

LAKE MICHIGAN WATER PROJECT

Return-flow pipeline construction begins soon

Utility to hold virtual open house on project timeline, impacts



Cara Spoto/Freeman Staff

Pipes that will soon be part of a nearly 24-mile-long pipeline sit along Sentry Drive in Waukesha. Construction of the pipeline, which is designed to return treated water back to Lake Michigan, is slated to begin later this month.

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WAUKESHA — More than a decade since it began its quest for Lake Michigan water, the city of Waukesha is expected to see construction begin soon on a 23 1/2-mile pipeline that will one day return treated Lake

Michigan water to the Root River watershed and eventually Lake Michigan itself.

Waukesha residents might have already seen the early signs of the project's beginnings.

Giant pipes have been gradually delivered to staging sites along the route over

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Pipeline

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the past few weeks. Several piles currently sit along Sentry Drive near the Waukesha Water Utility wastewater plant, where the pipeline will start.

Contracts for the return-flow infrastructure were awarded earlier this year and came in \$20 million under budget. The contract was awarded to S.J. Louis Construction, Inc. for under \$80.4 million.

Speaking about the project on Tuesday, Waukesha Water Utility General Manager Dan Duchniak said he expected contractors to start laying pipe by the end of the month.

"The contractor is taking delivery of all the materials right now and those are being placed along the route.

There is a lot of pipe that is going into the ground," Duchniak said.

Construction will be taking place at multiple points along the route, which will run along Sentry Drive, West Sunset Drive, West Avenue, Les Paul Parkway, Racine Avenue, Interstate 43, Small Road, Moorland Road, Durham Drive, North Cape Road, West Ryan Road, and South 60th Street.

The utility is planning to host a virtual open house on Monday evening to help residents along the route understand how construction of the pipeline could impact their daily commutes.

"People will be able to see where the projected construction is slated to take place, and if and when pipeline construction will be taking place in their neigh-

borhood," Duchniak said.

Residents can register for the open house at greatwateralliance.com/register-Waukesha.

The open house starts at 6 p.m. on Oct. 19.

Booster station and supply pipeline

Progress is also being made on other portions of the project, Duchniak said.

Bids for the 12-mile water-supply pipeline were awarded by the Waukesha Common Council last month, and the Public Service Commission is expected give a final up or down vote soon on the utility's proposal to construct its booster pumping station and reservoirs at a site off East Broadway and Rempe Drive.

The utility has been working on the relocation since March after the city of New Berlin agreed to pay the util-

How to go

What: Virtual open house on return-flow pipeline

Where: Online

When: 6-7 p.m., Monday, Oct. 19

How to attend: Those wishing to participate must register for the event at greatwateralliance.com/registerWaukesha

ity \$2 million to abandon its plans to construct the project on a farm field at Racine Avenue and Swartz Road in Minooka Park.

Duchniak said he expects the PSC to deliver its final ruling by November.

In the meantime, the utility has been working to prep the site.

Construction of the BPS and reservoirs is expected to begin next spring and take up to a year and a half to complete.