

## Richmond Area Municipal Contractors Association

### Inside this issue:

RAMCA Website	1
Chesterfield Update	2
Henrico Environmental Workshop	2
SCC Position Papers	3
Upcoming Events	3
Member Update	3
Staff Update	3
Sales Tax Increase	4
Fire Hydrant/Water Meter Issues	4
In Memoriam	5



### RAMCA LAUNCHES WEBSITE, VUHCC GOES ONLINE TOO

A number of RAMCA members have contacted the office to comment on both the content and quality of the newly-created RAMCA website- [www.ramca.info](http://www.ramca.info). The site contains a wealth of information about RAMCA, and should prove to be a tremendous resource for members and potential customers of members. Information on the association's upcoming activities, legislative and regulatory positions, and links to a host of other important and useful sites is now available to RAMCA members at the click of a mouse. If you haven't already visited the site, take a moment now and become familiar with it. The information contained there is designed to save you time, provide you with valuable resources, and keep you updated on the many activities of your association. In addition, your suggestions on improving the site are encouraged.

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RAMCA's statewide lobbying arm, the Virginia Utility and Heavy Contractors Council, has also gone digital this summer. The VUHCC site, [www.vuhcc.org](http://www.vuhcc.org) is now up, providing members and a host of other audiences with information about the legislative position of RAMCA and our industry partners across the state. If you need information about a state regulatory or legislative matter, the VUHCC web site should be your first stop. A number of state legislators have already been there as well.

Check out both sites and bookmark them. You are going to become a regular visitor!

## RAMCA/CHESTERFIELD COUNTY PROPOSAL MOVING FORWARD

Earlier this summer RAMCA requested a meeting with Chesterfield County to discuss problems associated with the County's subdivision ordinance requiring that subdivision streets be paved and accepted by VDOT before many of the building permits for that subdivision can be approved. RAMCA maintained that requiring subdivision roads to be paved only to then have a large volume of construction vehicles ride on that newly paved road in order to build-out the subdivision is self-defeating and a "catch 22" for the contracting community, the County, and VDOT.

As a result of our request, the County invited senior VDOT representatives from the Chesterfield Residency along with numerous representatives of the homebuilding and development community to attend the meeting as well. Lots of folks talked at that meeting, but only RAMCA had a proposal in writing for consideration. That document, which is attached for your review, requests that the County adopt a "split pavement" approach to their subdivision roads. Instead of laying two inches of asphalt early in the development of homes in the subdivision and then watching as numerous heavy construction vehicles involved with building-out the remaining lots rolled through and damaged the road, the RAMCA approach calls for an initial two inches of asphalt about midway through the project and another inch and a half when the subdivision is nearly built out. RAMCA believes this approach will yield a better final product, with minimal additional cost, and will provide tangible benefits for builders/developers, the County, VDOT and RAMCA members.

Now after numerous weeks of consideration, all parties except VDOT have signed off on the RAMCA proposal and their approval is expected shortly. Once it is given, RAMCA will immediately begin working with the County to get this proposed change to the Subdivision Ordinance before the County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors for approval. The process is expected to take another three to six months, but RAMCA is optimistic about the outcome. We will keep the membership informed of our progress.

On a separate matter, Chesterfield County E&S officials have begun enforcing their newly-enacted civil penalty schedule for certain violations of the County's Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.

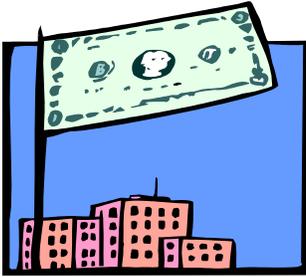


### HENRICO TO SCHEDULE SECOND ENVIRONMENTAL WORKSHOP

In November of 2002 Henrico County's Environmental Division put on a half-day workshop focusing on a broad range of erosion, sediment control, and environmental issues. RAMCA served as a sponsor of that event, which was exceptionally well received by the large group of members and others who attended.

The County's Environmental Manager, Mr. Jeff Perry, has informed us that he would like to sponsor a second such workshop during the first week in December. He has targeted two areas- Responsible Land Disturber and Temporary Seeding- as topics for the December session. In addition, Jeff has specifically asked RAMCA members for suggestions on other topics we would like to see discussed. This is a great opportunity to get issues that either concern or confuse you clarified. PLEASE SEND ANY SUGGESTIONS DIRECTLY TO JEFF PERRY AT [per03@co.henrico.va.us](mailto:per03@co.henrico.va.us) along with a copy to the RAMCA office ([marksinger@ramca.info](mailto:marksinger@ramca.info)). Further details concerning location, time, etc. will be forthcoming.

## REMINDER – SOME TAXES WILL BE GOING UP



In last month's newsletter we discussed in depth the failure of the 2004 Virginia General Assembly to provide any new funding resources for transportation in Virginia. But legislators did generate some 1.4 billion dollars in new money for a host of other state needs. One of the main sources of that new money will come from an increase on the state retail sales tax on non-food items by one half of one cent, making the new total sales tax (after local tax options are added on) 5%. If you are buying something expensive in the near term, you may want to get it bought prior to September 1<sup>st</sup>!!!

## FIRE HYDRANT CONSTRUCTION WATER METER PROBLEMS

David Wallace with Henrico's Department of Public Utilities Department has also contacted RAMCA soliciting our suggestions regarding a growing problem he is experiencing with the use of portable fire hydrant construction water meters issued to contractors.

The County currently issues meters that range in size from 5/8" to 2". These are standard domestic water meters fitted with appropriate hardware to allow them to be connected directly to a fire hydrant. A deposit ranging from \$50 to \$175 is charged based on the meter size. Users of the meters are instructed to return them to a County warehouse at the beginning of each month to be read and inspected. Readings from the meters are used to bill the users for water consumption.

Mr. Wallace indicates that many users do not regularly return the meters each month. When this happens, he has to produce their bills based on estimated water consumption. In many cases, when the meter is returned, the County has over or under estimated consumption. As a result, the County is now considering adding a substantial penalty charge to any construction meter bill that was estimated because the meter had not been returned.

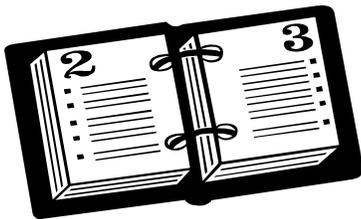
In addition, many of the meters that are returned are found to no longer register consumption. Apparently, in some applications, the water pressure and volume demands are greater than the meters can handle. Current policy is to only charge for physical damage to a meter, not for a broken register. In these cases, the meter with the bad register is exchanged for a new meter at no cost to the user. This results in a sizeable new meter expense to the County each year. In addition, many of the meters that are not returned for extended periods are found not to be registering when they are finally brought in. In these cases, the County has no way of knowing whether their estimated bills have been accurate.

The County is, therefore, also considering charging the user for any damage to the meter and increasing the required deposit to cover the full cost of the meter and all hardware. Another solution being discussed is to purchase meters that are constructed specifically for fire hydrant attachment and use. These meters are much larger and consequently more expensive. Any deposit required would have to be increased accordingly.

**IF YOU ARE A USER OF THESE METERS, YOUR THOUGHTS ON THESE PROPOSALS, OR ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS MENTIONED ABOVE, ARE NEEDED.** The County would like to continue their practice of providing convenient fire hydrant meter service to users and be able to better control the meters and their use. **HOWEVER CHANGES TO CURRENT POLICY ARE COMING. YOU CAN HELP SHAPE THAT POLICY BY PROVIDING RAMCA WITH YOUR THOUGHTS.**

## SCC REQUESTS POSITION PAPERS

After months of meetings and many hours of negotiations, a Task Force created by the State Corporation Commission (SCC) has been unable to reach agreement on both items it was charged to attempt to resolve. The first issue is whether design professionals designing specific projects (mostly large commercial, industrial and residential developments) should be required to delineate the existence and location of underground utility lines on their plans. RAMCA says they should. Virginia's utilities unanimously say they should not, and the engineering community is split. The second item, whether utilities should be required to inform excavators calling in a Miss Utility ticket of the existence of abandoned lines in the proposed dig zone, is similarly deadlocked. RAMCA argues that they should, and the state's utility operators say they should not. As a result the SCC is requesting all Task Force members to submit their positions in writing to the Commission. RAMCA's is included with this newsletter. RAMCA would also like to acknowledge the many hours of work contributed by the two Task Force contractor members –Mr. Johnnie Barr (Ward & Stancil) and Mr. Gray Pruitt (F.G. Pruitt, Inc.) Both have done an outstanding job of presenting the excavating community's position on these two impor-



## UPCOMING EVENTS

The Annual Jack Bargamin Memorial Golf Outing is scheduled for September 9<sup>th</sup> at Lake Chesdin Golf Club. Registration and sponsor information is already in the mail and the event is filling up very fast. If you plan on participating, REGISTER SOON,

The 2004 Underground Damage Prevention Conference is scheduled for September 28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> at Wintergreen. Sponsored by the State Corporation Commission, this annual meeting will feature progress reports on a number of important items currently under review (see previous article), educational sessions, and vendor displays featuring the latest in damage prevention technologies. If you dig in the ground, this is a pretty essential meeting to attend. For more information call 804-371-9947.

A legal seminar on the New Overtime Rules will be presented by RAMCA member Sands, Anderson, Marks, and Miller on November 4<sup>th</sup> at The Place at Innsbrook. For more info call 804-783-6781.

OSHA Compliance 2004. The National Seminars Group out of Kansas City will present a comprehensive two-day update on workplace safety issues on November 3rd and 4th in Richmond. Topics include: preventing OSHA violations; compliance with record keeping requirements; and site specific fine avoidance. For more info call 1-800-258-7246.

## MEMBER UPDATE

RAMCA member Fred Kozak announces the new location of his law practice to 9011 Arboretum Pkwy, Suite 265, Richmond VA 23236. Phone is 804-330-3288 email is fredkozak@fklaw.org.

## WELCOME NEW RAMCA STAFF

The new voice you hear when calling the RAMCA office is Ms. Judy Frederick. Judy brings a wealth of administrative and organizational talent to the association. Please welcome Judy to RAMCA the next time you contact us. Judy's email is judyfrederick@att.net.

**RAMCA Officers****President**

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*F.G. Pruitt, Inc.*

**Vice President**

**Bill Howard**

*G. L. Howard, Inc.*

**Secretary/Treasurer**

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*Keiter, Stephens, Hurst, Gary &  
 Shreaves*

**Immediate Past President**

Monty Gatewood

*Shoosmith Bros., Inc.*

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*Sovereign Paving, Inc.*

James H. Martin, Jr.

*J.H. Martin & Sons Contractors,  
 Inc.*

Johnnie Barr

*Ward & Stancil, Inc.*

**Associates:**

Ben Steele

*Martin Marietta Aggregates*

Keith Frazier

*ACF Environmental*

**Executive Director:**

Mark I. Singer

Office Manager

Judy Frederick



**RAMCA**

Richmond Area Municipal Contractors Association

*One Strong Voice*

## IN MEMORIAM

RAMCA MEMBERS WERE DEEPLY SADDENED TO LEARN OF THE PASSING OF TWO LONGTIME ALLIES OF RAMCA AND THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IN CENTRAL VIRGINIA.

Mr. Gilbert Lynn “Gilly” Howard passed away on July 17<sup>th</sup>. Gilly was a longtime and active supporter of RAMCA for over 30 years. He served as the association’s President for two terms in the mid-eighties, and was a recipient of the association’s most prestigious honor – Contractor of the Year. There is hardly a RAMCA member who did not know and respect Gilly and he will be greatly missed by the entire RAMCA family. Our deepest condolences to his son Bill and his lovely wife of over 50 years Jean, and the rest of his family, friends and employees.

James Harold Martin, Sr., founder and Chairman Emeritus of J.H. Martin & Sons Contractors, Inc. passed away on July 25<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Martin founded a company at the end of the Second World War that grew into one of the most important utility and site contractors in the region, and his tradition of excellence continues on under the leadership of the company’s current President, James H. Martin, Jr. RAMCA expresses our sympathy to James and Janet and their family as well as to the many fine employees of J. H. Martin and Sons Contractors, Inc.