

Local Station Is Checked Every Month



ENGINEER A. D. ASH WATCHES FIELDMAN L. G. STEARNS Current meter is used to check speed of water on Rouge (Dick Shirk Photo)

Rouge Valley Communities to Benefit from Statistics Obtained at Gage Station Here

By RAY DENNIS

Approximately 75 feet north of the new West Maple bridge, a small unimposing 10-foot high structure overlooks the River Rouge. This little known building houses a recording instrument which accurately keeps a day-to-day account of the level of the river.

Maintained by the U.S. Geological survey and known as a "ginger station," it was put into operation June 31. Costs of its construction, and upkeep are equally shared by the city of Birmingham and the geological survey, according to Arlington D. Ash, District Engineer in charge of surface water investigation in Michigan.

Purpose of the station is to take an inventory of surface water resources and find out how much water is available. Ash emphasized that his unit has nothing to do with water control, but is merely a fact-finding unit.

City Manager Donald C. Egbert said figures taken from the station will not be of much use to the city until after a year. He stated that the information received from records of the station will be useful for future designs for sewers and bridges in Birmingham. He also added that the figures will aid in the design for a channel to control floods.

The station will also help the city in plans pertaining to the sewage disposal plant because the flow of the Rouge can affect the operation at the plant.

EACH YEAR, records of all the

to 2,000 of a foot. The tape is located in the building and is lowered until it reaches the water level. At that time, it registers on a volt meter. Water from the stream is carried by an intake pipe to a well below the building. A weight driven clock on the Stevens recording gage drives the tape. Whenever there is a change in the water level, it is recorded on the graph.

Staff gages are also located both in and outside the structure. Ash said the main purpose of the outside gage is to serve as a check on the intake pipe. If the pipe clogs up, instruments inside the station will not measure accurately.

The field man measures all the instruments which record the level of the water. In that way, he knows everything is in working order. Ash said his unit aims to get the best records possible. He added that often U.S. Geological survey records are entered as testimony in court cases and honored because of their recognized accuracy.

EVERY PRECAUTION taken to get accurate records. Besides the recording gage, there is an electric tape gage, a very accurate instrument which can read up

operate with any community having a water problem. Under the setup in Birmingham the building and equipment cost \$2300, of which the city paid half and the geological survey the other half. Annual operating costs of the station are \$700 and this amount is also shared with Birmingham, which pays \$350 yearly. The recording gage cost \$350.

Various Federal agencies make use of the figures compiled by the survey. Ash said his office cooperates with the three army engineer district offices in Detroit, Duluth and Milwaukee. It also works with the state conservation department, state highway department and water resources commission.

Ash stated that after the survey has furnished the information to various cities pertaining to their water availability, it is up to the city planners to utilize the supply. The engineer said that the local station will be more valuable after it has been in operation for several years. Then authorities can go back over records and definitely correlate figures. A more accurate means can be established over a longer period.

The geological survey records are tabulated according to "water year," which runs from October to September. Ash said that probably Birmingham's records would not be entered for the water year ending this September as not enough tabulations had been taken.

THE LANSING OFFICE serves 66 stations and has a staff of five field men who start out each Monday. They usually stay out all week visiting the stations and return on Friday. Each man checks an average of three or four stations each day.

During emergency periods such as floods, the field men often travel to the stations at all hours of the day to get figures which will be of immediate use to authorities.

In addition to the Lansing office, there are branch offices of the surface water divisions in Grayling and Houghton. Ash is also in charge of these units.

Don M. Corbett is district engineer of the survey and his headquarters are located in Indianapolis. The district includes Michigan and Indiana.

On Nov. 13, a water resources district office was established in Lansing, with responsibility for water investigations in the state.



STORK, NOT SANTA, STUFFED THESE SOCKS—Old Saint Nick will have 12 less socks to fill thanks to the stork who swooped down on this washline in Middleborough, England, to present Lady Ruth with a dozen English Springer Spaniel puppies. Lady Ruth makes no bones about the fact that she's just too doggone tired to try to have the socks emptied and hung by the chimney before Santa's sleigh soars across the skies.

Lansing, with responsibility for water investigations in the state. Ash, who has been the district engineer in charge of the Lansing surface office was also placed in charge of this new department.

The engineer stated that the ideal locations for gage stations are just above a break in the stream. This gives a pool above and a riffle below.

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In spite of several organizations conducting paper drives at the same time, members of this pack were successful in getting more than 35 tons of waste paper.
Pack B-8's Charter for the 1950-51 season has been received from the Detroit council.
Advancement awards will be presented at the meeting scheduled for Dec. 19. Work for these awards must be completed and reported by the den mother to T. L.

Woodworth by Dec. 7, since it takes about 10 days for the certificates to arrive from headquarters in Detroit.
Pack members are making gift packages for Christmas. They are also collecting "old toys that you have been fixing up for kids whom Santa Claus might forget to visit." These will be shown at the Dec. 19 meeting.
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