

So often one may be inclined to be critical of the falling of a heavy rain . . . it interferes with the out-of-doors activities one may have planned for the day. To be sure, this interference is injurious to one's planned activities . . . but, since rain is one of the two most important of Nature's offerings (the other is sunshine) why not be thankful for its falling, anytime?

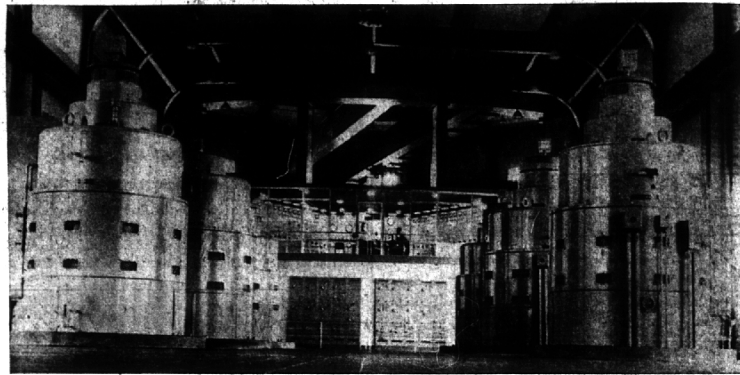
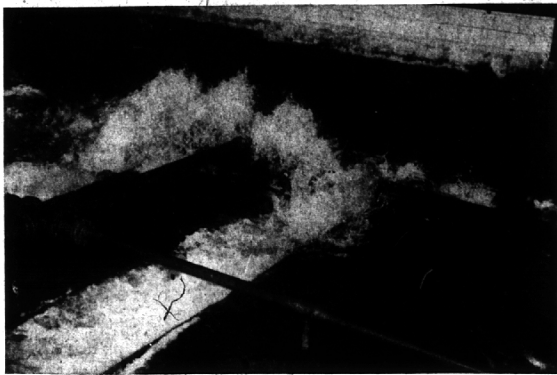
The Birmingham Eccentric

BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN

Thursday, August 6, 1959

SECTION
B

Water Flows Uphill in Long Push to Birmingham



In its steady, endless surge toward the sea, lake water—780 million gallons of it daily—gets sidetracked about 25 miles from here, on its way to Birmingham. It goes in here (left), at the City of Detroit's intake station at the eastern end of Belle Isle. From here on out it takes an uphill course—toward north Detroit, away from the sea. A dose of chlorine kills most of what shouldn't be living in drinking water in the first place. Herb Cisco (above, right), Detroit superintendent of filtration, checks gauges that register the

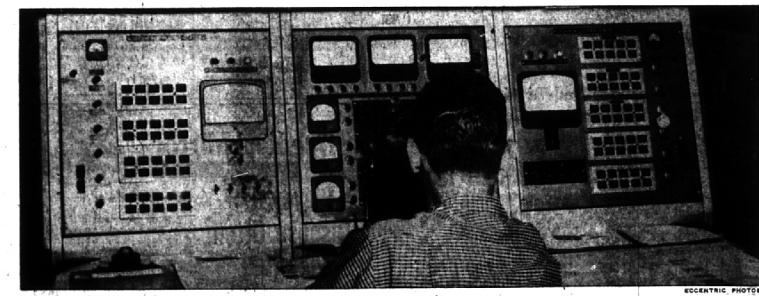
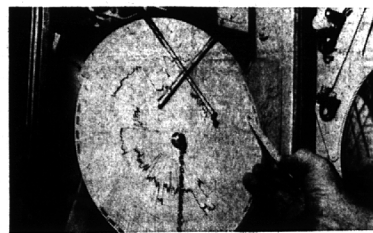
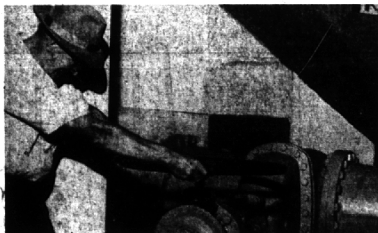
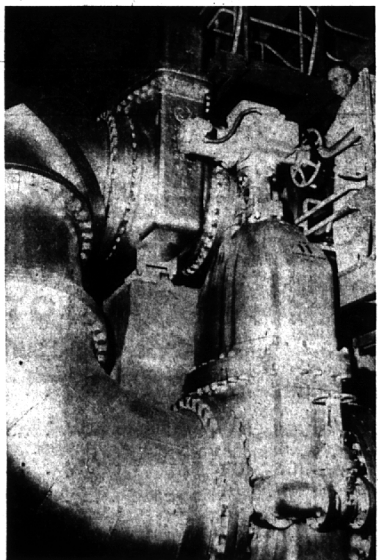
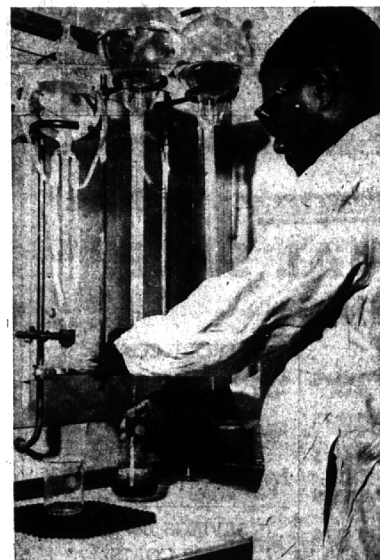
amount of chlorine in the still impure water. Birmingham-bound water races through more than five miles of tunnels and dips as much as 104 feet below Detroit streets. The "raw water" ends its trip at the Northeast station, East Eight Mile road near Van Dyke, where the real work begins. Chemicals—filter alum and activated carbon—are added before the water is stirred violently. Life gets a little calmer as the treated water enters settling

basins, where chemical reactions precipitate the impurities. Finally the water comes back to daylight—the first time since it left the Detroit river. The half-purified water now enters one of 48 filter beds. Despite the giant strides made in the filter industry in the past few years, the billion year-old method of filtration through sand and gravel is used in this 1959 plant. Each bed is used for 24 hours and then is cleaned thoroughly (above, center). Water is forced

up through the filter elements—a reverse of the filter process. It surges through the sand and carries the dirt with it. A whole battery of pumps (above, right) lifts the water to the level of the city's mains. But—not before it's tested rigidly (lower, right). Judd Ahmad, junior chemist for the City of Detroit, runs one of the multitude of tests taken all along the line. His chlorine residual test checks the amount of chlorine left in the water. Caged again, (lower, center)

the water starts northward to parched Detroit suburbs. Keith Van Dusen, head operating engineer, works the controls as the water shoots into city mains. The water changes hands at the Greenfield road station, Northland. Here the South Oakland County water authority takes over. Vern Griffith, maintenance chief "takes the helm"—gives a few test tugs to a control wheel at the junction of the Detroit and South Oakland mains. His pencil points to the spot on the gauge (a water meter

for hundreds of thousands of homes) that marks the day's intake. Supreme power rests in the man at the control panel in the Webster station, Royal Oak. This board controls every pump and valve in the South Oakland system; it tells how much water is being used in each community, can raise or drop pressure with the touch of a button. Then, on northward to a Birmingham fire hydrant, faucet, swimming pool or drinking fountain. . . . it comes out here.



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