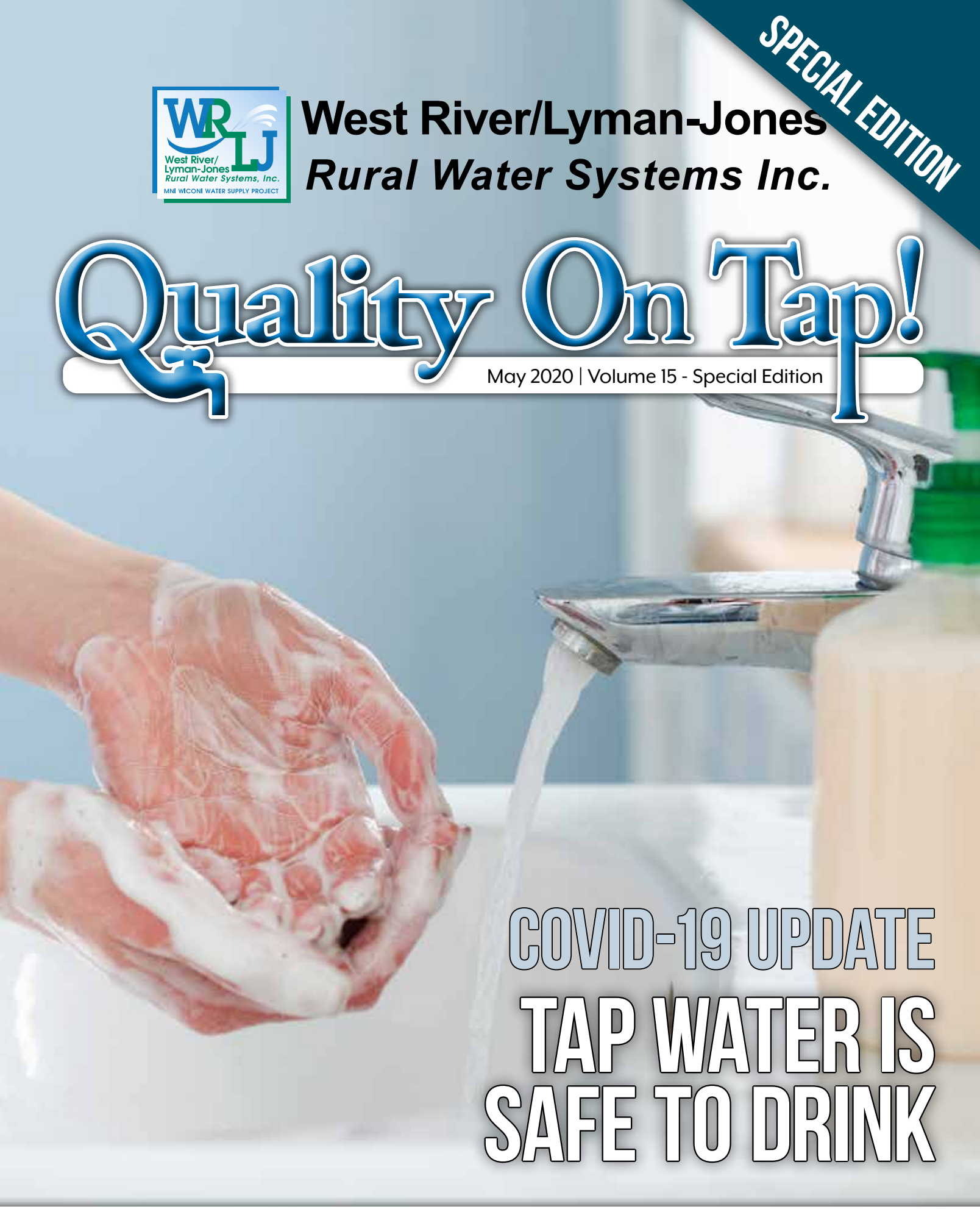
SPECIAL EDITION

West River/Lyman-Jones
Rural Water Systems Inc.

Quality On Tap!

May 2020 | Volume 15 - Special Edition



COVID-19 UPDATE

TAP WATER IS SAFE TO DRINK

WRLJ OFFICES CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

MANAGER'S REPORT

Jake Fitzgerald
Manager, West River/Lyman-Jones RWS

WR/LJ is participating in a special addition of the *Quality On Tap* newsletter organized by the South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems (SDARWS). The newsletter focuses on the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. As I write this on April 3, 2020, there are many unknowns about the Coronavirus and what lies ahead. We will continue to work every day to provide a safe and continuous water supply through these tough times.

WR/LJ is taking a number of precautions to lower the chances of catching or spreading the virus. The WR/LJ office in Murdo and the field office in Philip are temporarily closed to the public. The closure notification displayed on office building doors and shared on social media is printed on page 7 of this newsletter.

We are practicing social distancing in the workplace. The office staff and field staff are prepared to work remotely when needed. We appreciate the Golden West Network Operating Center for setting us up with remote access to our offices.

The WR/LJ Board is able to hold monthly meetings by teleconference. We are also participating in SDARWS meetings with other rural water systems in South Dakota through telephone and video conferencing.

As stated, WR/LJ will continue to provide a safe and uninterrupted supply of water to all of our customers. I have always valued the lifestyle western South Dakota has to offer, and I'm beginning to develop an even deeper appreciation for where we live as I see what is happening in other areas of the world and nation.

Please feel free to contact us anytime if you have any questions or concerns about your water service.

And please keep washing those hands – we have plenty of water!

West River/ Lyman-Jones Rural Water Systems, Inc.
MNI WICONI WATER SUPPLY PROJECT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dave Fuoss, Draper – President
Richard L. Doud, Midland – Vice President
Dodie Garrity, Hayes – Sec./Treas.
Paul Goldhammer, Wall
Kirk Cordes, Creighton
Veryl Prokop, Kadoka
Casey Krogman, White River
Brad Smith, Vivian
Dean Nelson, Murdo
Quint Garnos, Presho
Marion Matt, Philip – Liaison for West River Water Development District

MURDO PROJECT OFFICE

307 Main Street
PO Box 407
Murdo, SD 57559

Jake Fitzgerald ..... Manager
Amy Kittelson..... Office Manager
Kati Venard ..... Billing Secretary
Brandon Kinsley..... O & M Foreman
Ed Venard..... O & M
Steve Baker..... O & M
Brian Flynn ..... O & M

Ph: 605-669-2931 or 1-800-851-2349
Fax : 605-669-3022
E-Mail Address:
wrlj_ruralwater@goldenwest.net

PHILIP FIELD OFFICE

PO Box 144
Philip, SD 57567

Mike Vetter ..... O & M Foreman
Eddie Dartt..... O & M
John Kramer..... O & M
Nick Konst ..... O & M

Ph: 605-859-2829 • Fax: 605-859-2859

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION: In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

YOUR TAP WATER IS SAFE TO DRINK

IS DRINKING TAP WATER SAFE?

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), The World Health Organization (WHO), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the COVID-19 virus has not been detected in drinking water. Conventional water treatment methods that use filtration and disinfection, such as those in most municipal drinking water systems, should remove or inactivate the virus that causes COVID-19.

IS TAP WATER SAFE TO USE FOR HAND WASHING?

EPA recommends that Americans continue to use and drink tap water as usual. According to the CDC, washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds helps prevent the spread of COVID-19.

DO I NEED TO BUY BOTTLED WATER OR STORE DRINKING WATER?

EPA recommends that citizens continue to use and drink tap water as usual. At this time, there are no indications that COVID-19 is in the drinking water supply or will affect the reliable supply of water.

DO I NEED TO BOIL MY DRINKING WATER?

Boiling your water is not required as a precaution against COVID-19.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I'M CONCERNED ABOUT MY DRINKING WATER?

The World Health Organization (WHO) EXIT has stated that the, "presence of the COVID-19 virus has not been detected in drinking-water supplies and based on current evidence the risk to water supplies is low."

Homeowners that receive their water from a public water utility may contact their provider to learn more about treatments being used. Treatments could include filtration and disinfectants such as chlorine that remove or kill pathogens before they reach the tap.

WHAT IS EPA'S ROLE IN ENSURING DRINKING WATER REMAINS SAFE?

EPA has established regulations with treatment requirements for public water systems that prevent waterborne pathogens such as viruses from contaminating drinking water. These treatment requirements include filtration and disinfectants such as chlorine that remove or kill pathogens before they reach the tap. Additionally, the World Health Organization (WHO) EXIT notes that, "conventional, centralized water treatment methods which utilize filtration and disinfection should inactivate COVID-19 virus."

The EPA continues to coordinate with federal partners, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and continues to provide technical assistance and support to states, as appropriate.

References

https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-drinking-water-and-wastewater

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/water.html

Thank a WATER OPERATOR

Water utility personnel are the unsung heroes of public health. The important work they do ensures that we have clean, safe water with every turn of the tap.

As we endure this COVID-19 pandemic, we must continue to recognize and thank each of the men and women working every day to ensure our water continues to flow and waste treatment systems continue to operate, while protecting our source waters and the environment. These services are essential to maintain public health, essential to protect the environment and essential to mitigate and eliminate the threat of this virus on our American communities and families. For all these reasons, each individual operating and working in these systems is considered essential to carry out these critical services during this emergency.

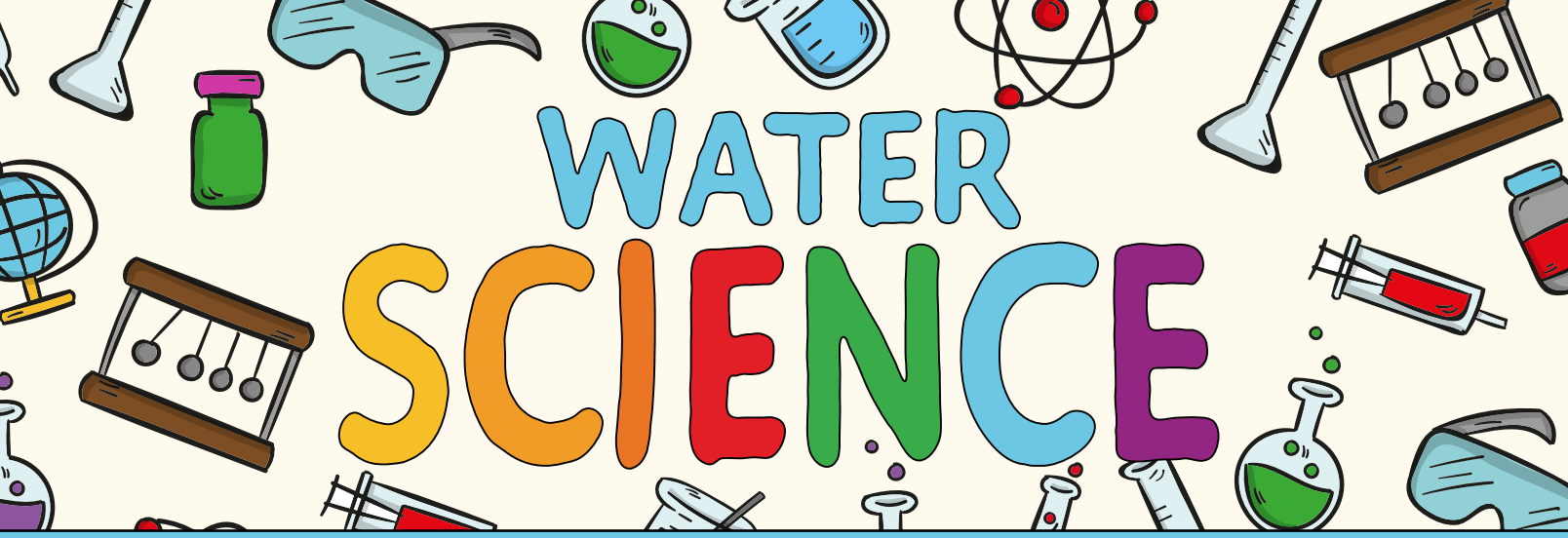
Systems of all sizes have taken necessary steps to ensure continuity of service and to protect the industry workforce. State Rural Water Associations have developed a listing of around 3,000 retired or otherwise qualified operations specialists to support systems if critical, local utility staff are unable to perform their duties due to the virus – including operations specialists in South Dakota.

The memorandum specifies the following Water and Wastewater sector employees as "Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers:"

- Operational staff at water authorities
- Operational staff at community water systems
- Operational staff at wastewater treatment facilities
- Workers repairing water and wastewater conveyances and performing required sampling or monitoring, including field staff
- Operational staff for water distribution and testing
- Operational staff at wastewater collection facilities
- Operational staff and technical support for Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) Control systems
- Chemical and equipment suppliers to water and wastewater systems and personnel protection
- Workers who maintain digital systems infrastructure supporting water and wastewater operations

The public health and well-being of our nation's rural residents depends on uninterrupted access to safe drinking water. Rural water systems provide critically important, life-saving infrastructure by providing safe drinking water and clean sanitation at millions of homes across the United States and territories.

At this time, existing safe management techniques in both drinking water and sanitation apply to COVID-19. Extra measures are not needed. In particular, disinfection treatment processes will facilitate more rapid die-off of the COVID-19 virus. Provision of safe water, sanitation and hygienic conditions play an essential role in protecting human health during all infectious disease outbreaks, including the current COVID-19 outbreak, and is the priority of water and wastewater operations specialists around the state and the country.



FUN EXPERIMENTS YOU CAN TRY AT HOME!

DIFFUSION

What you need:
- 2 clear glasses or jars
- Hot tap water
- Cold tap water
- Food coloring

Instructions:
Fill up one of your clear glasses with cold tap water, the other with hot tap water. Place the filled glasses on a table and let them sit until the water is calm. Add the food coloring one drop at a time so you can see the drop of color slowly spread throughout the water.

WALKING WATER

What you need:
- Odd number of clear glasses of the same size
- Tap water
- Paper towels
- Food coloring
- Spoon
- Scissors

Instructions:
Line glasses in a row about two inches apart. Starting with a glass on one end, fill every other glass with water. Put a few drops of food coloring in each water-filled glass and mix (don't use the same color twice). Cut a paper towel in half and then fold it into quarters lengthwise. Stick one end of the paper towel into the colored water and one end into the empty jar. Let sit for at least one hour. Over time the water moves or "walks" up the paper towels into the empty jar until the water level in all the glasses are equal.

BENDING WATER

What you need:
- A plastic comb (or inflated balloon)
- A narrow stream of water from a tap
- Dry hair

Instructions:
Turn on the water so it is falling from the tap in a narrow stream. Run the comb through your hair just as you normally would when brushing it (around 10 times). If you are using a balloon then rub it back and forth against your hair for a few seconds. Slowly move the comb or balloon towards the stream of water (without touching it) and watch closely to see what happens.

WATER CYCLE

What you need:
- Plastic bottle
- Plastic cup
- Ice cubes (optional)
- Blue food coloring

Instructions:
Remove the labels from the bottles. Add a drop of blue food coloring to each bottle and fill about 1/3 of the way with water. Screw the caps on tightly. Turn the bottle upside down inside a cup. Place a couple of ice cubes on top of the bottle and set it in a sunny location. Check the bottle after about an hour. There should be condensation on the top of the bottle, and there may even be a small cloud there! Watch as the droplets of water fall back to the bottom of the bottle.

Should you FLUSH IT?

WR/LJ OFFICES ARE TEMPORARILY CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC

The safety and health of WR/LJ customers, staff and surrounding communities has always been our number one priority. The Center of Disease and Control (CDC) recommends social distancing to limit exposure and help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. As a precautionary measure, WR/LJ will temporarily close the main office in Murdo and the field office in Philip to the public starting on March 24th and the closure will continue until further notice.

Although our office doors may be closed, WR/LJ staff will continue to work as usual to provide the best service possible. Please feel free to contact us anytime by phone at 605-669-2931 or email at wrlj_ruralwater@goldenwest.net.

After hour emergency numbers:

Murdo area	605-530-0932
Philip area	605-530-1136

An outside payment drop box is available at the main office in Murdo.

WR/LJ is joining many others in our service area to do our part in helping slow the spread of COVID-19. We will continue to actively monitor this situation, being mindful of Federal, State and Local guidelines.

We appreciate your understanding and patience!

AUTOMATED PHONE CALLS

WR/LJ has started using an automated system to contact our members by phone, text or email with matters regarding your accounts. Some examples of these communications are notifications of planned outages, delinquent accounts, and disconnect for non-payment.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

1. **Online Payment:** Go to www.wrlj.com (accepts Visa, MasterCard, Discover and Electronic Check)
2. **Pay-By-Phone:** Call 1-855-325-8898 to use our automated bill payment option.
3. **Pay-By-Phone:** Call 1-800-851-2349 and a WR/LJ customer representative will take your payment information over the phone.
4. **Electronic Direct Payment:** Your payment is automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the 10th of each month.
5. **US Mail:** Mail payment along with the bottom portion of your bill.
6. **24-Hour Drop Box:** Available at the Murdo office near the main entrance.

For forms or more information on these payment options, please call 1-800-851-2349.

Visit us online at: **www.wrlj.com**

West River/Lyman-Jones
Rural Water Systems Inc.
PO Box 407
Murdo, SD 57559
605-669-2931 • www.wrlj.com

PRESORTED
STANDARD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #32
MADISON, SD

HOW TO PROPERLY WASH YOUR HANDS

(scrub for at least 20 seconds - as long as it takes to sing "Happy Birthday")

WET HANDS

APPLY SOAP

RUB HANDS PALM TO PALM

LATHER THE BACKS OF YOUR HANDS

SCRUB BETWEEN YOUR FINGERS

RUB THE BACKS OF FINGERS ON THE OPPOSING PALMS

CLEAN THUMBS

WASH FINGERNAILS AND FINGERTIPS

RINSE HANDS

DRY WITH A CLEAN TOWEL

USE THE TOWEL TO TURN OFF THE FAUCET

YOUR HANDS ARE CLEAN!