

Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2006 6:24 PM
Subject: BAD BOY REPORT: UNREPORTED LEAD LEVELS

Dear Aquathin Dealer OnLine, Splash NewsBulletin and Allergic Reaction NewsBulletin Members;

Need another reason to own an Aquathin !!?? Whip this article out to any potential Customer who says, "I pay my taxes and the city is providing safe water!"

Remember...everyone lives downstream from everyone else...and that includes the water plants. The best source of "safe water" is POU (Point of Use = at the tap) and POE (Point of Entry = total home) treatment.

I LOVE MY AQUATHIN ! AND REMEMBER, THE NEXT BEST THING TO OWNING AN AQUATHIN IS RECOMMENDING ONE TO A FRIEND !!


Let me know what you AquathinK !


Warmest regards to all...as well, your comments are always welcome and very much appreciated.

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Alfred J. Lipshultz, President

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Industry News - Besieged St. Lucie West Water Official Quits in Lead Flap

[Industry News Index](#)

Source: Palm Beach Post
Date: 2006-03-09

By TERESA LANE Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

The beleaguered operator of the St. Lucie West water plant walked off the job Tuesday, the same day supervisors of the St. Lucie West Services District blasted plant operators for waiting three months to alert water customers to high lead levels in nearly one of fives homes and businesses sampled.

Jim Richardson, who worked at the water plant for more than a decade, walked out of a four-hour district meeting Tuesday morning, turned in his keys and cellphone and scrawled a note that said, "Self-terminated," officials said.

Richardson had penned a resignation letter Feb. 8, two days after he was reprimanded for failing to alert his supervisors to high lead readings in 12 homes and businesses in November.

Charles Sweat of Government Services Group, which district board members hired to manage St. Lucie West's water and sewer plants, said he persuaded Richardson to rescind the resignation a few days later. But he accepted it Wednesday.

It's not the first time Richardson has been in trouble at the utility. He was reprimanded a year ago after he admitted falsifying utility log sheets to make it appear the water and sewer plants were being staffed adequately, Sweat said.

The forgeries occurred on isolated dates over a six-year period, resulting in an \$8,000 fine by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Sweat said. The department cited St. Lucie West plant operators this week for being 20 days late in filing reports of the recent lead results, a violation that could result in a maximum fine of \$100,000: \$5,000 for each day the report was late.

The services district is a quasi-governmental agency created under state law to manage St. Lucie West's utility plants, lakes and drainage program. Residents elect five board members, or supervisors, to set policy for the district, and the supervisors hired Government Services Group in October 2004 to oversee day-to-day operations.

Two supervisors said Wednesday they blame Government Services Group for many of the district's problems during the past 17 months, including a catastrophic water outage in February 2005 that virtually ground life to a halt for a weekend.

"Without a question, I'd go for a new management company," Supervisor Sal Mancuso said.

"I'm very, very unhappy, and I've gathered information that doesn't look good for

GSG and Charlie Sweat," Supervisor Charles Altwein said. "I've put it all together in a list."

Sweat defended his company's management and his decision to change the job description of former utility Director George Morgan, who resigned under pressure after the water outage. Sweat changed the utility director's title to "manager" and deleted a requirement that the manager hold Class A licenses to run a water and sewer plant.

Sweat hired a former co-worker of his, Tom Pound, for the job, bypassing some supervisors' suggestions that he hire longtime district engineer John Whitmer. Whitmer was criticized this week for designing the community's new reverse osmosis water plant with a flaw that failed to adequately block lead absorption inside homes and businesses.

The problem, which has been corrected, is a concern even in new communities such as St. Lucie West, built after Congress' 1986 law restricting the amount of lead that can be used in home plumbing fixtures.

"Prior to my arriving, there was no communications at all with the board," Sweat said. "The board didn't have a manager here dealing with this stuff. It has nothing to do with me."

Sweat said he is looking for a new chief water plant operator to replace Richardson. In the meantime, an employee with a Class B water plant license is running the plant, satisfying Department of Environmental Protection requirements, he said.

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