



# CITY PRIDE

MORGANTON, NC

November 2012 • Morganton's Citizen Newsletter



## My Utilities

Did you know that City utility customers can view account information and pay utility bills on the Internet?

Visit the City's website and click the 'My Utilities' link at the top right of the web page to register.



[www.ci.morganton.nc.us](http://www.ci.morganton.nc.us)

## Connect Online!

We post. We tweet. We syndicate. We share photos and video. And we want you to get connected to Morganton!

You can "Like" us on Facebook; follow us on Twitter; subscribe to our YouTube Channel; and check out images from around the City in our Picasa Galleries.

Visit the City's website at [www.ci.morganton.nc.us](http://www.ci.morganton.nc.us) and look for the social media icons at the top right of the page to connect online!



## RSS Feeds



Several pages of information on the City Website is syndicated using RSS feeds. All you need is an RSS Feed Reader and you can subscribe to the City's News and Crime Release pages, Job Openings and Parks and Recreation updates!

## Morganton City Council

- Mel Cohen, Mayor
- Dr. Alfred Hamer Jr., Mayor Pro Tem
- John H. Cantrell
- Forrest A. Fleming
- S. Sidney Simmons

[citymayor@ci.morganton.nc.us](mailto:citymayor@ci.morganton.nc.us)  
[citycouncil@ci.morganton.nc.us](mailto:citycouncil@ci.morganton.nc.us)

[www.ci.morganton.nc.us](http://www.ci.morganton.nc.us)

# Filter upgrades continue at water treatment plant

The City of Morganton's \$1.7 million water filter upgrade project is well underway at the City's water treatment plant. The Morganton City Council approved the project in March of this year and contract workers started work in September.

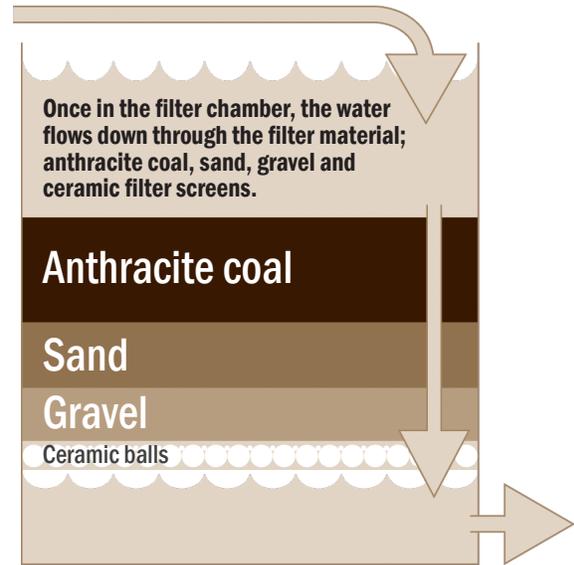
So far, contractors have refurbished and replaced the filter media in one of the nine filter chambers at the plant. Water Treatment Plant Superintendent Jason Green said the entire project could be complete by as early as May 2013.

During the filter upgrade, workers will replace the filter material in all nine water filters, upgrade the filter wash system, replace two old sediment basin baffle walls, and repair some access walkways at the plant. Crewmen will inspect the filter screens, inspect and repair the filter walls, make any other needed repairs and then install the new filter material.

"This upgrade will save money and improve efficiency," Green said. "We will be able to run the filters longer and clean the filters faster when the project is complete."

The City's water treatment facility operates using nine large concrete water filters. The water filter media was last replaced in 1992 and the material is nearing the end of its useful life.

Water is pumped out of the Catawba River and



mixed with chlorine and a coagulant that captures particles in the water. The water then flows into 15 sediment basins. As the water moves through the basins, which are approximately 75 feet wide by 125 feet long, most particles are captured by the

See **FILTER UPGRADE** on Page 2

# City welcomes new technology director

The City of Morganton has hired Greg Branch as the new director of the City's Information Resources Management Services department.

Branch has 13 years of experience in the information technology (IT) field and served as the IT Director for Caldwell County for the past six years.

Branch started with Caldwell County in 1999 as a computer technician and worked his way up to director, earning a B.A. in Management Information Systems from Gardner-Webb University along the way. Branch is also certified by the UNC



**Greg Branch | IRMS Director**

School of Government as a Chief Information Officer.

Branch said he enjoyed working for Caldwell County, but he couldn't pass up the opening with the City of Morganton and the opportunity to work in his

hometown.

"I'm excited about being here," Branch said. "This position is close to home, and I got along with everyone right off the bat."

Branch grew up in the Salem community. He graduated from Freedom High School in 1992 and married his high school sweet heart, Lea-Ann. Branch's 13-year-old daughter Karson attends Table Rock Middle School and the family is very active at Walker Road Baptist Church. The Branches have lived in the Oak Hill Community for the past 14 years.

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## Holidays in Downtown

### Winter Carnival & Memorial Tree Lighting

**Nov. 17 from 1:00 - 5:30 pm**

Downtown Morganton wants to help you kick off the holiday season with some family fun. On Saturday Nov. 17 from 1:00 - 5:30 pm, the Courthouse Square will transform into the North Pole!

Free activities are available for everyone to enjoy including Ice Fishing, Santa's Putt-Putt, and Snowman Bean Bag Toss! Of course, the man-of-the-hour, Santa, will be waiting to hear what all of the GOOD little boys and girls of Morganton are hoping for this holiday season.

### Carriage Rides

Come downtown and enjoy a carriage ride on Fridays and Saturdays, starting Nov. 17.

Visit [www.downtownmorganton.com](http://www.downtownmorganton.com) to find out more details about prices.

### Breakfast with Santa

Come have breakfast with Santa at the Morganton Community House Saturday Dec. 1 and Saturday Dec. 8 at 8:30 am and 10:00 am!

The Community House is located at 120 N. King St.

### Christmas Parade

**Dec. 4 at 6:00 pm**  
**Rain or Shine!**

Please join the Morganton Downtown Development Association as they present the Downtown Morganton Christmas Parade on Tuesday Dec. 4 at 6:00 pm.

This year's Christmas Parade theme is: A Patriotic Christmas.

Find out more details about [www.downtownmorganton.com](http://www.downtownmorganton.com).

## MainStage 2012-2013

### "LETTERS HOME"

Thursday Nov. 8 | 7:30 pm

### "SHREK" THE MUSICAL

Sunday Nov. 25 | 7:30 pm  
[www.shrekthemusicalontour.com](http://www.shrekthemusicalontour.com)

### A PAT BOONE CHRISTMAS

Thursday Dec. 13 | 7:30 pm

### "HOMETOWN CHRISTMAS"

Mr. Jack Daniel's Original Silver Cornet Band

Thursday Dec. 20 | 7:30 pm

### THE BLIND BOYS OF ALABAMA

### "100 Years of Gospel"

Friday Jan. 18 | 7:30 pm  
[www.blindboys.com](http://www.blindboys.com)

### SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK

Tuesday Feb. 12 | 7:30 pm  
[www.sweethoney.com](http://www.sweethoney.com)

### LEAHY

Saturday March 9 | 7:30 pm  
[www.leahymusic.com](http://www.leahymusic.com)

### "BILOXI BLUES"

Montana

Repertory Theatre

Friday March 15 | 7:30 pm

COMMA

Call 433-SHOW or visit [www.commaonline.org](http://www.commaonline.org)!

## Leaf Collection: October - January

Leaf collection started in October and continues as needed through January. The City Public Works Dept. currently collects leaves every two weeks during leaf season at no charge.

After January, loose leaves will be collected for a \$25.00 fee.

## Filter Upgrade

*From the front*

coagulant and settle to the basin floor.

The water then flows into one of the nine water filter chambers. Once in the filter chamber, the water flows down through the filter material - anthracite coal, sand, gravel and ceramic filter screens. After moving through the filter, the water is clean and clear and ready for the final treatment. Chlorine, fluoride, lime and phosphate are added to the water and the drinking water is stored in finished water tanks before being pumped into the City water system.

The new, fresh filter material (anthracite coal) will trap more particles in the water, reduce turbidity and improve water clarity, Green said. Plant operators will be able to run each filter longer before they have to

stop and wash the filter thereby increasing efficiency.

Currently, plant operators can run water through a filter about 72 hours before crews have to shut down and clean the filter. After the upgrade, plant operators will be able to run water through each filter for 96 hours before they have to stop and clean the filter. Also, cleaning/washing the filter will be faster and more effective thanks to the new air scour system being installed.

Green said contractors will repair the access sidewalks that connect the nine filter chambers as well as baffle walls in two of the older sediment basins.

Morganton's water treatment plant was built in 1956 and prior upgrades were made in 1966, 1974 and 1992. Green and eight staff members operate the plant 24 hours a day, seven days a week; his crew produces an average of eight million gallons of City water every day.

## Branch

*From the front*

Branch is an amateur radio enthusiast and already has at least one friend in City Hall, a fellow amateur radio enthusiast who works in the Electric Department.

City Manager Sally Sandy said she is excited to have Branch on the City staff and she is confident he can lead the City's IRMS department.

"We are happy and fortunate to have someone of Mr. Branch's caliber working for the City," Sandy said. "He is very familiar with, and comfortable with, our municipal software systems, and

he also knows our community very well.

"He will definitely be an asset to the City, and we are glad he accepted the position."

As the IRMS director, Branch will be responsible for directing, managing, analyzing and operating all of the City's information technology systems - staff computers, the telephone system, networks, Internet access, planning and zoning permitting software, GIS systems and more.

Branch will be responsible for researching and implementing software and hardware upgrades as well as maintaining the flow of information between City staff and City departments.