

## July 2018 Mall Maintenance Fountain Update

I know there has been frustration towards the fountains on the Square this spring and in the past several years because they have not been up and running as early as many would like to see. Please understand that spring and early summer are an incredibly busy time of year for the Parks Division, especially the Facilities Maintenance Team who are trying to get everything up and running, including shelters, the pool, splash parks, drinking fountains and irrigation across the city, among many others. Inevitably there are repairs that must be made that slow us down as well. The fountains, particularly on the Square, continue to present many challenges to us. This is due to a combination of factors including age, construction, water supply issues and staff availability to work on these during our busiest time of year—this is always at minimum a two person job due to the fact that all of the mechanicals are located in below-grade pits. We wish turning them on were as easy as flipping a switch. Unfortunately, it is not as easy as some tend to think, and this leads to many delays and frustrations along the way. I will give you both the long and short explanation for where we are with them this year.

**Short story:** Components of all fountains on the Square were running by the time the crew left last Friday. The crew came in on Monday to find that one of the pumps had failed over the weekend on the fountain by American Exchange (North side of East Washington). This fountain is not working now, as we are awaiting parts. The crew is working this week to complete the internal work on the fountain and will replace the pump once it is in, but it is likely that it will take a while longer to get everything operational.

Badger Fountain on the 500/600 Block of State was running the first week of May.

Peace Park fountain was started in early June. The crew made some adjustments to it this week to ensure water is flowing at a more desirable rate.

It's important to note that the two smaller fountains are set up completely different than the Square fountains, so they are much simpler for the crew to start-up than the others.

### **Long Story:**

The crew has encountered a number of difficulties that have severely impacted the ability to get and keep the fountains running.

West Washington:

The water supply had not been able to be properly blown out and winterized for years due to a private development project that was never corrected, though the crew has always done what they can. Unfortunately, there was some water remaining in the line over the winter and it froze and burst underground. To repair this and get water to the fountains, it took the better part of last week to trench by hand in order to find the damage and repair. These fountains were up and running Tuesday of this week. The crew will be making modifications to the system to ensure proper winterization going forward.

East Washington:

The fountain in front of Glass Bank is partially functional, but the Beacon portion has an internal leak that the crew is working to repair. On the American Exchange side, the fountain was running several weeks ago, but we had some specialty valves fail which caused the pit for the pump to flood. After evaluation by electrician we determined the was still functional and had the fountain functional before this past weekend. Unfortunately, it failed at some point before Monday morning. In addition, the crew is working to rebuild the internal piping that froze and broke due to scale build-up. The crew will continue to work on this next week and once the replacement pump is in, we will get the pump running as quickly as they can.

Given the issues we've had this spring and knowing our resources are always going to be pulled in many directions this time of year, I am recommending that we look into a contractual relationship with a vender to ensure that the fountains are up and running when stakeholders would like to see them running. We've received some preliminary cost estimates that we are planning to look into further.

Please let me know if you have additional questions.

Thanks,  
Lisa