

## **BOPU assesses '09 challenges**

Opportunities for growth abound, including federal funding for upping pipe lifespan.

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CHEYENNE -- Last month, the Cheyenne Board of Public Utilities hosted a day-long meeting to discuss plans and goals for the future.

The year 2009 will bring challenges, as well as opportunities for growth, board spokesman Clint Bassett said.

One such challenge will be examining the water and sewer pipe maintenance schedules.

At the current rate of replacement, which is about 1.5 miles per year, it would take more than 250 years to replace all of the city's about 375 water pipelines.

But the pipes have an expected lifespan of just 75 years.

The rate of replacement would have to more than double, to 3.75 miles per year, to keep pace, according to a report presented at the meeting.

The board allocates about \$2 million each year for maintenance on water and sewer lines, but that price tag might have to increase in order to keep up with the aging infrastructure, said Brad Brooks, operation and maintenance division manager for BOPU.

And that could mean additional rate increases for city water customers, although other options are being pursued, Brooks added.

Those options include potential federal funding and a project to increase the lifespan of the pipes.

For now, a new software program will help to prioritize projects and spend the money they do have wisely, Brooks said.

Also discussed at the meeting was expansion of the recycled water project.

Phase two of that project is scheduled to begin this year, bringing recycled water to North Cheyenne Community Park, Miller Elementary and possibly United Nations Park.

Recycled water, which is water that has been treated to a somewhat lower standard than drinking water, is already being sent to several parks, athletic fields and golf courses in town.

After the expansion, the same water will be used for the additional areas.

There are six potential phases of expansion for the recycled water project. If all are carried out as planned, it will be complete by 2018 and will bring recycled water to Mylar Park, Central High, McCormick Junior High, Laramie County Community College and Frontier Refining.

Also discussed at the meeting were various reports and presentations regarding water quality, water at the Archer complex and east Cheyenne, a new vehicle replacement strategy and financial projections.