

NEWS RELEASE

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February 16, 2016

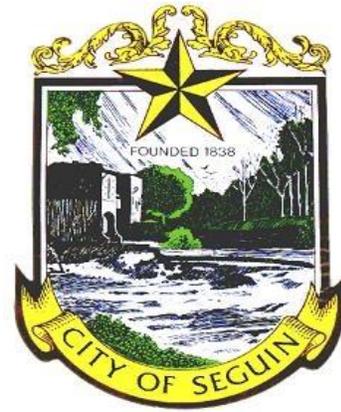
Press Release # 021516A

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Wastewater Treatment Plant evades restrictions thanks to staff efforts

Rene Porras & Gilbert Ybarbo selected as February Employees of the Month

SEGUIN, Texas –Treating wastewater definitely isn’t the most glamorous job – but a very necessary one. An effective wastewater treatment plant is vital to a city’s growth and continuing economic development.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Gilbert Ybarbo and Pretreatment Coordinator Rene Porras were recognized this week for diligently and successfully reducing the level of phosphates from our treated wastewater. The two were named as Employees of the Month for February.

Several years ago, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) contacted the city concerning levels of phosphate in water we discharge into the river after being treated (cleaned). The commission had decreased the amount of the phosphates allowed in the treated water. Seguin and several other cities South Central Texas had to find a way to remove it or face restrictions that would cost thousands of dollars in plant upgrades/improvements.

Ybarbo and Porras spent the next three years reaching out to local industries who produced the most wastewater. They believed educating our users would decrease the phosphates before the water ever reached the treatment facility.

“It was a lot of face-to-face meetings with our big industrial companies. We educated them about changes they could make that would decrease the amount of phosphate in their waste,” said Ybarbo.



Phosphate is part of the detergent family of chemicals. High amounts in treated wastewater impacts ecosystems in the Guadalupe River and other bodies of water.

“We worked together with our industrial users to make changes that would lower the amount of phosphate coming into the plant. Things like changing the types of cleaning products they used,” said Porras.

By working with TCEQ and our local industries, the city’s treated wastewater now returns to the river with very low levels of phosphate. Their efforts saved the city hundreds of thousands of dollars’ worth of equipment, manpower and chemicals.

Congrats to Porras and Ybarbo for being selected as the City of Seguin’s February Employees of the month!



Pictured left to right: Assistant City Manager Rick Cortes, Gilbert Ybarbo, Rene Porras, Director of Water/Wastewater Emery Gallagher and City Manager Doug Faseler