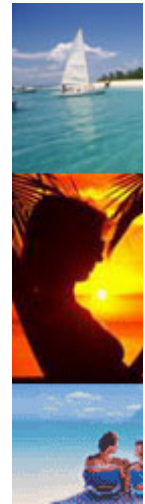




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Engineers study Croton's off-color water

By **ROBERT MARCHANT**
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CROTON-ON-HUDSON — Water engineers are sampling drinking water and reviewing the flow rates of underground pipes in the village in an effort to remove the orange and brown taint that discolors the water.

The village administration recently hired Chazen Engineering of Poughkeepsie for \$8,750 to find ways of minimizing the brown-water problem that draws frequent complaints at Village Hall. The company will study the water system and identify solutions, both mechanical and chemical.

Mayor Greg Schmidt said the study will help determine if there are short-term remedies that may alleviate the problem. If long-term solutions are necessary, the village will be in a better position to identify them after the study.

"We're looking at all the options," he said.

Village Engineer Dan O'Connor said, "We're going to look at where the brown water is coming from and what's causing it."

One possible scenario after the study is complete will be to add chemicals to the water supply to help it run clear. The added chemical compounds, in small doses, limit the corrosion inside the unlined, rusty pipes that were installed decades ago. The old cast-iron and galvanized-steel pipes, from which rust slowly leaches into the water, are believed to be the main cause for much of the discolored water. The water is unsightly but safe to drink.

O'Connor said a range of chemical compounds could be added to the water to keep it running clear.

"We may add corrosion inhibitors to the water system to minimize the corrosion rate," O'Connor said. He mentioned phosphate, for example, as a potential additive that may be used. "It almost provides a molecular coating" on the pipes, he said, and has shown no ill effects on human health in small quantities.

The study also will look at water temperature. Since hot water corrodes metal pipes more than cold water, the study will identify ways to keep the water cooler in storage areas. Mechanical solutions, the most expensive options, also will be considered. The study will identify which sections of pipe would be the best to replace at dead ends in the system, where

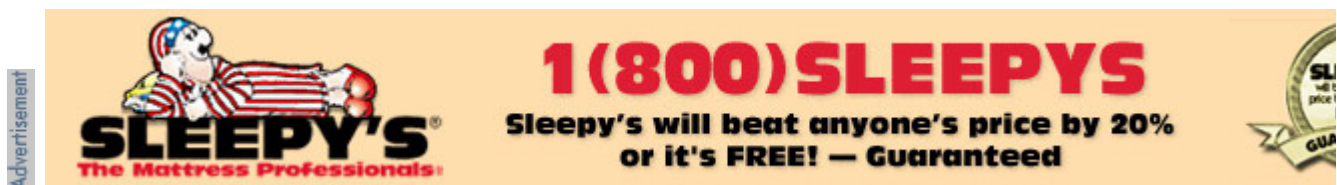
the brown water stagnates.

Helene Farrey lives in a section of the village plagued with brown water and even black water. Farrey installed a filter recently, and she has to change it more than twice as often as the manufacturer recommends because of the amount of rusty water flowing through the pipes.

"It's still a problem," she said. "I hope they can fix it."

In a related development, the village is installing new water pipes in the Harmon section at a cost of \$1.2 million, replacing the century-old pipes there that have been blamed for discolored water in that neighborhood. Most of the new water mains have been installed, and the project should be completed in the spring after individual homes are connected.

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