# **City of Bolivar, MO**

## **Spring 1999 Fire Hydrant Testing/Coding Project**



Tests conducted and report generated by: Theron J. Becker, FPE

Project advisors: Dale **Newcomb,** City Clerk, Assistant Fire Chief Milton Dickensheet, Director of City Services and City Engineering Dean Ponder, Water Department Foreman

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#### <span id="page-2-0"></span>2.0 Executive Summary

TO: Terry Helton, City Administrator

cc: Milton Dickensheet, Director of City Services and City Engineering Dale Newcomb, City Clerk, Assistant Fire Chief Dean Ponder, Water Department Foreman Patty Head, Fire Chief FROM: Theron Becker, Interim Fire Protection Engineer DATE: May 19, 1999 SUBJECT: Spring 1999 Fire Hydrant Testing/Coding Project

The goals of the fire hydrant project were to systematically test Bolivar's fire hydrants and paint them according to a color code developed by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and recommended by the Insurance Services Office (ISO). The results of these tests can be used, not only by the fire department, but also by the water department and city engineering services to identify deficient areas of town.

Due to different main sizes and ages, water flow will differ from hydrant to hydrant. The knowledge gained from this project will be primarily used by the fire department to determine which hydrants are best to be used in fire suppression activities. The other main use of the data from this project will be by the City Engineering Department and Water Department to identify areas of town that might need additional water supply. One other reason for this project is the upcoming Insurance Service Office (ISO) inspection. As you know, ISO rates cities based upon the fire department and water services. This rating is the basis for property fire insurance premiums in the city. ISO representatives prefer having documentation on hydrant ratings. They require information about the number of hydrants, type of hydrants, and types of mains connected to hydrants. The results of this project will provide all that information.

To meet these goals, I was hired in a temporary capacity to develop a system and start testing and coding the city's hydrants. This document explains in detail the system developed and implemented. By doing flow tests and hydraulic calculations, each hydrant in the city now has extensive data on it. This data includes location, hydraulic information, hydrant information, main information, etc.

No matter the value of this project, the value of an ongoing project is great. NFPA recommends hydrants should be tested and rated every year. This task is immense when every hydrant is to be tested, but a few hydrants per week is not difficult nor very time consuming, whether water department crew does some testing while flushing hydrants or fire department personnel does some testing after fires, etc. The ongoing testing will provide continuous knowledge of the city's water supply performance.

This document provides, in a how-to format, information on how hydrant flow tests are to be done and were done for this project.

#### <span id="page-3-0"></span>3.1 Introduction and Objectives

"Fire flow tests are conducted on water distribution systems to determine the [amount of water] available at various locations for fire-fighting purposes. Additional benefit is derived from fire flow tests by the indication of possible deficiencies which could be corrected to ensure adequate fire flows as needed." (NFPA291 4) Using even the most sophisticated computer programs, a mathematical test would be tedious and yield only approximations. Actual internal pipe conditions, effective diameters, and partially or completely closed valves or other obstructions can only be estimated to be entered into the computer, therefore the computer results are only as good as the estimates. Due to these various reasons, going out and getting wet while actually flow testing hydrants is best.

Once one or more hydrants are tested, there must be a way to quickly determine the approximate flow from them in the field. Fire Department personnel responding to or arriving at a fire scene must be able to quickly and easily select the *best* hydrant(s) for connection to a fire engine to be used in fire suppression activities. Selection of the best hydrant includes several factors. Two of the most important factors are location and water flow. In the past, people knowledgeable with the city's water main distribution system estimated water flow. It was a rough estimate that amounted to the bigger the main, the more water. With some sort of code or system, actual tested water flows can be easily known on a fire scene.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends a color code system as described in the document: NFPA 291 - Recommended Practice for Fire Flow Testing and Marking of Hydrants. Water flow (the amount of water flowing per time unit) is measured in gallons per minute (gpm) and NFPA's color-code assigns four colors depending upon a hydrant's gpm. The Insurance Services Office (ISO) recognizes this code and also recommends it.

This project is aimed at testing all hydrants in Bolivar and painting them according to NFPA's system. This document explains the project and can be used as a guide for future tests with supervision of a city engineer, water department personnel, or a fire protection engineer.

Therefore this document is formatted in a how-to fashion. The project followed these guidelines to accomplish its goals.

#### 3.2 Project Description

Before starting any task, tools must be identified and assembled for use. Some basic equipment needed for hydrant testing include: a pitot tube, tapped hydrant cap with gauge, small ruler accurate to 1/16<sup>th</sup> of an inch, hydrant and spanner wrenches, elbow fitting, smoothbore nozzle or playpipe, water line map, and a convenient form to record test data. A piezo tube diffuser may be



substituted for the pitot tube, elbow, and nozzle.

A Pitot tube is an instrument that, when inserted into a stream of water, will display the velocity pressure of that stream. There are various types of pitot tubes but most (including Bolivar's) have air chambers extending past the gauge to form a handle. This air chamber serves as a shock absorber and will reduce needle vibration on the gauge.

The tapped cap and gauge is used to gather the other two data items: static and residual pressure.

The ruler is needed to measure the actual diameter of the outlet orifice to be used together with the velocity pressure gained from the pitot tube to yield flow. Hydrant and spanner wrenches are obviously needed to open and close the hydrant and loosen and tighten caps and fittings.

The elbow fitting is used to direct the stream of water in the direction that will cause the least damage or disruption.

The smoothbore nozzle or playpipe is attached to the elbow fitting to yield a more accurate reading from the pitot tube.

A water line map is essential to determine main sizes, main conditions, main types, and probable direction of water travel. Finally, a of form needs to be used to record all the data gained in the field for interpretation and later use.

A piezo tube diffuser may be obtained from many water system and fire department equipment retailers. The diffuser does just that - it diffuses the stream of water to reduce damage a straight stream might cause. There is no formula for pitot readings in a diffuse stream, so the diffuser has a built-in piezo tube before the stream becomes diffuse which acts to give the pitot reading. During this project, Bolivar's Director of City Services and City Engineering, Milton Dickensheet, volunteered and allowed me use his diffuser manufactured by The Joseph G. Pollard Co., Inc.

After gathering all needed equipment, the selection of hydrants to be tested and flowed needs to be done. First, determine the hydrant to be tested. This is the test hydrant and all data accumulated will be relevant to this location at this time. To make results relevant at other nearby locations, additional friction loss



Bolivar's tapped cap and gauge.



Bolivar's hydrant and a spanner wrench.







and elevation calculations must be made. For those calculation formulas see the Hydraulic Calculation

Formulas Appendix on page 19. Record which hydrant you are testing and the hydrant's condition (if it is accessible, if it is leaking, etc.).

Before operating a fire hydrant, a few hazards must be identified. There are relatively few dangers when conducting flow *tests.* There are, of course, the horror stories about hydrant stems rocketing up and out of the top of a hydrant. While the possibility of this is remote, it is wise not to position your head or torso above the hydrant while operating it. It is also wise to make sure caps not removed are tight as to lessen the chance of them blowing off. Keep in mind that a two and a half-inch stream has considerable force and can knock people off their feet and even cause damage to automobiles. As with most safety ideas, they are just common sense, like testing in freezing weather should be avoided to prevent ice from forming on streets and sidewalks. Actively think with safety in mind while in the field (or anywhere for that matter).

Sometimes mains and hydrants have not been flushed for years. This allows corrosion and particulate matter to accumulate in the mains. Do not be surprised to see brown, red, black, or gray water when first opening a hydrant. Recently laid water mains often have quite a few rocks in them due to the fact that contractors rarely flush lines before attaching them to the city's system. Even small rocks can cause quite a bit of damage to instruments and fire pumps. Therefore, every hydrant should be flushed before attaching any instrument to minimize damage. Prior to opening the hydrant, one should evaluate the site and make note of which direction would be best to flow water for a few minutes to clean out the debris in the mains. Once a suitable direction is determined, remove one cap and attach any needed fittings to direct the stream, then open the hydrant enough to flush out any foul water or debris. Keep in mind that once a hydrant is opened, it may stir up rust, settled dirt, etc. in the mains for hundreds of feet. Before finishing testing in an area, the mains need to be



Recording form used for this project.



Bolivar's Diffuser.



(IFSTA)



flushed for about 15 minutes to allow all suspended particulates to be removed.

After flushing, the hydrant can then be closed and the tapped cap with gauge can be attached to it for testing. Open the hydrant fully while counting the turns it took to open it. If the hydrant is operating correctly, it should take the same number of turns to close the hydrant. There should be no water flowing with the hydrant on, so the reading on the gauge will be the *static pressure*. Record this pressure.

Next, a downstream hydrant must be selected to be flowed. It is called the *now* hydrant and it must be downstream from the *test hydrant* to ensure the results are truly valid at the *test hydrant*. This is where use of a water line map is essential. Consult it now. On a dead-end line, determining the downstream hydrant is easy; just follow the line away from the source main.

Gridded systems complicate matters tremendously. Most cities (including Bolivar) use gridded systems as much as possible to increase water flow and dependability. The trick to finding a downstream hydrant on a gridded system is to consider the flow as coming from the side supplied by the larger mains. In reality, 70%-100% of the water is coming from the larger line. If both mains are the same size, either or both hydrants may be used without significantly affecting the results.

After determining the flow hydrant, again look around and flush the hydrant. After cleaning the hydrant of debris, one needs to take another look around taking note of traffic ways, sidewalks, areas where people are or could be, and even flower beds or fragile lawns in residential

areas. During the test there is the possibility that thousands of gallons per minute will be flowing onto the ground or into the air. A 2.5" elbow fitting will allow directing the stream away from areas where that volume of water would be damaging or dangerous. Redirecting the stream is important where drainage,





erosion, or traffic conditions pose a problem. The problem with using this elbow is the basic equation used to transform pitot pressures into gallons per minute requires the use of a specific mathematical coefficient depending on the outlet. There is no factor for an elbow. Therefore, in conjunction with an elbow, a straight stream nozzle must be used. As in this project's case, a diffuser **Hydrants** with elbows to redirect stream. can be used in lieu of the elbow and nozzle.



Before opening the hydrant, two pieces of data must be obtained: The coefficient of discharge and the exact orifice diameter. The coefficient of discharge is a number used to adjust the formula for different types of orifices. Consult the table on page 21 in the appendix for typical coefficients of discharge. If you are using the elbow and nozzle, the coefficient must be used for the nozzle. Some nozzles have documentation on their coefficients or the manufacturer should be contacted for that information. The Typical Coefficients of

Discharge Appendix is available on page **Hydrant With diffuser.** Hydrant with diffuser. 21 if manufacture's data is unobtainable. If no elbow is used, the coefficient of the hydrant must be determined. Fire hydrants come in three basic designs. Most modern designs include shoulders (where the hydrant nozzle or outlet connects to the barrel) are rounded. This coefficient is 0.9. If the shoulders are







squared off, the coefficient is 0.8. In some rare cases, the shoulders actually protrude into the hydrant barrel. This coefficient is 0.7. **No** sophisticated technique exists to determine the type of shoulders in a hydrant. Simply stick your fingers into the hydrant and feel the shoulder to determine its structure, then apply the appropriate coefficient.

The exact diameter of the orifice is vital. It needs to be measured to the nearest sixteenth of an inch. This is important because an error of one-sixteenth of an inch can result in more than a five percent error in calculated results. Use your ruler to measure either the hydrant opening diameter (which can vary from 2.35" to 2.5") or the nozzle diameter. Note: The formula used to convert the pitot reading into gallons per

minute assumes a solid stream is measured. There is no practical way to calculate a stream with voids or irregular shape. The five inch steamer outlet does not produce a solid stream, it has voids in it, so it should not be used for pitot readings.

Once the hydrant is opened and water is either flowing directly out of the hydrant or through an elbow and nozzle, it is time to use the pitot tube. This is used to measure the velocity pressure (or pitot pressure) of the flowing stream. This pressure will later be converted to gallons per minute. The proper procedure for using a pitot tube is as follows: Hold the opening of the blade of the pitot tube in the center of the stream ½ the diameter of the nozzle opening away from the opening. This is the point where stream size is smallest and stream velocity is greatest. Hold the tube so the air chamber is slightly elevated and be sure to drain all the water before use.



Diagram of correct pitot use. (IFSTA)



From an accuracy standpoint, pitot readings of less than 10 psi

and more than 30 psi should be avoided, if possible. When the flow from a hydrant is so poor that no pressure registers on the pitot tube gauge, reduction of the diameter of the outlet with a nozzle can increase the stream velocity enough to provide a pressure reading. When the flow is so great as to leave the accurate range of the gauge, additional hydrants may be opened.

While the pitot reading is being taken at the *flow hydrant*, the pressure at the *test hydrant* must also be recorded. This is the *residual pressure*, because it represents the pressure remaining in the system while water is flowing. "It should be noted that the use of *residual pressures* of less than 20 psi is not permitted by many state hearth departments." (NFPA 291 4) The Department of Natural Resources **(DNR)**  has the same requirement. This is due, in part, to the dangers involved with a residual pressure less than 20 psi. Once a fire engine starts pulling water from an area with deficient *residual pressures*, it decreases that pressure even further which could result in the collapse of the mains or other water system components or back-siphonage of polluted water from some other source such as leaking underground sewer lines. There is a balancing act between this 20 psi minimum and the following recommendation.

More accurate results are obtained if a significant pressure drop from static can be achieved. Sometimes this requires more than one *flow hydrant*. A 25% or 15 psi drop from static to *residual* pressures is recommended. There is no standard value, but larger pressure drops give better results. Pressure drops of this magnitude minimizes the impact of gauge inaccuracy and human error. It would be difficult to defend the significance of a three psi drop where gauge error might be two psi and sight accuracy only plus or minus one psi. To achieve this pressure drop, multiple hydrants may need to be opened. If more than one hydrant is opened, they must all be opened simultaneously and the flows from each outlet measured at the same time and added together for the total flow. The *residual pressure* must

also be recorded while all hydrants are flowing. During this project, due to engineering considerations, only one hydrant was flowed irregardless of the pressure drop.

Remember to close each hydrant slowly to reduce the chance of damaging equipment or lines by causing a water hammer. Also, after closing a hydrant, the water should drain from drain holes under the ground to prevent it from freezing in the hydrant. To check the hydrant to verify it is draining properly, simply cover the opening(s) with your hand(s). You should be able to feel a slight suction or hear air escaping into the hydrant when you pull your hand(s) away.

Now we have three pieces of information: static pressure, residual pressure, and velocity pressure. "To have any real meaning, a *flow test* must result in these three pieces of information." (Brock 125)

The *static* and *residual pressures* are in formats readily usable, but the velocity pressure must be used in a calculation to determine gpm. The formula is:

 $Q = (29.83) (C_d) (D^2) (\sqrt{P})$  $Q = flow(qpm)$  $C_d$  = coefficient of discharge  $D =$  orifice diameter (in) P = velocity pressure (psi)



Diagram of the three data points determined in the field. (IFSTA)

For example: If the diffuser with an exact orifice diameter of 2.5" was used on a hydrant with rounded shoulders and produced a *velocity pressure* of 30 psi, the following would be done to get gpm:

 $C_d = 0.9$  $D = 2.5$  $P = 30$  $Q = (29.83) (0.9) (2.5^2) (\sqrt{30})$  $Q = (29.83) (0.9) (6.25) (5.5...)$  $Q = 919$  gpm actual flow

This is the actual flow at the *residual pressure* read at the *test hydrant*. For consistency reasons, NFPA wants the hydrant flow rated at 20 psi residual pressure if the static pressure is greater than 40 psi. If the static pressure is less than 40 psi, NFPA wants the hydrant flow rated at a residual pressure that is

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equal to one half of the static pressure. It might be possible to attain the desired residual pressure in some situations by controlling the flow or opening other hydrants, but it can be prohibitive due to time and manpower required. Therefore, a formula is used to convert the actual flow to the rated flow. That formula and an example is below:

 $Q_2 = (Q_1)$  ( $|P_S - P_{R2}^{0.54}|/|P_S - P_{R1}^{0.54}|$ )

 $Q<sub>2</sub>$  = flow predicted at desired *residual pressure* (gpm)  $Q_1$  = total flow measured during test (gpm)  $P_s$  = *static pressure* measured during test (psi)  $P_{R2}$  = desired *residual pressure* (psi)  $P_{R1}$  = *residual pressure* measured during test (psi)

The same hydrant tested in the last example that yielded 919 gpm did so at 44 psi residual pressure from 52 psi static pressure.

 $Q_1 = 919$  $P_s = 52$  $P_{R2} = 20$  $P_{R1} = 44$  $Q_2 = (919) ((52-20)^{0.54} / (52-44)^{0.54})$  $Q_2 = (919) (32^{0.54} / 8^{0.54})$  $Q_2 = (919)(6.5... / 3.1...)$  $Q_2 = (919) (2.1...)$  $Q<sub>2</sub>$  = 1943 gpm rated flow

Now to discuss those difficult hydrants. Sometimes it is difficult or impossible to test a hydrant using the test/flow hydrant procedure. Some examples include a hydrant at the end of a dead end main (there is no downstream hydrant to flow from), or if you are working alone and do not want to leave a flowing hydrant alone while you go check the test hydrant's residual pressure due to traffic, children, etc.

On the topic of children, a quick note: As a fire department, public relations and public education are very important projects. Especially during warm days, children are drawn to flowing fire hydrants like magnets. From miles around, they see the arc of water in the air and come running, riding, skating, etc. During this project, I always made sure I had my stock of Hartford® plastic fire hats to distribute to the kids. As I handed out these hats, I answered *most* questions they asked and posed a few of my own. My questions include: "Who can tell me the phone number everyone should remember to dial if you need help from a fireman, policeman, or an ambulance?" Answer: 911. "Who knows what to do if your clothes catch on fire?" Answer: Stop, Drop, and Roll. Keep this in mind no matter what fire department project you are doing. Develop your own system to promote the department and educate the public on safety and fire issues.

The solution to those difficult hydrants is hydraulic calculations. In the case of a dead end hydrant, test the next-to-the-last-hydrant and use formulas to adjust the static and residual pressures to the *now*  hydrant. The actual flow is the same and can be directly transposed from the test hydrant to the flow hydrant. The only difference in static pressures is due to elevation changes. The formula for pressure change due to elevation is:

 $P_E = (0.433)$  (h)

 $P<sub>E</sub>$  = pressure change due to elevation (psi)  $h =$  difference in height (ft)

The difference in *residual pressures* is due to elevation and friction loss. The formula for pressure loss due to friction is called the Hazen-Williams formula.

 $P_f = [(4.52) (Q^{1.85}) (L)] / [(C^{1.85}) (d^{4.87})]$ 

 $P_1$  = pressure loss due to friction (psi)

 $Q = flow(gpm)$ 

 $L =$  length of pipe (ft)

C = pipe C-factor

d = pipe diameter (in)

An example of a hydrant needing hydraulic calculation is the one at the end of this dead end main:



Let's say you flowed that dead end hydrant while testing the other one upstream. These were your results:



To transfer these numbers to the last hydrant, let's use those fun formulas. The dead end hydrant is five feet lower and 350 feet away down a six-inch plastic line. Static pressure is first. The only change to it is due to elevation.

 $P_E = (0.433)$  (h)  $h=5$  $P<sub>E</sub> = (0.433) (5)$  ${}^{\circ}$  P<sub>F</sub> = 2.2... psi gained from gravity

The new static pressure is now 54 psi. Next is residual pressure. Add the same pressure due to elevation and subtract pressure loss due to friction loss. Our friends Hazen and Williams helps us with friction loss.

 $P_f = [(4.52) (Q^{1.85}) (L)] / [(C^{1.85}) (d^{4.87})]$  $Q = 919$  $L = 350$  $C = 150$  $d = 6.09$ 

The C-values for pipes can be found in the appendix on page 19 as can the actual diameters of various pipes. A quick look at the formula will tell you how important the diameter is. It will be raised to a power of 4.87. So nominal diameters will reduce the accuracy of the formula by a great deal.

 $P_f = [(4.52) (919^{1.85}) (350)] / [(150^{1.85}) (6.09^{4.87})]$  $P_f = [(4.52) (303482.5...) (350)] / [(10611.3...) (6623.5...)]$  $P_f = [480109362.6...] / [70283769.3...]$  $P<sub>f</sub> = 6.8...$  psi lost to friction

After adding 2.2 psi from gravity and subtracting 6.8 psi from friction loss, our original 44 psi residual pressure is now 39 psi. Your results for that difficult hydrant are now:



Now, all the hydrants can be grouped and painted according to NFPA's code. "Hydrants should be classified in accordance with their rated capacities (at 20 psi *residual pressure* or other designated value) as follows: All barrels are to be chrome yellow except in cases where another color has already been adopted [in Bolivar's case: red]. The tops and nozzle caps should be painted with the following capacity

indicating color scheme to provide simplicity and consistency ... It is recommended that the capacity colors be of a reflective-type paint." (NFPA 291 11)

During and after all the testing and painting occurs, there must be some form of record-keeping. Throughout this project, two forms of record-keeping were created and maintained. The first was an Excel® spreadsheet containing information on hydrant

location, hydrant type, static, residual, and velocity pressure, coefficient of discharge used, orifice diameter used, output from that data which included actual flows, rated flows, and hydrant color, main information such as size, type, gridded or dead ended, the date and time of the test, and other notes such as the condition of the hydrant or deficiencies. Examples of hydrant painting recommendation. (Cote 6-

Most of the spreadsheet information is self-







explanatory. The location information was created with the North/South (n/s) address and the East/West (e/w) address. This gave a location such as 1350 S Lakewood Court and 1339 W Lakewood Drive. The 1350 in the n/s address indicates the hydrant is on the East side of Lakewood Court because it is an even number. The 1339 in the e/w address indicates the hydrant is on the North side of Lakewood Drive because it is an odd number. Therefore the hydrant is on the North-East corner of Lakewood Court and Lakewood Drive.

The date and time of the test is very important. If future tests do not yield the same data, the old data may not be invalid if the two tests occurred on different days of the week or time of day. This is due to the fact that city water consumption varies from day to day and hour to hour. For example, a test in a residential area at seven in the morning might yield less flow than one at ten in the morning due to a large number of residents taking showers, cooking, etc. The same goes for all areas of town.

The notes column of the spreadsheet is another important one. All notes from "hydrant does not drain" to "hydrant in front of easily angered resident - do not flow while he/she is home" are important for future reference.

The second form of record-keeping was a city map created in AutoCAD®, indicating hydrant locations. As the hydrants were tested, the color code was indicated on the map. Hopefully, this map may be used by fire department personnel in regards to hydrant selection. A quick consultation of this map should give a responder general information on call location, route to scene, and hydrant data.

## <span id="page-14-0"></span>3.3 Conclusion

The goals of this project were to systematically test Bolivar's fire hydrants and paint them according to a color code developed by the National Fire Protection Association **(NFPA)** and recommended by the Insurance Services Office (ISO). The results of these tests can be used, not only by the fire department, but also by the water department to identify deficient areas of town.

The knowledge gained from this project will be primarily used by the fire department to determine which hydrants are best to be used in fire suppression activities. The other main use of the data from this project will be by the City Engineering Department and Water Department to identify areas of town that might need additional water supply. One other reason for this project was the upcoming ISO inspection. ISO representatives prefer having documentation on hydrant ratings. They require information about the number of hydrants, type of hydrants, and types of mains connected to hydrants. The results of this project will provide all that information.

This document explains in detail the system developed and implemented. By doing flow tests and hydraulic calculations, each hydrant in the city now has extensive data on it.

No matter the value of this project, the value of an ongoing project is great. NFPA recommends hydrants should be tested and rated every year. This task is immense when every hydrant is to be tested, but a few hydrants per week is not difficult or very time consuming, whether water department crew does some testing while flushing hydrants or fire department personnel does some testing after fires, etc. The ongoing testing will provide continuous knowledge of the city's water supply performance.

## <span id="page-15-0"></span>4.1 "Quick" Guide to Hydrant Testing

- 1. Gather equipment.
- 2. Select test and flow hydrants. 2a. Record *test hydrant's* location, hydrant type, main size, main type, and main connect.
- 3. Determine best direction to flow test hydrant to remove debris.
	- 3a. Open test hydrant while counting turns.
	- 3b. Close test hydrant slowly. Hydrant should turn the same number of times to close.
	- 3c. Place hand over opening to determine draining ability.
	- 3d. Record any problems with test hydrant or location.
- 4. Attach tapped cap to test hydrant.
	- 4a. Open test hydrant.
	- 4b. Measure and Record static pressure.
- 5. Determine best direction to flow *flow hydrant* to remove debris.
	- 5a. Open flow hydrant while counting turns.
	- 5b. Close flow hydrant slowly. Hydrant should turn the same number of times to close.
	- 5c. Place hand over opening to determine draining ability.
	- 6c. Record any problems with flow hydrant or location.
- 6. Determine best direction to allow flow hydrant to flow for 15 minutes.
	- 6a. Attach any fittings or devices (i.e. diffuser).
	- 6b. Measure and record orifice diameter.
	- 6c. Determine and record coefficient of discharge.
	- 6d. Open flow hydrant.
	- 6e. Measure and record velocity pressure.
- 7. Measure and record residual pressure from test hydrant.
	- 7a. Close test hydrant slowly.
	- 7b. Remove all fittings and put test hydrant back into service.
- 8. After 15 minutes of flowing flow hydrant to remove anything stirred up in the mains, close flow hydrant slowly.

8a. Remove all fittings and put flow hydrant back into service.

- 9. Use pitot pressure to flow formula,  $Q = (29.83) (C_d) (D^2) (\sqrt{P})$ , to determine flow. 9a. Record actual flow.
- 10. Use flow converter to desired residual formula,  $Q_2 = (Q_1)$  ( $P_S$  - $P_{R2}^{0.54}$ ) /  $|P_S-P_{R1}^{0.54}|$ ), to determine rated flow.

10a. Record rated flow.

- 11. Determine color code from rated flow.
	- 11a. Paint test hydrant.
	- 11b. Record test hydrant color in spreadsheet and on map.

## <span id="page-16-0"></span>4.2 Glossary

- Complex Loop "A piping system that is sometimes called a 'grid' and is characterized by one or more of the following: more than one inflow point, more than one outflow point, and/or more than two paths between inflow and outflow points." (Brock xi)
- **DNR**  "[The Department of Natural Resources] preserves and protects the State's natural, cultural, and energy resources and inspires their enjoyment and responsible use for present and future generations." (www.dnr.state.mo.us)

Flow Hydrant - ''The hydrant from which the water is discharged during a hydrant *now test"* (Brock xi)

- **Flow Test**  "Tests conducted to establish the capabilities of water supply systems and referred to as *now tests* because they involve flowing fire hydrants. The objective of a *now test* is to establish quantity (gallons per minute) and pressures available at a specific location on a particular water supply system." (Brock xi)
- FPE "Fire Protection Engineering is the application of science and engineering principles to protect people and their environment from destructive fire." (www.stpe.org)

gpm - Gallons per Minute.

Gridded Piping System - see complex loop.

- Hazen-Williams Formula "An empirical formula for calculating friction loss in water systems that is the fire protection industry standard. To comply with most nationally recognized standards, the Hazen-Williams formula must be used." (Brock xii)
- Hydraulics "The branch of fluid mechanics dealing with the mechanical properties of liquids (in this text, water) and the application of these properties in engineering." (Brock xii)
- **IFSTA**  "[The International Fire Service Training Association is a] nonprofit educational association of fire fighting personnel who are dedicated to upgrading fire fighting techniques and safety through training." (www.ifsta.org)
- **ISO**  "[The Insurance Services Office, Inc. is the] leading supplier of statistical, actuarial, and underwriting information." (www.iso.com)
- **NFPA**  "[ The National Fire Protection Association] reduces the burden of fire on the quality of life by advocating scientifically based consensus codes and standards, research, and education for fire and related safety issues." (www.nfpa.org)
- Pitot Tube "Common device used to measure *velocity pressure* and thus fluid velocity. The pitot tube consists of a small diameter tube, usually about one-sixteenth inch in internal diameter which is connected to a pressure gauge." (Brock xii)

Pressure - Force per unit area.

psi - "In fire protection, pressure is most often dealt with in units of pounds per square inch (psi)." (Brock **xii)** 

- Residual Pressure "The pressure that exists in the distribution system, measured at the residual hydrant at the time the flow readings are taken at the flow hydrants." (NFPA 291 4) "The pressure at the test hydrant while water is flowing. It represents the pressure remaining in the system while the test water is flowing." (Brock **xiii)**
- Simple Loop "A loop in which there is exactly one inflow point and one outflow point, and exactly two paths between the inflow and outflow points." (Brock **xiii)**
- Static Pressure "The pressure that exists at a given point under normal distribution system conditions measured at the residual hydrant with no hydrants flowing." (NFPA 291 4) "The normal pressure existing on a system before the flow hydrant is opened." (Brock xiii)
- Water Hammer "Stopping any flowing stream too rapidly can cause a phenomenon called water hammer. [A] water hammer is a violent increase in pressure which can be large enough to rupture the piping." (Brock **xiii)**

## <span id="page-18-0"></span>4.3 Hydraulic Calculation Formulas

Pitot pressure to flow  $Q = (29.83) (C_d) (D^2) (\sqrt{P})$  $Q = flow (gpm)$  $C_d$  = coefficient of discharge  $D =$  orifice diameter (in) P = velocity pressure (psi)

Flow converter to desired residual  $Q_2 = (Q_1)$  ( $|P_S - P_{R2}^{0.54}|/|P_S - P_{R1}^{0.54}|$ )  $Q<sub>2</sub>$  = flow predicted at desired *residual pressure* (gpm)  $Q_1$  = total flow measured during test (gpm)  $P_s$  = static pressure measured during test (psi)  $P_{R2}$  = desired *residual pressure* (psi)\*  $P_{R1}$  = *residual pressure* measured during test (psi) \*note: If P<sub>s</sub> is greater than 40 psi, then P<sub>R2</sub> = 20 psi. If P<sub>s</sub> is less than 40 psi, then P<sub>R2</sub> = P<sub>s</sub>/2.

Pressure change due to elevation

 $P_E = (0.433)$  (h)

 $P<sub>E</sub>$  = pressure change due to elevation (psi)

 $h =$  difference in height (ft)

Hazen-Williams (pressure loss due to friction)  $P_f = [(4.52) (Q^{1.85}) (L)] / [(C^{1.85}) (d^{4.87})]$  $P_f$  = pressure loss due to friction (psi)  $Q = flow (gpm)$  $L =$  length of pipe (ft) C = pipe C-factor  $d = pipe$  diameter (in)

## Common C-factors

Cast Iron= 100 to 140 depending on age and lining (140 new, 100 old)

Plastic = 150

Galvanized= 120 to 140 depending on age

## $Asbestos = 140$

Ductile Iron  $= 100$  to 140 depending on age and lining

## Actual Internal Pipe Diameters



## <span id="page-20-0"></span>4.4 Typical Coefficients of Discharge



(Brock 126)



(Brock 70)

## <span id="page-21-0"></span>4.5 ISO Public Protection Survey Information

The following is a copy of a publication by ISO to help prepare cities for an inspection:

Insurance Services Office, Inc. Public Protection Survey Information

The following information will be needed when our representative arrives:

## **General**

1. A Current scaled map of the city/district showing current city/district limits and streets.

## Fire Department

- 2. Current equipment inventories for all fire suppression apparatus in service and in reserve. Copies of our form, APPARATUS AND EQUIPMENT (one for each unit), are enclosed for your convenience.
- 3. A record of the date, time of day and the number of off-shift, call and volunteer members that responded to each structural alarm within the city/district in the last year.
- 4. The total number of structural alarms of fire and the total number of all fire related incidents for each of the last 3 years. If response is made to first alarms outside the city/district please indicate the number of responses outside the city/district, and what jurisdictions are involved.
- 5. Have the last three years aerial ladder, or elevated platform, and pumper service and hose tests records for each apparatus available for our review.

## Water Department

- 6. A scaled map of all water systems indicating fire hydrants, main sizes, valves, pressure zone boundaries, and supply and storage facilities (pumps, reservoirs, tanks, etc.). A single combined map showing the city limits and the water systems is preferable; however, any available maps will be appreciated.
- 7. Rated and actual capacities of wells, pumps, boosters, etc. ; that supply the waterworks system.
- 8. The total water consumption for each of the systems for the last 12 months, and maximum daily consumption that has occurred in the last 3 years. If there are different pressure zones within the system, the consumption data will be needed for each zone. Reasons for abnormally high consumption should be explained. This may be due to a main break, tank refilling after cleaning, filling a swimming pool, or other infrequent cause. If wells and pumps are not metered, please prepare the latest accurate estimate of consumption.
- 9. The total number of hydrants in service. This should include the number of hydrants that have a 6 inch branch connection with the number of these with a pumper outlet (with or without hose outlets), the number with 2 or more hose outlets and no pumper outlet, and the number with only a single hose outlet. Also, the number of hydrants with a 4-inch branch connection with a similar breakdown by outlets.

If there are any questions regarding the information requested above, please contact our office.

## <span id="page-23-0"></span>4.6 Bibliography



Brock, Pat D. Fire Protection Hydraulics and Water Supply Analysis. ©1990 Board of Regents, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK.



Cote, Arthur E., P.E. Fire Protection Handbook, Eighteenth Edition. ©1997 National Fire Protection Association, Quincy, MA.



Hall, Richard and Adams, Barbara. Essentials of Fire Fighting, Fourth Edition. ©1998 Board of Regents, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK.



International Fire Service Training Association. Firefighter I & II Presentations for the Fourth Edition of Essentials of Fire Fighting. ©1998 Board of Regents, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK.



National Fire Protection Association. NFPA 291 - Recommended Practice for Fire Flow Testing and Marking of Hydrants, 1995 Edition. ©1997 National Fire Protection Association, Quincy, MA.

Note: Pictures not referenced were taken by the author.

## <span id="page-24-0"></span>4. 7 Hydrant Data Gathered During Spring 1999 Project

See following pages in spreadsheet layout.

## City of Bolivar Spring 1999 Hydrant Testing Project Theron J Becker, FPE



residuals less than 42 20psi **9%** 











![](_page_27_Picture_432.jpeg)

![](_page_28_Picture_448.jpeg)

![](_page_29_Picture_321.jpeg)

![](_page_30_Picture_386.jpeg)

![](_page_31_Picture_581.jpeg)

updated 3/7/2006

![](_page_32_Picture_429.jpeg)

![](_page_33_Picture_375.jpeg)

![](_page_34_Picture_379.jpeg)

![](_page_35_Picture_432.jpeg)

![](_page_36_Picture_383.jpeg)

![](_page_37_Picture_409.jpeg)

![](_page_38_Picture_571.jpeg)

![](_page_39_Picture_442.jpeg)

![](_page_40_Picture_487.jpeg)

![](_page_41_Picture_426.jpeg)