

Alton Memorial Hospital ambulance donation pays off for Bethalto

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ALTON – Alton Memorial Hospital ambulances can still serve a community's needs even after they are removed from traditional ambulance service. Just ask the city of Bethalto.

With the Alton Memorial Health Services Foundation's annual Duck Pluckers Ball raising enough money to put a new ambulance into service each year, older ambulances are taken out of service. AMH donated one of those ambulances to Bethalto late in

2015. The city has just brought it online in its Public Works Department. The vehicle now houses a generator, 1,000 feet of cable and a robot that the sewer team uses to lower through manholes and run through miles of sewer pipes, helping to locate broken seams in pipes.

“We are very appreciative of the ambulance donation by Alton Memorial,” said Bethalto Mayor Alan Winslow. “Because of the space, layout and electrical system enhancements of ambulances, they are the perfect vehicle for the video inspection system that we are using to inspect our underground pipes. Having this mobile system available now allows our crews to inspect several hundred feet of pipe per day and to pinpoint the exact location of cracks, joint separations, collapses, and other faults in the network of pipes. “

Problems can now be fixed in a matter of hours instead of having to dig up ground and guess where problems are. It also saves in the cost of water treatment. When ground water leaks in, it is mixed with the sewer water sent to sewer plants. Keeping the ground water out of the pipes is estimated to save Bethalto a considerable amount of money in water treatment costs.

“Having this capability now relieves us of guesswork and lots of digging,” Winslow said. “This system is a considerable asset to the Village that will provide a very positive impact on the quality of life of our residents. Using this system to identify ground water infiltration of the sanitary sewers will help us to make necessary repairs to stop sewer backups and to reduce the amount of wastewater that we pay to have treated.

“We fully expect that by the time we have repaired the entire system, our monthly treatment expense of approximately \$35,000 will be reduced by 40 percent to 60 percent. The donation of the ambulance has saved us a considerable amount of upfront costs on the system and allowed us to put the system in use in a timely manner.”