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Multi-disciplined engineering firm doesn't stray from wastewater management roots

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"Sewage is us. We live it and breathe it," says Tim Verner, vice president and head of wastewater projects for Memphis-based **Fisher & Arnold**.

The exponential growth of many municipalities surrounding Memphis and Shelby County into Mississippi and Arkansas is putting the firm's expertise to good use.

Wastewater projects currently make up about 5%-10% of Fisher & Arnold's business, says Jeff Fisher, president of the company.

As municipalities grow they like to remain ahead of the curve, making sure their wastewater facilities can accommodate current and future demand, Verner says.

Fisher & Arnold has worked on wastewater projects in almost every municipality surrounding Memphis, including Collierville, Arlington and Martin, Tenn.; West Memphis and Sherwood in Arkansas; and Oxford, Arnold says.

Much of the work comes from long-standing relationships that the firm has with municipalities as city engineer consultants.

"We have established a long lasting and good working relationship with many of the surrounding municipalities," Verner says.

While relationships may help get their foot in the door, the company's expertise, ability to work well with regulatory agencies is what seals the deal.

"Their background, ratings as far as quality assurance and their pricing is why we chose them," says Ed Haley, town superintendent for the City of Arlington, which is building a \$9.4 million wastewater treatment plant.

Local knowledge of some of the municipality's existing wastewater facilities is also a plus. In the case of the Arlington project, Fisher & Arnold had helped the city upgrade its existing facilities in 1990 and performed a feasibility study that explored different options specific to the municipality's needs and constraints.

"The learning curve is reduced, and we can provide a more economical project for the city," Verner says.

Repeat business accounts for a lot of Fisher & Arnold's wastewater projects, but the firm also competes successfully when bidding for projects.

"If we weren't a good value, we would have long since shut the doors," Verner says. "You can't (succeed) by charging outlandish fees to clients."

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