

NEW ORLEANS AND FORD METER BOX

A grateful relationship continues . . .

New Orleans is one of Ford Meter Box's oldest utility customers. The relationship between Ford Meter Box and New Orleans started in the early 1900s. An example of the strength of this partnership can be found in this excerpt from "The History of a Small Indiana Company: 100 Years of Ford Meter Box" written by Hank Leander and Pete Jones.

In 1921, while making a sales call at the municipal water utility in New Orleans (we don't know what took Edwin to New Orleans because none of the company's

products was suited to warm climate areas), Edwin listened while George G. Earl, Chief Engineer and General Superintendent of

the Sewage and Water Board, described the unsatisfactory meter settings used by his department. The settings were made under unique conditions because much of the city is below the level of the Mississippi River, and rainwater must be drained from the ground and pumped over the levees. Over the years, the soil settled and the open-bottom meter boxes then in use filled with mud and soon became populated by gophers, crayfish, and other "intruders." The settling soil meant the top of the box was often several inches above ground.

After hearing the complaints about the existing boxes, Ford spotted an empty drafting

table in the utility's design department and he quickly sketched his idea of an improved meter setting. The engineering staff liked what Ford showed them, and, back in Wabash, Edwin refined his ideas and turned out the prototype of the Crescent Box designed for frost-free settings. It was a box with threads on the castings so that an inner-casting turns or screws up and down within the outer-casting, making possible an adjustment to grade.

After making a working sample, Ford was soon back on the train to New Orleans, where it was approved. When he

returned to Wabash, he carried with him a trial order for one hundred of the new boxes.

Since that time, the Crescent Box, named for the city for

which it was designed, has

been the standard setting for New Orleans. John Ford commented that in the year he joined The Ford Meter Box Company, 1924, nearly half the company's sales were to the City of New Orleans. "In the twenties," John said, "if we had lost New Orleans, I'm not sure we would have made it."



The Ford Meter Box commitment to providing the water industry with solutions continues today. For innovation and assistance with your water works challenges, contact your local Ford distributor or The Ford Meter Box Company.

