

Forest privies changing to plastic variety

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by Chad Brooks

Officials from the Cook County Forest Preserve District are hoping that their latest venture will help flush out one of the park's major problems.

As of Friday all of the 228 wooden outhouses throughout the forest preserve district were starting to be replaced with new plastic portable toilets, or "comfort stations," as district officials refer to them.

"We are trying to make the forest preserve experience a better one," said Steve Mayberry, spokesman for the forest preserve district.

Mayberry said 40 of the outhouses were replaced Friday, with the rest to be replaced over the next three weeks.

Over the past several years, the biggest complaint about the forest preserves was the condition of the public restrooms, Mayberry said.

"They will no longer have to worry about that," Mayberry said.

Besides being new, the portable toilets also will have a tank that will be flushed out weekly instead of storing the waste underneath them, Mayberry said.

The forest preserve district signed a three-year, \$387,182 contract with Aurora's Service Sanitation to clean and maintain the toilets.

"We think this is a necessary step toward making people want to come back to the forest preserve," Mayberry said.

There are 68,000 acres in the Cook County Forest Preserve District.

The facilities include six nature and educational centers; nine bike trails; 200 miles of multi-use trails for hiking, horseback riding and cross-country skiing; hundreds of picnic groves; 30 fishing ponds and lakes; access to fishing and canoeing on rivers and streams; golf courses; swimming pools; model airplane flying fields; dog training areas; toboggan slides; and a cross-country ski center.

Visit www.fpdcc.com for more information on the Cook County Forest Preserve.