

## **SOFIYSKA VODA: WE INVEST IN THE WATER SERVICE QUALITY**

*INTERVIEW WITH VASIL TRENEV, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR*

***Mr. Trenev, a year has passed since the conclusion of the agreement to the concession contract between the Municipality of Sofia and Sofiyska Voda. What are the results?***

Benefits for the people and the city. We implement successfully the agreement with the Municipality of Sofia and we cooperate actively. In the framework of our commitment to finance projects identified by Sofia City Council, only a few days ago we started the construction of two outflow sewers and trunk sewers in Filip Kutev St. and Hizhite St., at the total amount of more than 1.8 M BGN. In 2018 we reconstructed the sewers in Graf Ignatiev St. and P. Slaveykov square.

***And for that reason the traffic was reorganized ...***

Yes, temporary inconvenience is in place for the traffic but this is inevitable – the WSS infrastructure is underground. And these are large-scale projects which truly improve the quality of the services especially in the areas with newly built residential buildings where no such facilities have been constructed but they are necessary. I believe that our customers understand that and appreciate it.

***How do you actually get feedback from customers and measure whether they are satisfied or not?***

The innovations are constant for us because we want to provide modern services at global and European level to our customers. The key is to make it convenient and easy for the customers, to be partners with them and not just a seller and a buyer. The provision of our newest services started a few weeks ago – we already offer different classes of water meters, we also provide an option for free of charge SMS notification not only for the planned water supply interruptions but also for the unplanned ones, etc. We extend our integrated information system Pegasus and we process the signals in real time. We established new modern and functional centers. If you also have ideas – share them with us, if they are good and we can realize them – we will act. I am strongly behind the maxim that the customers deserve only the best and our team works for that every day. It is no accident that we conduct every year a comprehensive survey among our customers. For 2018 there is a significant increase in the number of people satisfied with our services, and they are already 86% of all. The number of those drinking tap water has also increased. I appreciate their assessment and trust.

***It sounds good, but as a customer I know – the most important for me is the water quality. What do you do in this aspect?***

We never compromise on water quality. In addition to the fact that in Sofia we drink high-mountain Rila water, which we further treat, we also invest a lot in our laboratory testing complex, in constant control and monitoring. When we construct new WSS infrastructure, we select materials of higher quality in order to guarantee human health. Many of the things we do are related namely to the quality.

***The innovations are a fact, the WSS projects are visible, but there is also a new price of the water services. Are the costs of these investments covered by it?***

Perhaps not everybody is aware that the price of the service is determined through a formula set by EWRC, and it includes different components and volume of investments, which the operator should make. This requirement is not an end in itself, many investments in the WSS infrastructure are necessary, as part of this infrastructure was constructed several decades ago. If we look objectively at the situation, the price of the service in Sofia is among the average ones for the country, but at the same time we have the most large-scale investment program. For 2018 it was specially planned to the amount of more than 45 M BGN. We manage to achieve a very good balance in favor of the people and I am happy that our efforts yield results – in Sofia we drink water with quality among the highest in Europe, and our company is modern and innovative.