



This photo of the *Fairport Light and Water Department* was taken on West Avenue in front of Baylor's Electric Shop and J.D. Webb's Grocery Store. . Although there is no date on the photo, it probably was taken sometime in the 1920's. Left to right are William Gardner or Charlie Struble, Dewitt "Dip" Barnhart or "Happy" Ostryk, Levi "Shorty" Wilkins, Jimmy Caler, Charlie Sullivan or Kenneth Phillips, and George Caler.

The New York State legislature passed a law in 1875 that allowed villages to "furnish pure and wholesome water to the inhabitants thereof," and another law in 1894 that authorized villages to "furnish electric light or gas light" to residents. While there have been both public and private utility companies since the advent of electricity, rural and less populated areas often had to produce their own power or do without. The result was the creation of municipal utilities that are owned by the citizens of the communities they serve and are not profit-making entities. Hence, on March 12, 1901, the Fairport village board established the Fairport Municipal Commission. The original three members F.A. Defendorf, C.Clarence Moore, and H.H. Howell, borrowed \$28,000 to buy and install a small steam generator at the water plant on what was then known as John Street (today's Lift Bridge Lane) and construct a pole line to furnish power. This early plant was able to power twenty streetlights and forty homes daily, from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise. Matching the growth of the town and village, today the utility serves the majority of Perinton/Fairport's residents and businesses.

