

# WHAT'S ON TAP

THE KKW WATER DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

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## DELIVERING QUALITY AND SERVICE SINCE 1895

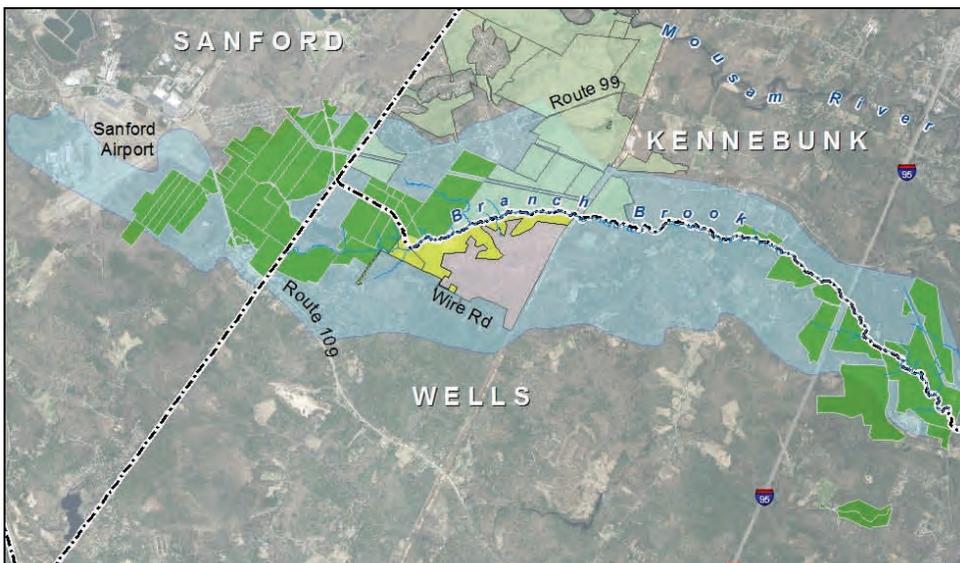
### PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE HIGHLIGHTS



**Norm Labbe, Superintendent - [nlabbe@kkw.org](mailto:nlabbe@kkw.org)** It's hard to believe another year has come and gone. Unlike the past few years, customer growth and overall water production appear to have returned to somewhat "normal" levels. More specifically, we added 170 new customers in 2012 (110 in 2011) and produced over 1 billion gallons of water (970 million in 2011) for our customers.

As a result, total revenues were slightly ahead of budget and expenses were slightly down (primarily due to a change in our employees' health insurance plan). A look at the longer term financial picture however points to the need for a moderate increase (not to exceed 7%) in water rates, with an effective target date of April 2013. Why a water rate increase? You may recall that our most recent increase (5%) was three years ago (April 2010) and since that time the Consumer Price Index (CPI) has increased by about 6.6%. Several significant expenditures since our last rate increase include over \$430,000 in watershed land purchases and over \$3 million in water system improvements, most of which were related to replacing older water mains in conjunction with Town or State road reconstruction projects and for developing a new groundwater supply.

This year (2013) will be no different, with over \$325,000 budgeted to be spent in Biddeford (The Pool & Fortunes Rocks), nearly \$500,000 in Kennebunk and an estimated \$120,000 in Kennebunkport; all of which are related to municipal road rebuilding and enhancement projects. *Continued on page 7.....*



Legend	
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<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #FFF9C4; border: 1px solid black;"></span> KKW Portion of Wells Barrens	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #ADD8E6; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Branch Brook Aquifer
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #C8E6C9; border: 1px solid black;"></span> KKW Property	

Recent land purchases within the Branch Brook Watershed over the past three years have increased the District's protective land holdings to approximately 2,100 acres. Protecting watershed lands from future growth and development is vital to maintaining a high quality drinking water source of supply.

### District Milestones



Utility Person Mike Buzulchuck recently celebrated his 40th anniversary with the District. Many thanks and congratulations!

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Our Mission is.....

**"To provide the highest quality drinking water and customer service at the lowest reasonable price"**



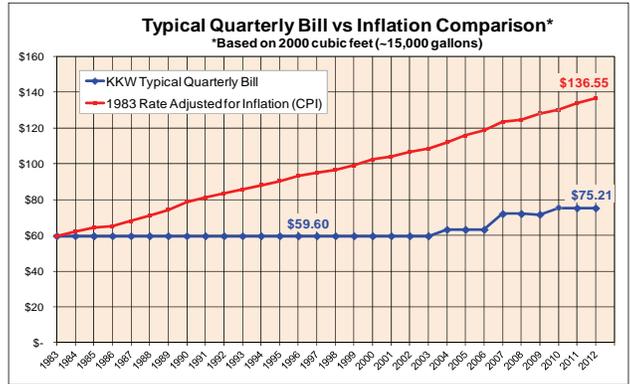
## WATER RATE INCREASE ON THE HORIZON FOR 2013

**Wayne Brockway, Treasurer - [wbrockway@kkw.org](mailto:wbrockway@kkw.org)**

As indicated in our Summer 2012 issue of *What's on Tap*, it will be necessary to have a rate increase in 2013. As of this writing, we have just prepared our annual operating budget for 2013.

A combination of all the known information along with our best approximation of what customer water demand (i.e. water sales) will be next year, we are projecting the need for a rate increase that will not exceed 7%. As we continue to "fine tune" the numbers, we will make every effort to keep the rate increase as low as possible.

As you know, since 2008 both the U.S. and worldwide economies have been faced with many perils, with our State and local area being no stranger to these difficulties. Over this same time period, the District has done its best to stabilize water rates by going three years between increases whenever possible. The last rate increase (2010) and the one planned for April 2013 have been or will be around the same percentage as the cumulative increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the immediately preceding three-year period. The increase in the CPI was 7.0% for 2007-09 compared to our last rate increase in 2010 of 5%. While the projected increase in the CPI for the years 2010-12 is about 6.6%, our current projected need is an increase that will not exceed 7%.



The above graph shows that water rates remained flat between 1983 and 2003. Since 1983, the quarterly cost for 2,000 cubic feet has only risen 26.2% while the rate of inflation (CPI) has increased a dramatic 229.1%.

Considering that many of our operating expenses are extremely difficult to control due to transportation, chemical, power and commodity costs largely driven by worldwide oil prices, we believe we have done a credible job in providing rate stability. For example, we have made tough choices such as switching to an innovative health insurance plan in 2012 which is saving us approximately \$100,000 each year. Although health insurance premiums are projected to increase by 7.5% in 2013, we are much better off than if we had not made the change in plans. *Continued on page 4.....*



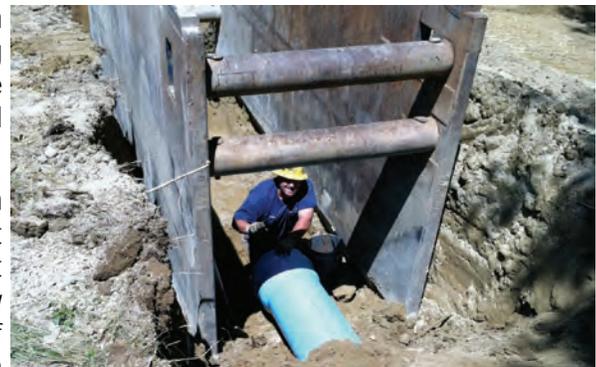
## BENEATH THE SURFACE - A PERSPECTIVE ON CONSTRUCTION COSTS

**Don Gobeil, Technical Services Director - [dgobeil@kkw.org](mailto:dgobeil@kkw.org)**

Regular readers of *Beneath the Surface* are accustomed to

reading stories about the District's recently completed construction season, or about a preview of coming attractions for the upcoming year. This edition doesn't stray too far off that model. After all, with a title like *'Beneath the Surface'* it's expected that the focus be on our buried infrastructure, in one form or the other.

Taking a high elevation view of 2013, our Capital Budget for water main replacements contains ten separate projects, with a combined estimated cost of \$1,051,000. Breaking it down a bit more, the ten projects total 11,450 feet of main replacements. If you divide the total estimated cost of \$1,051,000 by 11,450 (feet of pipe) you end up with a cost per foot (a common method of tracking pipeline construction costs) of \$91.79. In other words, based upon our 2013 budget, we are expecting to pay \$91.79 for every foot of pipe we install this year. Another way to look at this \$91.79 figure is by considering that the District's minimum quarterly charge for a 5/8" residential meter equals \$32.16, or \$128.64 a year. If all the revenue received from one customer using the minimum amount of water was devoted totally to our construction program, the customer would finance less than 1-1/2 feet of new water main.



District crew member Fred Smith prepares the bell end on 16" PVC pipe that was installed to connect the new Kennebunk River Well supply with the distribution system. The project was completed in late July (2012), followed by the installation of a temporary pump and portable chemical treatment trailer in order to use the new well. The well was operated for about three months, producing 51.1 million gallons of high quality groundwater for District customers.

This exercise is helpful in order to gain a proper perspective of just how expensive construction projects are in today's world. In spite of this, the District remains committed to devoting sufficient resources to our water main replacement and renewal program. Failure on our part to do so would be shortsighted and lead to the slow decay and ultimate failure of our infrastructure, resulting in more frequent emergency repairs and decreased overall system reliability. *Continued on page 6.....*





## WATER QUALITY FEEDBACK - CUSTOMERS HELP US FINE TUNE OPERATIONS

**Bill Snyder, Filtration Plant Manager - [bsnyder@kkw.org](mailto:bsnyder@kkw.org)** At KKW, we strive for impeccable water quality, but sometimes circumstances beyond our control will occur and we miss the mark. That's why we count on and appreciate customer calls to keep us aware of any changes in water quality. The District addresses a variety of water-related calls and hopefully this article will provide readers with useful insight on the causes of some common aesthetic (color, taste and odor) water quality issues.

Most customer calls to our Main Office or Filtration Plant can be quickly dealt with and easily answered due to our knowledge of local day to day activities. For example, colored water (light yellow to reddish brown) is usually caused by local fire hydrant use or by a fire sprinkler company testing a business's fire suppression system. Other issues such as pressure reduction usually relate to road construction, fire fighting, pipe replacement projects or water main breaks. Events like these can also cause water discoloration that is aesthetically displeasing.

Some questions have to be investigated by service personnel or Filtration Plant staff (at no cost). During a site visit, staff will listen to the owner explain the circumstances and may collect water samples and inspect the home's plumbing for possible causes. This direct interaction can generally resolve most issues. On occasion, we may need to make adjustments to our treatment process or operations. For example, our routine spring and fall water main flushing program purposely creates scouring velocities to remove sediment from the mains. A direct result of this is a temporary reduction in aesthetic water quality in the form of yellow to brown colored water. These issues are now being minimized by rearranging the flushing schedule and keeping local customers and businesses aware of our flushing crew's daily location. In addition to the above, water quality at the tap can also be affected by numerous other influences. The following list includes a few of the more common contributors and causes of aesthetic water quality issues that we come across:



Hot water tanks are notorious for accumulating sediment and minerals, like iron and calcium (left photo), which can lead to aesthetic water quality issues such as color, staining, taste and odor. Hot water tanks should be flushed (right photo) every 1 to 2 years to help control the buildup of such deposits. The removal of deposits allows your water heater to operate more efficiently and extend its useful life. Contact your local plumber for assistance.

1. Older distribution piping that is unlined, system dead ends with low demand and periods of seasonally high demand .
2. Minerals and sediment that accumulate in hot water storage tanks over time, enhanced by high water temperature.
3. Filters that remove minerals and will discolor over time with use. Keep to manufacturer's guidelines and replace accordingly.
4. New copper plumbing connected to a dissimilar metal (i.e. copper tubing or brass fittings connected to galvanized piping).
5. Newly installed PEX (cross-linked polyethylene) tubing - see the "*Did you know that*" inset located to the right on this page.
6. Electrical grounds attached to piping. Electrochemical reactions, cause iron, copper and possibly lead from solder and brass fittings to dissolve into the water and may accumulate as debris in faucet screens.
7. Certain laundry detergents or bleach can elevate pH and create stains. Also, watch for rusted screens inside washer hoses.

Occasionally, some issues are erroneously blamed on water quality, such as:

- ◆ Sink drains or traps containing debris that can generate unpleasant odors which may seem like they are coming from your faucet.
- ◆ Pink or grayish/black stains around drains or toilet bowls or around water surfaces are normally the result of an airborne non-toxic bacteria or fungi naturally occurring in soils or organic matter. These growths are harmless but may need strong chlorine type cleaners like Comet to eliminate them.

The most frequent question that always comes up is, is my water safe? Please rest assured that the water we produce meets all of the strict Federal EPA Safe Drinking Water Act criteria and is absolutely safe to drink. As always, please feel free to call me with any of your water quality questions or concerns at 985-2362.



### Did you know that.....

- ◆ Cross-linked polyethylene (PEX) plastic potable water pipe is quickly surpassing copper as the No. 1 pipe of choice for domestic plumbing in the United States.
- ◆ Among its many advantages, PEX piping costs 4-6 times less than copper, can be installed in long continuous runs (and bent around almost any corner) without fittings, resists corrosion, requires less labor to install, and is able to expand and contract without breaking are considered among the key attractions.
- ◆ Despite its many advantages, the California Building Standards Commission has certified the PEX Environmental Impact Report which cited the following health impact: Methyl tertiary-butyl ether (MTBE) can leach from PEX piping in amounts that exceed California taste, odor and health guidelines of 5 parts per billion (ppb) for taste and odor. The report further noted that new PEX piping can initially leach as much as 290 ppb of MTBE. The U.S. EPA has no MTBE standards.



## PROTECTING YOUR WALLET – THE CHILLING COST OF FROZEN PIPES

Paul Cote, Assistant Distribution Manager - [pcote@kkw.org](mailto:pcote@kkw.org)

As winter sets in, so do the freezing temperatures. It is important that your home's plumbing is prepared for the colder weather. Leaving your pipes unprotected increases the risk of having frozen pipes. Imagine waking up on a frosty, cold morning and having no hot water or no water at all for that matter – not exactly an ideal situation for anyone. If a pipe bursts, the cost can be much more than you ever expected.

Cleanup costs from water damage can run into many thousands of dollars, depending on the extent of the damage. If a pipe freezes and bursts while you are not home, there is a good chance you will have significant damage. Even if you are at home when a pipe bursts, the costs can be significant. In either case, the sooner you stop the flow of water, the better.

### Protect Your Water Pipes From Freezing

Many water meters and pipes susceptible to freezing are in basements, crawl spaces and other unheated areas where cold winter temperatures could cause them to freeze. Please remember that you, the customer, are responsible to protect the water meter and pipes within your property from freezing. If the water meter freezes and breaks because you failed to take steps to protect it, the Water District will replace the meter and bill you for the cost. If your service line or piping freezes or breaks, it is your responsibility to have repairs made. An experienced licensed plumber is your best bet to make the necessary repairs in a proper and timely manner.

### Here are some tips and suggestions to prevent freezing:

- ◆ Eliminate drafts in crawl spaces. Insulate pipes and the water meter if they are located in an unheated area.
- ◆ Repair broken and cracked windows and doors; tightly close exterior windows and doors.
- ◆ Be sure to keep fuel levels adequate; don't turn your heat down too low if there is a danger of a deep freeze.
- ◆ Check where your meter and pipes are installed, keeping in mind that it is colder near floors and foundation walls.
- ◆ If pipes or the meter are in a closed cabinet against an outside wall, insulate the wall and open the cabinet to allow warmer air to reach them.
- ◆ Disconnect outside water hoses. Water left in the hose can freeze and damage the pipe going into your house.
- ◆ If you are not going to be home for several days during cold weather, arrange to have someone visit periodically and turn on a faucet to ensure that the water is still flowing.

### If your service line, piping or meter freezes:

- ◆ Open a faucet near the freeze up to get water flowing and to release excess pressure.
- ◆ Direct a hair dryer or heat lamp at the frozen section of pipe.
- ◆ NEVER thaw frozen plumbing with an open flame. This is not only a fire hazard, but could also cause a steam explosion.
- ◆ If you are unable to thaw the frozen pipes, please contact the District further guidance.

**Did you know that.....**

◆ Frozen and broken water pipes rank No. 2 behind hurricanes in terms of both the number of homes damaged and the amount of claims cost in the U.S. In fact, the average claim is around \$10K with claims often exceeding \$50K (Insurance Information Network).

We hope you find these cold weather tips helpful in avoiding the inconvenience and expense of freeze-ups. As always, please don't hesitate to let us know (985-3385) if you have any questions.

## WATER RATES - CONT'D FROM PAGE 2

Additional factors influencing our need for a rate increase include several major maintenance projects such as the repainting of two water storage tanks (2013) and other similar projects that are on the horizon for subsequent years.

Another major influence on rates is the need to maintain the recommended water utility practice of replacing at least 1% (based on 100 year useful life) of our water mains on an annual basis to maintain water quality, system reliability and to minimize disruptions due to main breaks. Part of our capital budget comes from the excess income above expenses plus what's called depreciation expense. Simply stated, depreciation is the ability to recover a portion of our existing assets at their *original* cost versus what it costs to replace these assets. Our current financial structure provides the ability to finance about 60% of our capital needs. The remainder must come from new borrowing. While we always carefully consider new debt, the current interest rate climate makes long-term debt more attractive. We have improved our debt ratios dramatically since the 1980's and have achieved a balance whereby we have been able to retire old debt at a consistent pace.

As in the past, you will receive a notification letter once the final proposal has been submitted to the Maine Public Utilities Commission. In the meantime, feel free to call (985-3385) or email any questions you may have about our need for a rate increase.





## CUSTOMER CORNER - EASY BILL PAY OPTIONS CATCHING ON

**Kathleen Chapin, Customer Service Coordinator - [kchapin@kkw.org](mailto:kchapin@kkw.org)**

The exciting news to share from our Front Office is that many of you have taken advantage of our online payment options and that's a good thing! To date, over 300 customers have signed up for *paperless billing* which helps preserve our environment and save money. An almost equal number of customers are utilizing the *automatic payments* feature and that provides them with more free time.

That being said, we've also noticed that many of you are still using your own bank's bill payment options. While it might appear that online direct payments are all the same, they are not. Typically it takes an additional 5 to 7 days for your money to be received by us and posted to your account when you go through your own bank. The bank creates and sends us a paper check which is quite often coded insufficiently or even worse, incorrectly. When this happens, the chance of misapplication of funds increases. Our staff handles each one of these payments individually to ensure that they are processed quickly and correctly. This extra handling requires us to research the six digit account number as well as the bill number on every bank check we receive. Unfortunately, all of this takes time and costs money to research.

So the next time you receive a water bill from us please consider going to our website [www.kkw.org](http://www.kkw.org) to make your payment. We receive your payment the very next day and it's guaranteed to be applied correctly. We appreciate your business and your help with providing you the best service ever.

### Did you know that.....

- ◆ The District recently partnered with Invoice Cloud, a third party, web-based, electronic invoice and processing company that makes paperless automated billing and payment options available to all of our customers.
- ◆ Invoice Cloud is free - no sign up or postage costs.
- ◆ Invoice Cloud allows you to access, view and pay your water bill online at your convenience.
- ◆ Invoice Cloud allows you to pay with an electronic check without a service fee. Payment may also be made by credit/debit card, however a third party fee is required.
- ◆ Invoice Cloud allows you to pay immediately, schedule a payment or sign up for their Auto-Pay option.
- ◆ Using Invoice Cloud provides you with 5-6 more days to use your money than most banks' bill payment services.
- ◆ You can easily register for Invoice Cloud by visiting our website at [www.kkw.org](http://www.kkw.org), clicking on the *Customer Service Tab* and following the easy instructions.



## GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS - A TECHNOLOGY FOR ALL

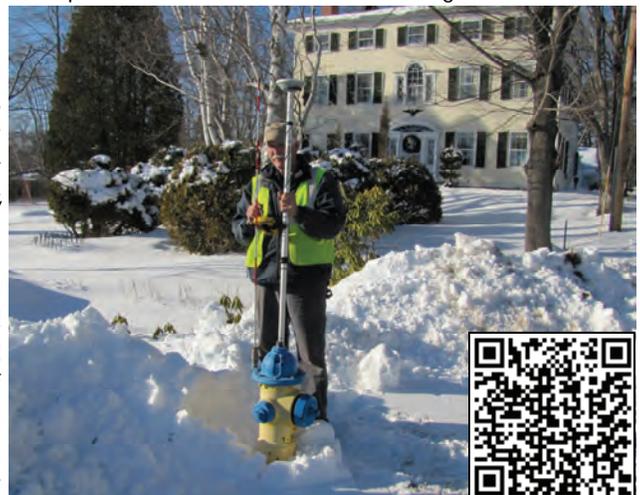
**Justin Richardson, GIS Coordinator - [jrichardson@kkw.org](mailto:jrichardson@kkw.org)**

Not too long ago, data and maps associated with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) were only accessible from high-end computers operated by GIS professionals. However, thanks to companies like Google, Microsoft and ESRI, almost everyone who uses a computer, tablet or smartphone is familiar with some form of GIS. Today's cyber infused society makes daily use of GIS without even knowing it. If you have used Google Earth, satellite navigation (GPS in your car, boat or on foot), internet map searches for restaurants or asking "Siri" where the closest gas station is, then you have used a form of GIS service.

The widespread accessibility to this technology allows KK&W to publish water system maps and data layers on our website, [www.kkw.org](http://www.kkw.org). Guests who visit our website can view interactive maps of our water system or download data layers for use in their own GIS software. Our GIS viewer and data downloads can be found on our website under the *Engineering & Distribution > GIS Mapping > Data and Maps* section.

The data viewer utilizes a limited functionality Google Earth gadget. You can view and click on water mains and hydrants. The viewer does not allow you to search for a particular location or turn off/on layers. For that functionality you can download the full version of Google Earth (free of charge) from the Google Earth website. Once you have installed Google Earth you can download our KML files located on the same webpage as the KKW data viewer. When you open the KML file, it will automatically add the layer(s) to Google Earth. Anyone who uses GIS software can also download shapefiles which are compatible with most GIS platforms. If you are new to GIS and interested in using the software, you can find links to free GIS programs on the KKW Data and Maps webpage.

Please feel free to contact me at 985-3385 if you have any questions.



District Distribution Technician Jerry Smith uses a Trimble GeoCollector (Model XH) GPS unit with dual frequency antenna to collect the location of distribution system assets (hydrants, gate valves, etc.) This professional grade unit costs over \$10,000 and allows for the collection of data points with a horizontal 10 cm (~2.5") degree of accuracy. Such capability permits the generation of very precise maps and engineering plans.

## BENEATH THE SURFACE - CONT'D FROM PAGE 2

As we typically do, the complete Capital replacement program for the upcoming year is available on our website ([www.kkw.org](http://www.kkw.org)). The highlights for 2013 include:

- ◆ Fortunes Rocks Road – Biddeford. This project represents the second half of a two-year installation that will add another 2,400 feet of main to the 4,700 feet that was installed in 2012. The new 12-inch main is replacing equal amounts of aged 8-inch and 10-inch mains. The work has been closely planned with the City of Biddeford, who will be rebuilding the road as part of their scheduled roadway improvement program.
- ◆ Maine Street/Union Street – Kennebunkport. In advance of a Town of Kennebunkport drainage system improvement, the District will relocate an existing 12-inch main and ultimately abandon a redundant 6-inch main. This 500 foot long project will facilitate the Town's drainage installation as well as streamline our distribution grid in the area. The project also involves replacing approximately 500 feet along Union Street, which is also part of the Town's drainage system project area.
- ◆ Great Hill Road – Kennebunk. This project will replace approximately 2,700 feet of unlined 8-inch main. The new 8-inch main will be installed with an innovative 'pipe-bursting' process that greatly reduces the amount of open trenching in comparison to traditional construction methods.
- ◆ High Street/Pleasant Street – Kennebunk. In anticipation of the Town of Kennebunk undertaking another phase of the Downtown Revitalization project on the south side of the Mousam River Bridge, the District will be replacing approximately 1,155 feet of 6-inch main along High Street, and approximately 550 feet of 4-inch main along Pleasant Street.

As mentioned earlier, please refer to our website for the complete project list. Looking forward beyond 2013, we are already in preliminary discussions regarding anticipated major work slated to begin in 2014. The Maine Department of Transportation is targeting 2014/2015 for a major rebuilding of Route One in Ogunquit. This will likely involve much work for us, as is typically the case for large roadway reconstruction projects. There will be much more to come on that project as we get closer to that time. But for now, we can only concentrate on what we are committed to for this upcoming year. As usual, if you have any questions about anything related to our construction program, just contact us at any time.



### STAYING BUSY IN THE WATERSHED - GOOD STEWARDSHIP NEVER RESTS

**Greg Pargellis, Chief Operator - [gpargellis@kkw.org](mailto:gpargellis@kkw.org)** It continues to be a busy time within the District's Branch Brook watershed area. We made another successful land purchase, this property containing approximately 1,200 feet of frontage along Branch Brook in addition to having a home on it. We will now be able to ensure that this property is maintained in such a way that will not negatively impact Branch Brook.

We continued to improve our District forests by selective timber harvests. I say "our" forests, meaning that they don't belong to just the District, but to all District customers, too. This year's harvest was between Rt. 1 and Harsiseckett Road. Many of the large mature pine had soft or rotten centers, so it was good to thin them out and give the others room to spread and grow, resulting in a healthier forest.

We are still working with the Wells Reserve on the best fish-ladder design possible on the dam on our impoundment area. Both parties would like to see the return of sea-run fish such as trout and herring to the upper reaches of Branch Brook. Designs and plans are underway and I'm sure that this project will be a win-win for all concerned.

Our collaborative efforts with the New England Cottontail (NEC) restoration group are temporarily on hold as guidelines are developed. This project plans to use a 20-acre parcel that is desirable for the NEC's preferred habitat (patches of meadow and scrub brush), providing a dual benefit for the land.

Lastly, we are in the early stages of producing a series of short educational videos that will eventually be made available on our website, [www.kkw.org](http://www.kkw.org). The videos will be on subjects such as timber harvests, the watershed and its preservation, treatment at the Filtration Plant for both surface water and groundwater, flushing hydrants and why, and even the process of laying water mains.

We here at the District are excited at these opportunities to work with others and still protect "our" source waters. As development pressure continues to increase in Southern Maine, it is reassuring to know that thousands of acres have been secured for watershed protection and enjoyment by future generations. As always, please contact me at 985-2362 should you have any questions.



The tracks on this grapple skidder distribute weight much more effectively than standard rubber tired models, thereby eliminating ruts and reducing soil erosion.



## PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE HIGHLIGHTS - CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

Just the water service renewals alone that are related to these projects will cost over \$250,000.

Next year (2014) promises to be equally demanding, with an anticipated \$1,000,000 or more to be spent in Ogunquit to replace our facilities due to an estimated \$11,000,000 plan by the Town and the Maine DOT to rebuild Route 1, add sidewalks and improve drainage. This isn't necessarily a bad thing, because coordinating these projects helps to minimize not only our construction costs but also the inconvenience to the affected neighborhoods and the traveling public. The downside is that we have little or no control as to when these road projects are scheduled and have to respond accordingly.

Although our total long term debt is one of the lowest among Maine water utilities (currently \$642 per customer), it has been increasing and comprises a significant portion (18%) of our total operating expenses. But don't worry, we're not going to run up an unsustainable debt or fall off the proverbial "fiscal cliff". It's just that the combination of inflation and an aggressive construction schedule does affect the bottom line. When you consider that an average residential Water District customer only pays us about \$1 per day for this essential service, its cost pales in comparison with that of any of your other utilities, essential or not.

We sincerely hope you find our newsletter an enjoyable and informational to read. As always, please feel free to contact me at 985-3385 with any questions or comments.

### Did you know that.....

- ◆ A recent U.S. EPA survey revealed the nation's water utilities need to invest \$334.8 billion over the next 20 years to maintain their current infrastructure. That represents an additional \$1,181 for each person served by public water.
- ◆ The District's current debt is only \$642 per customer (among the lowest in Maine) and is not expected to increase very much in the coming years.



## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN OPERATOR - WALKIN' THE "BLUE MILE"

**Brian McBride, Plant Operator - [bmcbride@kkw.org](mailto:bmcbride@kkw.org)**

It's four in the morning, and the Filtration Plant Operator is already at work monitoring the facility systems, hydraulics and planning his setup plan for the day. First, he has to read the notes left to him by the prior shift Operator, who he oftentimes doesn't get to speak with. A lot can happen in a few hours, and the Operator has to be ready for the unexpected. Will there be a structure fire somewhere in the service territory? Which water storage tank should we pump down first to freshen the water? Is it going to rain and change the water chemistry in Branch Brook? What about snow melt? During such events, the natural color and turbidity in Branch Brook can range from dramatic to the sublime, so what change in chemical dose should the Operator anticipate? The Operator notices on the work list that the Plant Manager wants to drain and clean the Plant today, so the daily goals and objectives anticipated on the Operator's drive into work already changed.

These and many more decisions happen constantly and must be addressed in the fast-paced and ever-changing work environment known as water treatment plant operations. The Operator's temperament is important as these changes must be addressed in a patient, understanding and professional manner. And let's not forget the steady stream of phone calls we receive that must be logged and facilitated, just like a 9-1-1 dispatcher is required to do.

The District's seven licensed Plant Operators do much more than just "run the Plant". They are also responsible for flushing over 900 system hydrants twice each year (spring and fall). They assist with testing water meters for the Meter Shop, monitor the watershed and forestry operations, and routinely help the Facilities Maintenance Department with their many projects. Plant Operators may also occasionally find themselves directing traffic or involved with water main and service line construction. Plant operations also include running a State of Maine certified lab where water samples (that are collected from throughout the distribution system each week) are analyzed for a host of required water quality parameters. The data and information determined through laboratory analysis are entered into a monthly report that is submitted to the State of Maine Drinking Water Program.

Operators also conduct educational tours of the Plant for local school children, as well as for interested customers and the general public during Open House events. Operators not only run the surface water Treatment Plant, but also run the groundwater part of the system which also has its own daily testing requirements. Keeping the chemistry of the groundwater and surface water as consistent and compatible as possible is always challenging, but we work at it every moment of the day. Operators continuously experiment with new chemicals and processes in a never-ending quest to improve water quality and operational efficiency.

The only thing Operators can count on not changing is change itself in this 24/7/365 operation. The Operators have each other's back when personal issues, emergencies, and other things change the game plan. Our Operators live by the golden rule that "every drop of water produced must be safe to drink". The District's Operators are a proud and dedicated group of essential service personnel who are there to ensure that District customers receive the best quality water at the most reasonable cost. Bottoms up!



Primary Business Address  
 Your Address Line 2  
 Your Address Line 3  
 Your Address Line 4

Your business tag line  
 here.

**BEST WISHES FOR A HAPPY NEW YEAR!!**



**EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT**

**Cindy Rounds, Administrative Assistant - [crounds@kkw.org](mailto:crounds@kkw.org)** In this issue, we are pleased to shine our Employee Spotlight on Treasurer Wayne Brockway who came to the District in January of 1994. Since then, this financial guru, who also leads the Front Office team of our Accounting and Billing staff, has provided valuable guidance to the Superintendent and Board of Trustees. His expertise has assisted them in making prudent financial decisions resulting in strong capital management and investments in watershed protection. His collaboration with a network of other utility financial officers serves as a valuable resource that keeps him abreast of not only changes in regulations but other developments that may affect the water industry.

Wayne doesn't spend all his time crunching numbers though. His talents extend beyond the District's finances. He is the 'go to' guy when it comes to health insurance and other employee benefits. As a member of the Technology Committee, he has played a major role in advancing the District's technological infrastructure. He played a vital part in successfully implementing changes that improved the District's billing system and enhanced payment options. Wayne has also developed a keen understanding of the latest meter technology that is expected to transmit real time data more efficiently.

Wayne and his family live in Kennebunk where he has enjoyed being involved in a variety of community and church activities. He was an instrumental leader in the establishment of The New School and has served as a Rotarian and Planning Board member. He currently serves as a Trustee at the So. Congregational Church (Kennebunkport) and continues in an active role for the annual Girl Scout cookie drive. Wayne and his wife Cindy have also enjoyed restoring their 1880s home.

Thank you Wayne, for your outstanding service and dedication to the success of one of the best water utilities in Maine and best wishes for the future.



The "Money Man", Treasurer Wayne Brockway, has seen the District's fixed assets grow from \$23 million when he started working with us in 1994 to over \$56 million today.