

WHAT'S ON TAP

Summer 2009

The KKW Water District Newsletter & Annual Consumer Confidence Report Vol. 7 No. 2 www.kkw.org



TAP WATER - ESSENTIAL FOR LIFE. BRANCH BROOK HAS SERVED AS A SAFE AND RELIABLE PUBLIC DRINKING WATER SUPPLY SINCE 1895.

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OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE THE HIGHEST QUALITY DRINKING WATER AND CUSTOMER SERVICE AT THE MOST REASONABLE PRICE.

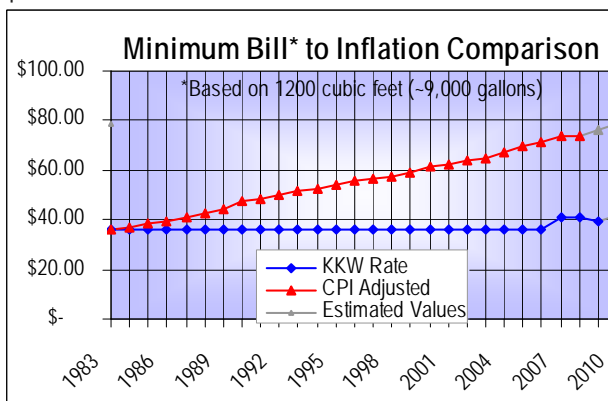
WATER RATES: PAST - PRESENT - FUTURE

Norm Labbe, Superintendent

As previously reported in our Winter 2009 Newsletter, our *revenue-neutral* rate adjustment went into effect on April 1, 2009 and should soon become apparent in your water bill. In summary, most annual customers, especially those using less than 2,500 cubic feet per quarter (about 205 gallons per day) will see a modest reduction in their water bills. The larger water users will see an increase. For more details, see "Rate Revision" in our Winter 2009 newsletter on our website at www.kkw.org.

Unfortunately, the water rate discussion doesn't end there. As you may know, our last rate increase was in 2007. It now appears we will be filing for a rate increase to become effective in 2010. This increase is being driven by a rise in operating expenses along with a reduction in water sales. Early estimates anticipate an across-the-board rate increase between 5-10%. Since 1983 the District's rate for 1,200 cubic feet has risen only 10.8%, while the Consumer Price Index (CPI) through 2008 has increased 107.4% (see chart at right).

We will continue to look for ways to reduce operating costs and develop new revenue sources to protect you, our ratepayers. For more detailed information on this matter, please see the "Water Rates to Rise in 2010" article on page 7.



CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORT - DRINKING WATER INFORMATION

CONGRATULATIONS! YOUR WATER MEETS OR EXCEEDS ALL FEDERAL AND STATE DRINKING WATER REQUIREMENTS.

Since its incorporation in 1921, the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport & Wells Water District (District) has considered water quality of the utmost importance. The District vigilantly monitors and safeguards its water supplies and is proud to report that it continued to meet or exceed all drinking water quality requirements in 2008. Our highly trained and State licensed Water System Operators are committed to providing our customers with drinking water that surpasses State and Federal standards for safety and quality. In doing so, we work to conserve, preserve and protect our water supply sources.

HEALTH INFORMATION

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily mean that water poses a health risk. Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

Microbial contaminants such as viruses and bacteria that may come from sewage plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations and wildlife.

Inorganic contaminants such as salts and metals, that can be naturally occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining or farming.

Pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff and residential uses.

Organic chemical contaminants including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (SDW Hotline) (1-800-426-4791).

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The District is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the SDW Hotline or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

WATER SOURCE

The District's primary source of drinking water is Branch Brook, a surface water supply that forms the town line between Kennebunk and Wells and originates in Sanford. The District also utilizes groundwater from its three approved well sites to supplement Branch Brook during periods of peak seasonal demand, high runoff events and as otherwise desired. The District also maintains mutual-aid system interconnection agreements with the Biddeford-Saco Water Company and the York Water District.

Protection of the Branch Brook watershed and well sites remains a top priority. We continue to purchase property and pursue/acquire conservation easements within the watershed and wellhead protection zones as opportunities arise. You can help too. Please be careful as you live, work and play to limit what goes into storm drains, tributaries and surface waters to help preserve the water quality and the diverse ecosystems it supports. If you witness suspicious activity within the Branch Brook watershed or at the well sites, please report it immediately by calling the District at 985-2362 or notify the appropriate Police Department (Kennebunk - 985-6121, Wells - 646-9354, Sanford - 324-9170).

SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT

The sources of drinking water include rivers, lakes, ponds and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and radioactive materials and can pick up substances resulting from human or animal activity. The Maine Drinking Water Program (DWP) has evaluated all public water supplies as part of the Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP). The assessments include geology, hydrology, land uses, water testing information, and the extent of land ownership or protection by local ordinances to see how likely our drinking water source is to being contaminated by human activities in the future. Assessment results are available at public water suppliers, town offices and the DWP. For more information about SWAP, please contact the DWP by telephone at (207) 287-2070. A well-head protection management plan has been developed for the District's well sites and the overall risk rating assigned to the Branch Brook supply was low.

WATER QUALITY MONITORING/REPORTING

VIOLATIONS: No water quality violations were issued in 2008.

WAIVER INFORMATION: Period 1/1/2008 - 12/31/2010, partial waiver for Branch Brook Filtration Plant (TCP, TQ1, TQ3), no waiver for the PTR Wells.

In 2008, the District applied for and was granted a partial or a full three-year waiver for water testing for certain synthetic organic compounds (SOC) (Phase II/V). This is an exemption from doing tests for insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, and certain other industrial chemicals that are regulated in drinking water. The State of Maine DWP grants a waiver only upon determining, on a case by case basis, that "it will not result in an unreasonable health risk." For any water tests that are not waived, we are required to report contaminants that were detected in our water supply in this Consumer Confidence Report.

TREATMENT PROCESS

SURFACE WATER from Branch Brook flows into our Filtration Plant where multiple processes are used to remove particles and microorganisms. The first process is COAGULATION, where chemicals (primarily food-grade alum) are added causing particles to destabilize and attract to each other. Then FLOCCULATION occurs in mixing chambers where the small particles combine into larger particles called floc. Next, CLARIFICATION occurs in the settling basins where the heavier floc particles settle out. Chlorine is then introduced for PRIMARY DISINFECTION. The FILTRATION process follows where clarified water passes through dual media filters (sand and anthracite) to remove any remaining floc particles. Finished water chemistry is then optimized for CORROSION CONTROL with sodium silicate, FLUORIDATION, and SECONDARY DISINFECTION with chloramines prior to being pumped into our distribution system where nearly 209 miles of transmission and distribution system water mains and 7 storage tanks distribute water to the District's customers.

GROUND WATER from any of the our three well sites (six wells) is pumped to our Pumping, Treatment and Recycling Facility (PTR) where the water chemistry is optimized for CORROSION CONTROL with sodium silicates, FLUORIDATION, and DISINFECTION with chloramines before being pumped directly into the distribution system.

2008 ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT FOR PWSID# ME0090760

Contaminant	Date	Result	MCL	MCLG	Source
Microbiological					
TOTAL COLIFORM (1)	2008	0 pos	1 pos or 5%	0 pos	Naturally present in the environment
Inorganics					
ARSENIC (2)	3/13/08	5.9 ppb	10 ppb	0 ppb	Erosion of natural deposits. Runoff from orchards, glass and electronics production wastes.
BARIUM	3/11/08	0.006 ppm	2 ppm	2 ppm	Discharge of drilling wastes. Discharge from metal refineries. Erosion of natural deposits.
CHROMIUM	3/11/08	0.88 ppb	100 ppb	100 ppb	Discharge from steel and pulp mills. Erosion of natural deposits.
FLUORIDE (3)	6/10/08	1.3 ppm	4 ppm	4 ppm	Erosion of natural deposits. Water additive which promotes strong teeth. Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories.
NITRATE NITROGEN (5)	3/11/08	0.16 ppm	10 ppm	10 ppm	Runoff from fertilizer use. Leaching from septic tanks, sewage. Erosion of natural deposits.
Synthetic Organics					
DI (2-EHTYLHEXYL)-PHTHALATE	2/20/07	0.2 ppb	6 ppb	0 ppb	Discharge from rubber and chemical factories; plastics.
Disinfectants and Disinfection By-Products					
TOTAL HALOACETIC ACID (HAA5) (9)	RAA	11.4 ppb Range (3.8-24.6 ppb)	60 ppb	0 ppb	By-product of drinking water chlorination.
TOTAL TRIHALO-METHANES (TTHM) (9)	RAA	10.9 ppb Range (1.3-25 ppb)	80 ppb	0 ppb	By-product of drinking water chlorination.
CHLORINE RESIDUAL	RAA	1.94 ppm	MRDL=4 ppm	MRDLG=4 ppm	By-product of drinking water chlorination.
TURBIDITY LEVELS (10)	3/11/08	0.24 ntu (WTP) 0.72 ntu (PTR)	0.3 ntu in 95% of samples	1.0 ntu maximum limit	Soil runoff.

Definitions:

- Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water.
- Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG): The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health.
- Running Annual Average (RAA): The average of all monthly or quarterly samples for the last year at all sample locations.
- Action Level (AL): The concentration of a contaminant that, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow.
- Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL): The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that the addition of a disinfectant is necessary for the control of microbial contaminants.
- Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG): The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.
- Treatment Technique (TT): A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

Units:

ppm = parts per million or milligrams per liter (mg/L); pos = positive samples; ntu = nephelometric turbidity units; ppb = parts per billion or micrograms per liter (µg/L); pCi/L = picocuries per liter (a measure of radioactivity).

Notes:

- 1) Total Coliform Bacteria: Reported as the highest monthly number of positive samples, for water systems that take < 40 samples per month.
- 2) Arsenic: The U.S. EPA adopted the new MCL standard in October 2001. Water systems must meet this new standard by January 2006.
- 3) Fluoride: Fluoride levels must be maintained between 1-2 ppm, for those water systems that fluoridate the water.
- 4) Lead/Copper: Action levels (AL) are measured at consumer's tap. 90% of the tests must be equal to or below the action level.
- 5) Nitrate: Nitrate in drinking water at levels above 10 ppm is a health risk for infants of less than six months of age. High nitrate levels in drinking water can cause **Blue Baby Syndrome**. Nitrate levels may rise quickly for short periods of time because of rainfall or agricultural activity. If you are caring for an infant you should ask advice from your health provider.
- 6) Gross Alpha: Action level over 5 pCi/L requires testing for Radium. Action level over 15 pCi/L requires testing for Radon and Uranium.
- 7) Uranium: The U.S. EPA adopted the new MCL of 30 ppb in December 2000. Water systems must meet this new standard after December 2003.
- 8) Radon: The State of Maine adopted a Maximum Exposure Guideline (MEG) for Radon in drinking water at 4000 pCi/L, effective 1/1/07. If Radon exceeds the MEG in water, treatment is recommended. It is also advisable to test indoor air for Radon. The U.S. EPA is proposing setting Federal standards for Radon in public drinking water.
- 9) TTHM/HAA5: Total Trihalomethanes and Haloacetic Acids (TTHM and HAA5) are formed as a by-product of drinking water chlorination. This chemical reaction occurs when chlorine combines with naturally occurring organic matter in water.
- 10) Turbidity levels for both the Water Treatment Plant (WTP) and PTR averaged 0.07 ntu for the year.

All other regulated drinking water contaminants were below detection levels - NO VIOLATIONS WERE ISSUED IN 2008.

PLEASE CALL US AT 985-2362 WITH ANY WATER QUALITY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE

GIS AND BEYOND - MAPPING OUR WAY INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

Justin Richardson, GIS Coordinator

A Geographic Information System (GIS) is a system of computer hardware and software that integrates, stores, edits, analyzes, shares and displays various layers of geographic information. Databases enable GIS to analyze feature attributes and a feature's physical location. For example, one simple use of GIS is to identify and track all water main breaks in order to better prioritize future main replacements through our Capital Improvement Program. For water utilities, GIS is commonly used for a whole host of items including source water protection studies, hydraulic modeling, water quality monitoring and distribution system operation and maintenance. The use of GIS in water utilities has grown exponentially in the past decade and is not only invaluable in terms of system planning, operation and maintenance; but is also a requirement for compliance with state and Federal rules and regulations.

To meet the growing regional demand for GIS, the District led an effort to hire a GIS coordinator and share the position with three other water utilities in southern Maine. In a collaborative effort, the Sanford Water District, South Berwick Water District and the Kittery Water District are all sharing the cost for this new GIS position and reaping the benefits of common GIS support, development methodology and standardization. On February 1st, I began working for these four districts as the GIS Coordinator. I am a certified GIS Professional and have a B.A. in Geography from the University of Maine at Farmington along with 10 years of professional GIS experience. Prior to joining the District, I was the GIS Manager for Wright-Pierce, a Civil and Environmental engineering firm with offices throughout New England. Sharing a GIS coordinator among the four water utilities brings the GIS expertise required for each district at an affordable cost. This sharing of resources also dovetails nicely with the Southern Maine Regional Water Council's plans to help regionalize certain services to bolster each district's capabilities while reducing costs and increasing efficiency. Please feel free to contact me at the KKW office with any questions regarding our implementation of this new technology.

BRANCH BROOK - FOCUS OF SOURCE WATER PROTECTION EVENT

Bill Snyder, Plant Manager

In April, representatives of the District met with Federal, state, and local environmentally minded groups for a groundbreaking workshop on source water protection. The two day session consisted of informative classroom presentations, discussion and field exercises, the latter of which featured an extensive focus on the Branch Brook watershed and tour of our Filtration Plant. The Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve in Wells, Maine hosted the event.

Workshop attendees included members of the USEPA, the Maine Drinking Water Program, Maine DEP, several land trusts, water districts, town managers and code enforcement officers, along with citizens interested in source water protection.

Objectives for the workshop were identified and water quality issues within our various watersheds were discussed as were new rules and funding for various source water protection projects. Although we have worked collaboratively with local land trusts and municipalities in the past to preserve lands in the Branch Brook watershed, the importance of working together to achieve our common goal of resource protection (water, land, ecosystems) was reemphasized and expounded upon.

The Sanford Regional Airport gave an exceptional tour of the airport grounds to show what they have done over the years to mitigate taxiway runoff and to showcase their fuel spill prevention and containment technologies. The Maine Turnpike Authority showed two retention ponds that were built where Branch Brook crosses the turnpike in order to contain potential spills that would otherwise contaminate the Brook. The Save Our Beaches group explained their methods for detecting over-board discharges into local waterways. The field trip portion of the workshop ended with a tour of our Plant where we discussed our commitment in caretaking for both surface and ground water supply sources. We were especially proud to inform our guests that our water Plant runs with zero discharge back to Branch Brook and that all backwash water is 100% recycled. Workshop organizer, Dr. Chi Ho Sham (Cadmus Group) was so impressed by our efforts that he suggested we apply for a national EPA Watershed Protection Award.

Certainly, this will be the start of future cooperation between all groups involved in source water protection, and as a group, we will be able to resolve the many current and emerging issues that confront us. On an added note, we are open for individual or group tours of our water Filtration Plant. Please give me a call at 985-2362 if you'd like to schedule a tour.



Several attendees of the two day SWAP workshop were (from left): Andy Tolman - DWP, John Peckenham - UMO, Kira Jacobs - EPA, Bill Snyder - KKW, and John Branscom - MTA.

WATER CONSERVATION SPOTLIGHT - EVERY DROP COUNTS

Proven tips to reduce irrigation demand and save you \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$

- 1.) Put a layer of mulch around trees and plants. Chunks of bark, peat moss or gravel slows down evaporation.
- 2.) Water during the cool parts of the day. Early morning is better than dusk since it helps prevent the growth of fungus.
- 3.) Don't water the lawn or garden on windy days as the wind causes excessive evaporation, minimizing the benefit.
- 4.) Cut down watering on cool and overcast days and don't water in the rain. Adjust or deactivate automatic sprinklers.
- 5.) Set lawn mower blades one notch higher. Longer grass means less evaporation, reducing the frequency of irrigating.
- 6.) Drive your car onto the lawn to wash it. The rinse water will help water the grass while reducing runoff.
- 7.) When the kids want to cool off, use the sprinkler in an area where your lawn needs it most, moving it as required.
- 8.) Xeriscape - replace your lawn and high-water-using trees and plants with less thirsty and drought resistant plantings.
- 9.) Divide your watering cycle into shorter periods to reduce runoff and allow for better absorption when you water.
- 10.) Check outdoor hoses, pipes, faucets, connections and fixtures for leaks. Fixing even small leaks can mean big savings.
- 11.) Remember to weed your lawn and garden regularly. Weeds compete with other plants for nutrients, light and water.
- 12.) Set a kitchen timer when watering your lawn or garden with a hose or manually operated sprinkler.
- 13.) Avoid the use of water toys that require a constant flow of water. A flow rate of only 3 gpm = 180 gallons per hour.
- 14.) Aerate your lawn. Punching holes in your lawn about 6 inches apart helps water to reach the roots rather than run off.
- 15.) Place an empty tuna can on your lawn to catch and measure the water output of your sprinklers. Adjust as necessary.

WATER RESOURCES - THE FACTS

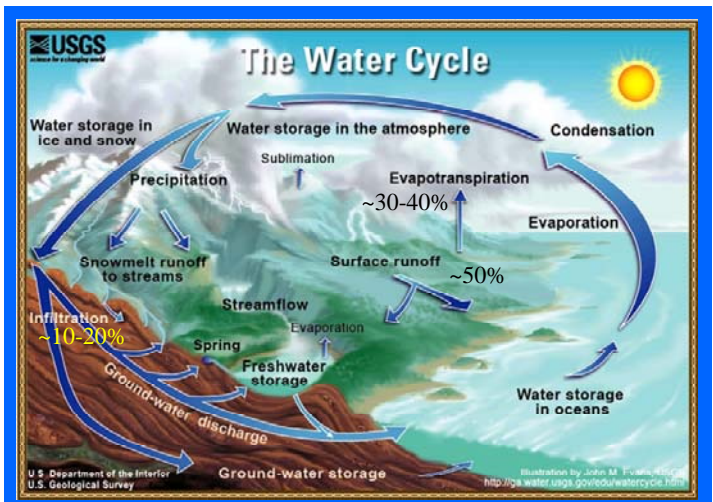
Norm Labbe, Superintendent

The temporary water shortage we experienced in 2002 is thankfully history. Since that time, we have worked diligently to nearly double our available water supply sources and are working on yet another groundwater source, which is expected to produce up to an additional 2 million gallons per day (MGD). Once secured, this new supply will raise our total available peak seasonal groundwater supply to over 5 MGD. When added to our utility interconnection sources (up to 3 MGD) and our Branch Brook surface supply (up to 6 MGD), meeting a 7 MGD peak day demand will not be an issue. Neither will the 10 MGD peak day demand predicted in 50-plus years by our 2008 Water System Master Plan. For more details on our new sources of supply, please revisit *Supply Source* in the Winter 2009 newsletter on our website.

Looking at the bigger picture, each year Maine receives an average of 24 trillion gallons of precipitation. Of this, about 4 trillion gallons recharges Maine's underground aquifers. The rest flows into ponds, lakes, streams and rivers or is evaporated (see Water Cycle illustration). If you were to compare this 4 trillion gallons of "new" annual groundwater to a 500-sheet ream of paper, the following may surprise you. All of the groundwater withdrawn by all of Maine's water utilities equals about one sheet of paper per year (or 0.2% of all water entering the ground each year). Breaking this down further, all groundwater withdrawn by all of Maine's bottled water companies equals about one tenth of one sheet of paper each year (or 0.02%). When considering that Maine's weather is trending wetter and is predicted to do so (due to global

Did you know.....that we recently purchased a parcel of land with over 1,000 feet of frontage along Branch Brook to enhance our watershed protection efforts. The lot is located on the south side of Route 109, opposite the Sam Allen Road in Sanford. The former house, which had recently been damaged by fire, was removed and the lot restored to its natural condition. In addition to being permanently protected from future development, the site provides a convenient public access for outdoor enthusiasts to enjoy brook fishing and hiking.

warming), it is difficult to comprehend how we're going to run out of water as a result of groundwater withdrawals by water utilities and bottled water companies. Both the Maine Geological Survey and Maine DEP share this position.



BENEATH THE SURFACE - 'STIMULATING' CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY

Don Gobeil, Technical Services Director

In the last installment of *Beneath The Surface*, we chronicled how different the planning of our 2009 construction season was expected to be because of the trepidation surrounding the economy and the impact of the proposed economic stimulus program. We had to approach our planning for 2009 with an eye toward maintaining some operational flexibility in order to shift our limited resources around as needed to collaborate with projects that the stimulus program might bring to our area.

Since January, however, some clarity has come to the local scene. On February 17th, the President signed the stimulus bill known as the "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009". From the total national spending package of \$787 billion, Maine's share for additional highway and bridge projects was \$130.7 million. This extra funding translated into an additional 71 projects that would be constructed as part of the overall statewide transportation infrastructure program. However, because of the scoring criteria used for the selection process, none of the selected projects were located within the KKW service area communities.

Armed with this new information, we immediately set out to finalize the design and scheduling of our spring construction program. The primary focus for our crews this spring was to replace a large section of obsolete 8-inch main along Brown Street in Kennebunk. The 2,600 foot project was coordinated and scheduled to precede the Town of Kennebunk's planned reconstruction of Brown Street. The other major spring initiative was the second phase of the Route One 20-inch main upgrade and replacement project in the Town of Wells. This 3,100 foot major system improvement was made possible by securing a low interest loan through the State Revolving Loan Fund for utility infrastructure improvements and was outsourced to Dearborn Construction Inc. via a competitive bidding process. As we go to press, both projects should be online; with Brown Street providing improved system reliability for an area previously prone to service disruptions, and Route One representing a major system upgrade that will improve our capability to move large volumes of water to the southern portion of our service territory.

Moving beyond the spring/summer period, we are busy preparing for a fall project in the Skipper Joe's Point Road and Marshall Point Road area of Kennebunkport. This combined 2,100 foot renewal of our primary northbound transmission main is expected to be difficult and technically challenging. Look for a follow-up report on this project in our next edition of *What's On Tap*. As always, if you have any questions or would like receive more information, please feel free to contact us at any time.



By installing temporary lines like this 6" PVC pipe on Brown Street in Kennebunk, the District is able to replace its obsolete 1930s era pipe with a new one in the same location, minimizing the impact on both customers and other underground utilities.

WATERSHED FORESTRY PROGRAM REVIVING UP

Greg Pargellis, Chief Operator

The District has revived its practice of managing its many woodlots within the Branch Brook watershed by completing a new Forest Management Plan. The new Plan includes selective timber harvesting as a proven forestry "best management practice" to ensure ecosystem health and diversity while generating additional revenue for the District's ongoing source water protection efforts.

Funding for the new Plan (~\$14,000) was accomplished by selectively harvesting timber on two lots (about 22 acres) in the area around Harsiseckett Road (Wells) and the Filtration Plant. Most of the timber removed was either damaged, dying or diseased; or removed to make room for the large, healthy standing trees as well as the young trees just starting their growth cycle.

The District is proud to own nearly 2,000 of the 8,000-acre watershed. The new Plan enhances our ability to actively manage the watershed lands to better protect your public drinking water supply by minimizing soil erosion, providing for precipitation uptake and brook recharge capabilities. We will continue to acquire additional watershed land as it becomes available (see the *Did You Know* snippet on page 5). All timber harvesting is done under the watchful eye of our Forester with an emphasis on protecting the Brook's water quality. Please give me a call at 985-2362 if you have any questions about our Plan.



White Pine trees are plentiful throughout the Branch Brook watershed and when mature, provide superb water quality protection. Pine needles also possess 5 times the Vitamin C by weight as lemons and make an enjoyable herbal tea.

Did you know...
That the forest has long been recognized as the guardian of the watershed, largely responsible for controlling the purity, regularity and volume of water flow. Mature tree canopies slow the velocity of falling rain, reducing soil erosion; while years of leaf and needle accumulation on the forest floor develop into a thick sponge-like humus layer that soak up and retain large quantities of water, even during prolong dry periods.

WATER RATES TO RISE IN 2010 - WHY? WHAT'S NEXT?

Wayne Brockway, Treasurer

During these uncertain economic times, many dramatic shifts have occurred in global markets. One such change was the worldwide commodity price boom between 2003 and 2008 where the prices of water treatment chemicals, pipe materials and the like shot up to unprecedented levels. Historically, when a boom period is followed by a bust cycle or recession (such as we are currently experiencing) prices usually drop significantly. However, chemical costs have continued to remain high due to decreases in worldwide production. Construction material costs have fallen back slightly, but not near what they were three years ago. Coupling these costs with two years of relatively wet summer weather, resulting in decreased water demand, the District will need to raise its rates during 2010.

How much you may ask? While we have not yet begun the formal process, it appears that it will be between 5-10%. Since the District just implemented a major cost of service study with its revenue-neutral water rate adjustment, we may simply recommend to the Maine Public Utilities Commission that this increase be applied "across the board" to all customer classes.

We realize this is not welcome news, but promise to do our best to keep the increase as low as possible. We have continued our cost containment efforts in various ways, including minimizing labor costs through attrition, job sharing and cross training. We also reduced our use of subcontractors; scaled back our capital improvement program; and locked in our heating oil cost for next year early at under \$2 per gallon.

In any event, you will probably see a rate change notification around January 2010, with the requested rate change effective as of April 1, 2010. We're hoping this next increase will carry us for at least another three year cycle, until 2013.

YOUR DEADLY WATER SERVICE - THE SHOCKING FACTS

Rob Weymouth, Facilities Manager

At a very young age we are all taught the dangers of electricity. "Don't play with that plug", "Don't put your fingers in that socket" and many other great pieces of advice. However, no one ever told us that we can be seriously injured or even killed by electricity from our water pipes.

According to the National Electrical Code, metal water piping systems shall be bonded to the grounded conductor (your house's electrical grounding system). This is done so that should the water pipe become inadvertently energized, the stray current will be taken to ground and not injure a person who comes in contact with a pipe or faucet or start a fire. While this is a good thing, it can make for a very dangerous situation for the unaware homeowner, plumber or excavating contractor working on the plumbing system, inside or outside of the home or business. Should electrical connections in the grounding or the service entrance system malfunction or deteriorate, the only available conductor for electricity is the water piping. If this happens and you break continuity in the piping system by cutting the water piping or removing an inline water meter, without first installing a bypass jumper, any person coming in contact with the water pipes or faucets and ground will become energized and suffer shock or possibly electrocution!

Therefore anyone planning to remove metallic components (i.e. pipe, water meters, etc.) from a grounded plumbing system must install jumpers or bonding straps around the component prior to its removal. If you are unsure of what is involved and the safety practices that should be used, be sure to contact a qualified professional for further assistance. As Jim Wright at Central Maine Power Company says in the ads, "No line is safe to touch, ever." Here at the Water District we like to say, "No pipe is safe to cut, ever." So be safe!

CUSTOMER CORNER - NEWS YOU CAN USE

Kathleen Chapin, Customer Service Supervisor

Times are Tough - It's hard to escape. Everywhere you go, people are talking about the economy. Whether their scope is global or local, the current outlook is dismal. Businesses are closing, people are losing their jobs and credit card interest rates are soaring. Most of us are tightening our belts and trying to eliminate expenses we consider unnecessary. Certain costs however we can't escape. Some of these include housing, food and our basic utilities, such as water. At best, we can try to conserve our water consumption but still there's a baseline cost associated with its use. Given our current economic conditions, it's understandable that some may fall behind in payments. We encourage early contact with our office to discuss payment plan options. We want to help you manage your account. So please call us at 985-3385.

New Seasonal Rate Structure - By now, most of you that comprise our seasonal customer base have received your minimum bill for the 2009 season. You may have noticed that under our new rate structure, your initial seasonal bill is broken out into two separate charges. The first one listed on your bill is the new \$60 Seasonal Service Fee that covers a broad spectrum of services including meter installations and removals, maintaining summer lines as well as cleaning, storing and testing meters. It was designed to recover the District's costs that are only attributable to seasonal class customers. The second charge is the actual minimum fee for water consumption and is based on the meter size at your property. It allows for 600 cubic feet of water with no additional billing to your account. An additional bill will be sent only if you exceed 600 cubic feet. Please check our website at www.kkw.org for a more detailed description of our new rate structure.

Kennebunk, Kennebunkport & Wells Water District
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PORTLAND, ME
PERMIT NO. 7

Did you know.....that under the Maine Criminal Code, the theft or wrongful procurement of a public utility service is a crime and is also subject to a civil penalty of up to \$2,500 for each violation, payable to the utility. The Code states a person may not obtain utility services by deception, threat or force or any other means designed to avoid due payment. Taps or diversionary devices installed before the meter and unauthorized removal of the meter are illegal and will be prosecuted by the District to the full extent of the law. Please call the District at 985-3385 if you have any questions.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT - PLANT STAFF SETS THE BAR

Cindy Rounds, Administrative Assistant

The Filtration Plant is located in a beautiful 1920s era brick building on Route One at the Wells/Kennebunk town line. The seven Operators who run the facility are seldom seen but work 24/7 to provide you with safe, high quality and great tasting drinking water that meets or exceeds all state and Federal regulatory requirements. It takes a certain character to work the different shifts, weekends, and holidays to meet the many and varied demands of running the Plant, especially during the summer months when daily customer demand can reach 7 million gallons. The Operators continually work to not only improve Plant operations, water quality, and cost savings; but also to improve themselves by taking classes and staying current with evolving regulations and developing trends. New operators are required to obtain a Class 4 Systems license, the highest in the State. The Operators possess a diverse educational background with Bachelors degrees in biology, chemistry, nautical science, environmental science, business and religious studies.

Among our community outreach efforts, our Operators enjoy giving Plant tours, especially for students of all ages. The tours include Plant functions, water treatment chemistry and our highly successful source water protection and monitoring efforts that we are very proud of.

For many decades, the Operators have also run a local weather station, recording rain and snowfall amounts. This is important information as it determines how Plant operations will be impacted along with predicting flow availability from our Branch Brook surface water supply, as this renewable resource is constantly replenished from year to year. Many local municipalities and businesses also depend on the data that is gathered.

The *Superb Seven*, as we affectionately refer to the Operators, have 61 years of combined water treatment experience, with Plant Manager Bill Snyder topping the list with 17 years. Please contact Bill at 985-2362 if you would like to arrange a Plant tour.



Successful Plant operations require highly skilled and dedicated water treatment professionals and the District's staff are as good as they get. From left to right (back) are Bill Snyder - Plant Manager, Ed Killian - Operator, Brian "Skip" McBride - Operator, (front) Lynn Mankin - Operator, Norm Nunan - Operator, Greg Pargellis - Chief Operator, and Matt Sampson - Operator.