



# Maine Water News

*A Publication of the Maine Water Utilities Association*

May 2017, Number 193

## ***Why Are We Doing This?***

*Jim Wallace, 2017 President*

I am not sure. I suppose we have always done it this way. How many times have you heard this story before? Spend a few years in an organization, and this exchange will come up more than once. It is easy to forget why we do things. Things become normal, easy, and routine. In some ways, it is comforting to know what is expected. Everyone knows what we are supposed to do, and we carry out these tasks without hesitation.

During my first year on the Board of MWUA, it became clear that Jeff McNelly had this process down. He always knew what was going on, what was of highest importance, and had the board engaged in timely activities. I have to admit, after the first year the Board's activities became normal, routine, and comforting. That all changed when Jeff moved to the PUC. We were all a little nervous about replacing the only Executive Director of the association. Our 2016 President, Frank Kearney, did a fantastic job of guiding the Board through this period of change.

June marks the first year anniversary of Bruce's tenure as Maine Water Utilities' Executive Director. Bruce has come exactly as advertised. He immediately made his presence known, hit the ground running, and increased MWUA's collaboration with other organizations. This first year has been a good challenge for both Bruce and the Board of Directors. Bruce asked a lot of questions, especially the basic "why are we doing this?" I will admit to not having a lot of answers. Together, Bruce and the Board found a whole lot of activity occurring at the MWUA office to support this organization. We all thought highly of Barb before, and now we are in awe of the commitment she puts into MWUA.

Our mission continues to revolve around education, the development and promotion of legislation, standards and policies, and an exchange of information and experience. Bruce's questions present an opportunity to ensure MWUA is working on the right stuff, and sharing information that is important and relevant.

I can assure you, Bruce and the Board are not looking to change things just for fun. Every month we talk about

what provides value to our members, and everything is considered. Items such as the website, this newsletter, the Journal, and Annual Meeting and Trade Show are being discussed. We will be looking for your opinions to make the best use of MWUA's time. As with anything new, we may try a few methods to gather your opinions, such as a survey, or emailing questions. Please give us a moment of your time. Bruce appreciates and enjoys hearing opinions from everyone.

Even though I heard there was a chance of flurries in the County this morning, summer will be here soon. I know you all are looking forward enjoying what Maine summer has to offer. Do yourself a favor and make some plans with family or friends. Having something fun on the calendar always brightens your day.

## **April Bi-Monthly Meeting**

Our April Bi-Monthly meeting was held in picturesque Belfast at the Shriners Club. The views were spectacular. Our host, of course, was the Belfast Water District.

Mayor Walter Ash welcomed all in attendance to the City of Belfast. Superintendent Keith Pooler did a great job of reviewing Belfast Water District's history and where they are presently. He explained the District employs two eastside wells, both very high production wells and incredible supplies. The district has four above ground storage tanks with a 3-day water supply, and 39 miles of water mains supplying a population of 6,750. There are backup generators at each of the well site and security measures in place at all districts wells, pump stations and water district facilities. Certainly a well-run and maintained system. The Belfast Water District is a great example of what having a proactive board of trustees, an engaged manager, staff, and crew can accomplish collectively. Thank you Belfast Water District.

Roger Crouse offered some regulatory updates especially in regards to lead and copper testing for schools on public water systems. He also announced that the "free" testing offer to schools on public systems was

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**Material of interest to the water supply profession  
will be considered for publication. Copy deadline is  
the 15<sup>th</sup> day of month preceding publication.**

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#### **Water Resources Committee**

*Chair: June Mooney*

*Greater Augusta Utility District*

extended to the end of May. It appears from the initial feedback that there were several school systems across the State that took advantage of the offer for free testing.

Bruce Berger offered a legislative update on several bills currently being debated. He stated that the collaborative MWUA/MRWA joint legislative action committee is working extremely well. The chair of the committee is Kirsten Hebert, Executive Director of MRWA and a trustee at the Greater Augusta Utility District. Berger stated that it has been a rather busy legislative session. Many of the bills being introduced appear to have an anti-Nestle theme or overtone. The bills being introduced are often masked by language that would lead you to believe otherwise, but upon hearing supporting testimony at the various hearings, the intent quickly becomes clear. If you would like to know more about a current bill and or its status feel free to call Kirsten Hebert at MRWA or Bruce Berger at MWUA.

The technical session was very good. Luis Hernandez from Carus Corporation spoke on the use of phosphates in water treatment for both corrosion control and sequestering. All in attendance left having a better understanding of the value of using phosphates within their systems.

The breakfast and lunch were outstanding and greatly appreciated. Thanks to our Program Committee and their commitment to planning meaningful offerings for our membership meetings.

### **On to Houlton for the June Bi-Monthly Meeting**

Our June Bi-Monthly meeting is being hosted by General Manager Greg Sherman of the Houlton Water Company. The meeting will be held at the Houlton Lodge of Elks on June 8th, and Brian McGuire, Houlton Water Company's Superintendent and one of our Directors, is planning a meeting that will not disappoint anyone that makes the trek north. There will be a host of social activities on Wednesday the 7th including golf. We plan on playing at the Houlton Community Golf Course. Green fees are \$40. If you're interested in playing, you can call Mike Pelkey at (207) 632-0367 or send him an email at [mike.pelkey@ejprescott.com](mailto:mike.pelkey@ejprescott.com).

Wednesday evening, we will be creating memories by going to the Elks Lodge. Activities there include candlepin bowling, foosball, music, storytelling and other activities. It's a short ride from the lodge to the suggested lodging facilities on the registration form and there is a taxi service in town.

We will return to the Elks Lodge on Thursday to enjoy our technical meeting and lunch.

For the technical session, "New Pipe Technologies and Material", Bill Haines with VARI-TECH, will discuss HDPE piping techniques, fusing methods, types of connections, as well as design considerations and installation techniques. William Terry with E.J. Prescott will address Alpha couplings, valves, hydrants and zinc-coated ductile iron pipe.

Chef Brian McGuire is preparing another meal for the ages - Prime Rib and Haddock. It is suggested you not eat for several days before this meal. Otherwise, you'll not have proper capacity to take home with you one of the most incredible meals you've ever had the joy of eating. If you were in attendance at the June meeting in Houlton a couple years ago, you know this is not one to miss!

The registration form is included in this newsletter or you can go to <http://mwua.org/events> to register online.

Be sure to join us in Houlton on the 7th and 8th!

## The Staff Report

How many of us that have been associated with MWUA for any length of time know what our mission statement is? Here it is:

*“The Mission of the Maine Water Utilities Association is to represent the water works professional membership in advocating safe drinking water through education, legislation, policy and networking.”* Consistent with this mission, the Vision of the Association is that it be *“the organization of choice for informing members and influencing policy makers, regulators and the media on issues regarding public water supply and water resources.”*

So are we fulfilling our mission and vision? We welcome your feedback and comments. Please feel free to reach out to staff or any of our Board of Directors with comments, suggestions or ideas. Any association is only as strong as its active membership.

As many are aware, our profession and our association continues to lose longstanding members due to retirement. We have many young and new professional joining our ranks. We welcome you. The Maine Water Utilities Associations can and will play an important part in your professional and personal development, if you recognize its value. Reviewing our mission and vision may help you to understand why we exist. But understanding our history may also offer you an enhanced perspective. The following is a condensed summary of where we came from and what you can expect by being an active member:

The Maine Water Utilities Association (MWUA) is a nonprofit membership organization organized in 1925. At that time, a core group of water superintendents recognized the need to meet regularly, share information and ideas and lend mutual support. That group became increasingly involved in matters affecting water utilities. Today, the basic concept remains largely unchanged. MWUA is an advocate for the water supply profession. We share experiences at bi-monthly meetings, sponsor training sessions for members and provide mutual support. The networking and interaction are of great benefit to system operators in providing water service, while complying with stringent state and federal regulations. Every February, we hold a waterworks trade show in Portland drawing exhibitors from the U.S. and Canada and waterworks professionals from throughout the Northeast.

If you are not actively engaged, we would encourage you to join a committee. Our committees are listed on our website. There is no formal process to join. If you find a committee that potentially appeals to you, we would suggest you contact staff and find out what the schedule of that committee is and attend the next meeting. You can then gauge whether that committee is a match with your interests or passion. If you decide that there is a match, speak to one of the chairs they will make sure you are added to the committee. The strength of our association is truly the committees.

Please start thinking about nominating a co-worker or a respected professional for one of our annual

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awards. A list of awards and nomination criteria is listed on our website.

We are very excited to announce that in June, we are bringing back Mr. Steve Cavanaugh, P.E., of Cavanaugh & Associates. If you recall, he was a presenter at our annual conference and his presentation was very well received. Mr. Cavanaugh is a nationally recognized authority on water loss and water efficiency. He has agreed to give three full-day workshops. The workshops are scheduled for June 20-22 in Portland, Augusta and Bangor. The content of these workshops will offer meaningful tools that will help us in managing water loss within our systems. Please consider signing up for these workshops early.

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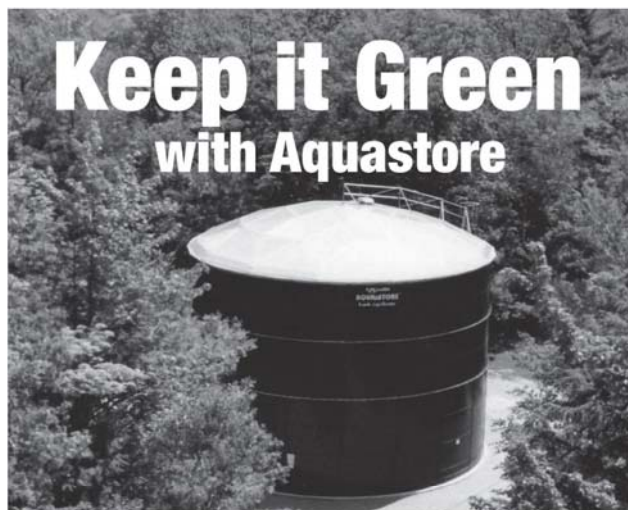
**Donald Tata, Founder and CEO of Tata & Howard, Passes Away**  
*Consulting engineering firm mourns the loss of its leader*



MARLBOROUGH, MA – March 27, 2017 – The Tata & Howard family is mourning the loss of the company's co-founder and CEO, Donald J. Tata, P.E., 63. Mr. Tata died at home surrounded by his family on March 25, 2017 after a valiant battle with cancer.

Tata & Howard Senior Vice President and co-founder Paul B. Howard, P.E. said, "Don was an incredible person, a brilliant engineer, and a lifelong friend. He dedicated his talents and drive to Tata & Howard for the past 25 years, and his presence is already greatly missed. His determination, integrity, passion for excellence, and commitment to the firm will continue to inspire all of us at Tata & Howard. On behalf of the entire Tata & Howard team, we send our deepest sympathies to his wife, their two children, and three grandchildren."

*In addition to the above news release, Maine Water Utilities Association and its members offer the Tata family and the Tata and Howard employees our deepest sympathies. Don Tata was a gentlemen and an outstanding representative of our profession. He will be missed.*



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**Pipe Tapping Competition May Return!**

The Program Committee is looking into reintroducing the Pipe Tapping Contest at the Clambake in August. We have a few logistic issues we need to address, but this may quickly become a reality.

Want to put together a tapping team? Teams consist of three workers and one coach. We'll be following the AWWA Rules and Regulations for all competing teams.

*Associate members interested in donating materials will be recognized as sponsors. Contact Bruce or Barb at MWUA if you are interested.*

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## Chapter 675 – Infrastructure Surcharge and Capital Reserve Accounts - A Short Overview

*Submitted by PUC Staff*

Chapter 675 of the Maine Public Utilities Commission’s Rules establishes procedures for water utilities to implement water infrastructure surcharges and capital reserve accounts. This Rule can be found on the Commission’s website and should be referred to by water utilities before implementing a surcharge or capital reserve account. <http://www.maine.gov/mpuc/legislative/rules/part6-water.shtml> See also 35-A M.R.S. §§ 6105, 6107-A

In Chapter 675, infrastructure refers to the stationary physical plant assets needed to operate a water system. This definition includes, but is not limited to, water mains, storage tanks, and pumping facilities.

Before implementing a surcharge or a capital reserve account, a water utility must prepare and file a system infrastructure needs assessment (SIA). The SIA, simply stated, is a summary of the physical assets and operations of the utility as it exists currently and the estimated future capital needs of the system. Chapter 675 includes a list in §3(A) of what the SIA **must** include and should be reviewed to ensure compliance. The SIA can be prepared internally. The SIA can include multiple projects and can be amended to add more projects. Projects must be included in the SIA in order to fund them with the surcharge or capital reserve account.

Temporary Surcharge for Infrastructure Replacement or Repair (Surcharge) provides for the inclusion in rates of infrastructure replacement costs after the project(s) are completed and placed in service. The Surcharge allows for the

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utility to begin recovery in rates of the project costs (depreciation, property taxes, debt principal/interest charges or return) without requiring a full rate case. Chapter 675 provides a template for the calculation of the Surcharge. The Surcharge is applied to both public and private fire protection and as a consumption charge to all other customers. Surcharges are submitted to the Commission as a standalone filing and subject to staff review prior to being decided on by the Commission. Chapter 675 also requires public notice prior to the implementation of the first Surcharge.

Capital reserve accounts (CRA) allow a water utility to set aside money in advance of a project. CRA are a component of a utility's revenue requirement and cannot be charged to ratepayers outside of a complete rate case filed with the Commission. The CRA level that can be included in the revenue requirement is a percentage of the utilities gross plant, based upon the utilities size. A CRA must be recorded in a separate account on its books and records. Chapter 675 requires that the account be funded but does not require a separate bank account. The CRA must be funded until the utility files a rate change that removes the CRA from its revenue requirements with the Commission. Chapter 675 does not limit the utilities ability to set aside funds outside of the CRA.

Chapter 675 sets caps on the Surcharges and CRA as to the impact on revenue requirements and rates, depending on the size of the utility. Size is based on the utility's total annual revenues.

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**HOST:** Greg Sherman, General Manager, Houlton Water Company

**LOCATION:** Houlton Lodge of Elks, 86 Main Street, Houlton, ME 04730

**DIRECTIONS:** I-95 N to Exit 302 (U.S. 1). Turn right onto U.S. 1 / North Street (signs for Houlton Historical District). Turn left onto Market Square. Continue onto Main Street. Lodge will be on the left.


<b>Accommodations:</b>	
<p><u>Ivey's Motor Lodge</u> 241 North Road, Houlton (207) 532-4206 At U.S. Route 1 &amp; I-95</p>	<p><u>Shiretown Motor Inn</u> 282 North Road, Houlton (207) 532-9421 At U.S. Route 1 &amp; I-95</p>

**PROGRAM**

- 8:30 AM – 9:00 AM      **Registration & Continental Breakfast**
- 9:00 AM – 9:10 AM    **Introduction & Welcome to Houlton, Maine**  
*Butch Asselin, Town Manager*
- 9:10 AM – 9:30 AM    **Overview of Houlton Water Company**  
*Greg Sherman, General Manager*
- 9:30 AM – 10:00 AM   **Business Meeting**  
**Regulatory Update, Maine Drinking Water Program representative**  
**Legislative Update, Bruce Berger, Executive Director**
- 10:00AM – 10:15 AM   **Break**

**Casual Attire  
Requested**

**TECHNICAL PROGRAM**

- 10:15AM – 11:45 AM   **New Pipe Technologies and Material**  
*Bill Huines, PE, US Director of Engineering, VARI-TECH*
- 11:30 AM - 11:45 AM   **Q & A**
- 11:45AM – 12:30 PM   **New Pipe Technologies and Material**  
*William Terry, Marketing, E.J. Prescott*
- 12:30 PM – 12:45 PM   **Q & A**
- 12:45 PM                **Lunch** 

**Jim Wallace**  
*President*

**Brian McGuire, Nate McLaughlin, Shawn Ready**  
*Program Coordinators*

**REGISTRATION FOR JUNE 8, 2017 BI-MONTHLY MEETING**

Please return registrations by: June 1, 2017

**2.5 DWP Training Contact Hours**

**Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Affiliation** \_\_\_\_\_

		Member		Non-Member		Late Registration (after 6/1/17)	
		Member	Non-Member	Member	Non-Member		
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**Total enclosed:** \_\_\_\_\_

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