

Maine Water News

A Publication of the Maine Water Utilities Association

November 2017, Number 196

Do You Have a Plan For When Disaster Strikes?

Jim Wallace, 2017 President

Last week, a few of us from Portland Water met with Central Maine Power Company's Corporate Security to discuss our participation in an electrical exercise this November. During our last Vulnerability Assessment, our dependency on utility power ranked high on our list of concerns. Since then, we have worked to maintain close relations with them through our CMP account manager and the emergency channels provided by the Cumberland County Emergency Management Agency (CCEMA).

CMP gave us an overview of their security/response capabilities. It is impressive. They have many portable sub-stations on trailers that, in the best-case scenario, can be delivered and in use within 4 hours. They also have partners that can turn any parking lot into a local command post in even less time. As CMP is a Subsidiary of Avangrid, a sister security operations center in New York can take over their operations in under a minute. They are big on leveraging their partners. As the saying goes, "when it hits the fan, you need lots of friends."

They do not believe in the "let's see what happens, then respond approach." When the forecast calls for storms, they prepare staff and assets in advance for the potential impacts. Once the storm hits, their first priority is to make everything safe, by de-energizing circuits. If the impact is large, an assessment of the damage may be the only task performed. While customers may hope that repairs are imminent, prioritization and coordination of work is of utmost importance. CMP learned this during the ice storm of 1998. Too often, field crews were pulled in many directions, limiting the coordination of reactivation, and leaving higher priority needs without power. While this seems like a simple plan, they are diligent about following through on every step.

PWD manages 125 wastewater and water facilities, many of which do not have permanent back-up power generators. We have a number of portable generators, yet during outages in multiple communities, our ability to maintain power exceeds our resources. It would be nice if we could identify our priorities in advance, but as power outage incidents go, location is everything. PWD has improved our storm planning, and

many closely watch the weather. Yet, we still underestimate the potential impact of some storms. The good thing, is once we are in storm mode, we work hard to keep everyone's informed and offer assistance across departments. We have learned to funnel our utility power needs through CCEMA. PWD participates in their regular meetings and exercises. When incidents occur, we appoint one person to make all requests, and we honestly identify the highest value needs. Most of the time, we simply ask about the likelihood of power being restored within a 4 to 6 hour timeframe, and coordinate our response accordingly.

CMP has incorporated emergency response planning into their daily operation. They have response plans and SOP's, along with partners to quickly implement them. They have equipment ready to go. When an incident occurs, they quickly transition into a different mode. For PWD, this process is working. We trust our needs are being addressed in an organized and timely manner.

We saw the October 29-30 storm, and I'll admit to underestimating it's impact. There was a great line on weather .com "This Eastern storm underwent bombogenesis from a weak area of low pressure..." I have no idea what that means, but it seems spot on to me. Perhaps we jinxed ourselves by talking about emergency response, kind of like talking about the low number of main breaks this week/month/year.

From my perspective, CMP is working their plan exactly as they explained it to us last week. We can all learn a lot from their example.

October Meeting Offered Incredible Views

What a spectacular day! The Program Committee did a great job with venue selection. The meeting was hosted by the Rangeley Water District at the Country Club Inn directly on the Mingo Springs Golf Course. We were in a room that was surrounded by windows and the views were incredible. The owners of the Inn, Margie and Steve Jamison, were very warm and welcoming.

Rangeley's Town Manager, Tim Pellerin welcomed us to Rangeley. His message included how important the service is that we offer the communities we serve.

**Maine Water News is published bi-monthly by
Maine Water Utilities Association
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**Material of interest to the water supply profession
will be considered for publication. Copy deadline is
the 15th day of month preceding publication.**

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Greater Augusta Utility District

Al Clinch, Superintendent of Rangeley Water District, offered a brief review of the history of the District's beginnings and its eventual transition from a private water company to a public water district. He also recognized Trustee Vernon Bean and all he has done for the District.

Roger Crouse, Director of the Maine Drinking Water Program, offered regulatory and program updates. He also mentioned the chief engineer opening created by Mike Abbott's resignation.

Jim Wallace presented the approved budget for 2017/2018. The budget reflects expected income of \$412,195 and expenses of \$411,884.

Because there were no Nominating Committee members able to attend and give the report, Jefferson Longfellow as most recent past president, gave the Nominating Committee Report. The candidates presented to fill two open seats on the Board of Director are Mike Broadbent of Auburn Water District and Jim Wallace of Portland Water District. Both Broadbent and Wallace are current members of the Board and have agreed to another 3-year term. Because there was not a quorum present at this meeting, the vote will take place at the December Bi-Monthly Meeting in Eliot.

The technical presentations focused on ground water. Jeff Musich, PE, Senior Vice-President and Director of the Water Division within Wright-Pierce got things started by explaining the process of developing a ground water source. He cited several case studies throughout New England helping all to understand how much is involved in planning and developing a well.

Andy Begin, PE, Director of Engineering and Assistant General Manager of The Greater Augusta Utilities District then spoke about their well development in Augusta and what they did to resolve many of the issues that were raised during that project.

Greg Smith, PG, CG of Wright-Pierce finished our technical session by helping us understand the importance of well maintenance. It involves and directly impacts both budget and water quality considerations.

We finished with some great interaction between our attendees, a tasty lunch and a beautiful ride home.

December Meeting to be Held in Eliot

The December Bi-Monthly meeting will be held at the Regatta Banquet & Conference Center on December 14th, 2017. The business meeting will include a vote on the nominated Board member candidates provided there is a quorum present.

The technical presentations will focus on Safety Compliance and the SHAPE Program.

Compliance Directives describe how the Bureau of Labor Standards will enforce the occupational safety and health standards in Maine public sector workplaces. Michael LaPlante will cover all of the Compliance Directives in detail that covers what Water and Sewer districts need to follow.

The Safety and Health Award for Public Employers (SHAPE) recognizes public sector employers who maintain an exemplary safety and health management system. Acceptance into SHAPE by the Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards is an achievement that distinguishes your organization as a model for workplace safety and health. Mary Mathews will discuss the steps required to qualify for acceptance into the SHAPE Program and the benefits you will receive after being accepted.

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

November Staff Report

The end of 2017 is quickly approaching. We realize it is impossible for time to accelerate, it plods on at the same rate since its inception. But doesn't it seem to speed up with each passing year? Within this seeming phenomenon, we must still accomplish what needs to be done. The daily demands are always present but the resources seemingly dwindle. The million dollar question is how do we answer this seeming conundrum? How are we able to get everything done with less time, money and resources?

Fortunately, we are involved in a very progressive profession. It amazes me how many new services and products are being developed every day that help us accomplish our goals and objectives in ways we would never have believed even 10 years ago. Automated billing, meter reading and meter infrastructure systems, GIS, asset management programs, SCADA, leak location systems, vacuum excavation, trenchless technology, distribution modeling, and computational fluid dynamics are just a few of the recognized advancements. What is your utility's view of these "new" technologies? What is your personal view? For many of us, change is never easy. We have had our successes over many years doing things a certain way, so why change? It is true, change involves risk. Risk can sometimes lead to a result that was not intended or expected but it rarely leads to failure. Think for just a minute where your utility would be without the use of some of the technological advancements listed above.

Webster's Dictionary describes failure this way: *Omission of occurrence or performance. A lack of success, falling short.*

In our opinion, failure is not a lack of immediate success. Failure is achieved when we become complacent and, by extension, stagnant. How many companies throughout history ceased to exist because they refused to embrace the need for change?

Their failure resulted from their complacency or their refusal to recognize the need to explore new and improved ways to do business. Can utilities fall into this trap? More than likely, we will not. People will always need drinking water and a conveyance system for delivery in one form or another. But we are all in danger of becoming complacent. Is it possible that this knowledge or understanding could potentially influence us in becoming complacent?

Technology is certainly one mechanism to help us to accomplish what needs to be done daily and fight complacency. Another is training. There are multiple opportunities for training. For many that offer training, it is part of their business model to increase revenue. For Maine Water Utilities Association (MWUA), it is viewed as an opportunity to educate and empower our members by giving them the training and education they need. It is not driven by a revenue goal. These trainings also offer an opportunity to talk to the many other water systems present at these trainings. MWUA has focused on improving the quality of our training offerings and hope you recognize those efforts. If you have not taken advantage of some of our recent training offerings, we would encourage you to

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do so. Water Loss, Benchmarking, and Performance Management are just a few. The vast majority of those attending commented on the quality and value of the classes. For MWUA to continue to offer these types of classes, we need your support.

We hope that many of these offerings will help you to understand the value of change by introducing you to advancements in technology, trainings for new ways of doing things and hopefully avoiding complacency.

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Nominees Sought for Annual Recognition Awards

The Association is seeking nominees for its annual awards of recognition, which are typically presented at the February meeting.

The Excellence in Operations Award recognizes outstanding performance of a public water system where a team effort has contributed to excellence in the following areas: consistent compliance with public health and environmental standards and regulations; mindfulness to system maintenance, infrastructure, and equipment; continuous improvements to the system's water quality; special efforts in the training and education of the utility's employees; significant efforts to educate the public about drinking water issues and their public water system; and participation in new research to improve the quality of drinking water.

The Jeff Nixon Distinguished Service Award recognizes a member of the MWUA who has demonstrated 2 or more of the following: a career of service to a Maine Water Utility; dedication and commitment to the MWUA over a period of ten years or more; and/or outstanding contributions to the water works profession in Maine.

The Jim Doherty Excellence in Volunteerism Award recognizes a past or present employee of an Associate Member of the MWUA who has demonstrated the following: While volunteering time, materials, labor, equipment or expertise, this person provided an outstanding service, contribution or assistance to a Maine water utility, the utility's employees or staff or to the water works profession, going above and beyond their normal job requirements to simply provide a helping hand.

The President's Award recognizes an individual or organization that has demonstrated an extraordinary dedication and commitment to the water works profession and to the MWUA over the past year.

The Sid Anthony Award of Merit recognizes an eligible member of the MWUA who has demonstrated one or more of the following: outstanding service to a Maine Water Utility; outstanding contribution or assistance to other water utility personnel; and/or



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outstanding contribution to the water works practice.

To nominate an individual, go to www.mwua.org and click on [Awards](#) under the Info tab. For more information, please contact our office at 207-623-9511, or email us at info@mwua.org.



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Farewell, Ron Boivin

Our profession has taken another devastating blow. Ronald Boivin, a Circuit Rider for Maine Rural Water Association and former superintendent of Clinton Water and Sewer District, passed away suddenly on Tuesday, Oct. 31, 2017 at his home in Burnham.

Ron will be missed by many that knew him. His knowledge and comprehension of utilities' systems was second to none. His quiet demeanor, quick wit, and humor endeared him to everyone he met.

Maine Water Utilities Association and its members would like to extend to Ron's family, friends, co-workers and Maine Rural Water Association our deepest sympathies and condolences.

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**92nd Annual February Meeting & Trade Show
Is Feb 6-7th, 2018**

Our committees are fully engaged with the planning of our annual conference. We have some exciting changes we wanted to make you aware of. This year we will have an opening plenary session from 8-9 AM on Tuesday that will set the tone and kick off our conference.

We will also feature a silent auction to raise money for our three scholarships: The Peter A. Lancaster, Madeline A. Storer, and brand new Judy Wallingford scholarships. As you may recall we **now have our 501(c)(3) tax designation**, so all donations for the silent auction will be tax deductible. The Public Awareness Committee will be overseeing this fundraising effort.

We will also be introducing a new program that we believe will help our efficiency with registration, tracking training, and issuing certificates. Part of the technology will include QR coding that will be printed on your name badges. These codes will be scanned upon entrance to the training class and upon exit of the class to receive the training contact hours.

For planning purposes the business and awards luncheon is being moved to the second day (Wednesday) of the conference.

It is always our hope that any adjustments to the conference are seen as meaningful enhancements that improve the quality of your experience when attending.

We look forward to seeing you all there!



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HOST: Michael Rogers, Superintendent, Kittery Water District

LOCATION: Regatta Banquet & Conference Center, 28 Levesque Drive, Eliot Commons, Eliot, ME 03903

DIRECTIONS: <http://www.regattaroom.com/>

PROGRAM

- 8:00AM – 8:30AM **Registration & Continental Breakfast**
- 8:30AM – 8:40AM **Introduction & Welcome to Eliot**
Dana K. Lee, Town Manager
- 8:40 AM – 8:50 AM **Overview of Kittery Water District**
Michael Rogers, Superintendent, Kittery Water District
- 8:50 AM – 10:00 AM **Business Meeting**
Regulatory Update, *Maine Drinking Water Program representative*
PUC Update, *Maine Public Utilities Commission representative*
Legislative Update, *Bruce Berger, Executive Director*
Annual Committee Reports
- 10:00AM – 10:15AM **Break**

TECHNICAL PROGRAM

- 10:15 AM – 12:00 PM **Workplace Safety**
Michael LaPlante, Public Sector Program Manager, ME Dept. of Labor Workplace Safety & Health Division
- SHAPE Award Program**
Mary Mathews, SHAPE Coordinator, Maine Department of Labor
- 12:00 PM – 12:15 PM **Q & A**
- 12:15 PM **Lunch**

Jim Wallace
President

Justin D. Richardson & William Terry
Program Coordinators

REGISTRATION FOR DECEMBER 14, 2017 BI-MONTHLY MEETING

Please return registrations by: December 7, 2017

2.0 DWP Training Contact Hours / 2.0 DEP Training Contact Hours (DEP approval pending)

Name(s): _____

Affiliation: _____

		Member	Non-Member	Late Registration (after 12/7/17)	
		Member	Non-Member	Member	Non-Member
<i>Water Systems serving more than 4,000 Customers</i>	_____ @	\$50 = _____	\$55 = _____	\$60 = _____	\$65 = _____
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