

# MAINE

# WATER

# NEWS

JANUARY 2004

*A Publication of the Maine Water Utilities Association*

Number 115

## Good Friends

*Jeffrey LaCasse, President*

Long time friends. You know, THE OLD GANG. They've been there since the early days, as long as you can remember. You grew up learning things together. Spent a lot of time at their place just hanging out doing stuff while enduring good times and bad and figuring out how to cope with the world. True musketeers. One for all, all for One.

So what do you do if those friends run into hard times and need support? Nothing's changed with your friends; they're the same good guys doing the same good things, but suddenly there is a threat to the world they know. No brainer. You are there. You help your friends. You do the right thing. It may be a thing you would not have thought of doing before, but you do what you can do.

MWUA has a long time friend just like the ones you may have had. The friend's name is the Augusta Water District. One of the original gang. An always gracious host for MWUA committee and board meetings with a pot or two of coffee and a warm smile for all. Actively participating in committee work at every level. Always there in the group when you are trying to figure out how to cope in the water utility world. AWD is a friend who has been doing the right things. AWD has been following the rules while pursuing a vision instead of just "playing the game". Now, however, AWD is under a threat by the City of Augusta to dissolve the District and create a new city department to handle water operations.

Could this change be disastrous? Perhaps. Is it the wrong thing? Definitely. There may be water utilities that need to be shaken to some degree to get them to move faster toward where they are supposed to be. Not AWD. Forget the arguments over what type of ownership is best for Maine water utilities. I don't think it makes a difference in this situation. It is possible AWD may operate just fine as a city department, but there is also a chance it may be pushed to the bottom of the city services priority list and lose much of its ability to operate effectively. Regardless, the point is that there is no valid

reason for threatening the operation of a utility that is doing it right.

The stated reason for proposing such a change is economic advantages for the taxpayer/ratepayer. Those of us who run water utilities in today's environment know that, in our highly regulated environment - outside of some operational consolidation - there is little true opportunity for savings through a proposed municipalization (Bingo!) such as this. We are dealing with many inherent fixed costs, strict regulation on how we can operate, and even some opposition to potential money saving regional collaborations.

Imploding an exemplary water district into a city bureaucracy is truly bizarro world. The logical answer to economic and operational efficiencies, I feel, is a public and/or private regional approach, not a circling of the wagons in a protective territorial offensive. The tact of sucking an existing regional entity back into the layers of municipal bureaucracy is completely opposite of the statewide push toward regional collaboration.

Desperate times force desperate measures, however, and fiscal stresses on municipalities are causing some of those municipalities to search for potential economic gain in places they have not previously explored. Putting economic gain before public health can be dangerous and some municipalities may not realize all the potential implications of water utility operation. The mission of a water utility is undeniably different than the mission of a municipality.

What do we as MWUA members do? We must take quick positive action. Make noise. Educate the people who are in charge of moving an idea forward: the municipality, the legislature, the customers. Many are reasonable people who will also do the right thing if given the proper information. Be there. Remember, you actually may need help at some point yourself because there is always the possibility of a domino effect. MWUA can give ideas, you need to give support.

AWD has been there for us in the past. So, Musketeers, "One for all, all for One." Let's do the right thing. Let's help our friend.

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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.

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Chair: Jon Van Boun  
*Kennebec Water District*

## The December Meeting

Well, this year it didn't snow for the December meeting. Instead it rained hammer handles and pickerel, but it did at least wait until we got to the restaurant. The meeting was very well attended. As usual we started off with the usual topics, but this meeting also included the annual committee reports. The members approved a requested dues increase and the results of the election of 2004 Directors were announced.

The session on leasing space for telecommunication equipment on tanks or other facilities provided much in the way of useful information. KKW host Norm Labbe and York Superintendent Dave Michniewicz did an excellent job relating what they had learned through their many years of dealing with this issue. There are revenues to be gained, but there are also issues to be aware of that could create problems for the water utility.

Following a hearty lunch, we departed into the rain and the trip home. All in all, it was a great day.

## Member Elect Directors for 2004

The Nominating Committee has tabulated the ballots for the election of Directors for 2004. Results were reported to the Directors and to the membership at the December meeting in Wells. The following were elected for three-year terms:

Jeffrey LaCasse	Kennebec Water District
Brian Tarbuck	Augusta Water District

## Directors Elect Officers

At the January 8 Board of Directors meeting the following individuals were elected as officers of the association.

President	Michael Nadeau
First Vice President	Jeffrey LaCasse
Second Vice President	Judy Kelley
Secretary	Mary Jane Dillingham
Treasurer	William Alexander, Jr.

Each officer will serve a one year-term.

## Lancaster Fund Directors Extend their Thanks

Greg Reed, President of the Board of Directors of the Bangor Water District Peter A. Lancaster Memorial Scholarship Fund, recently expressed the Board's appreciation for the MWUA membership's support during 2003. More than \$800 was raised at association events, through a 50/50 raffle at the February Conference and a "Casino Hole" at the August golf tournament.

The contributions helped the Board award their first two scholarships, of \$1,000 each, to two students residing in communities served by the Bangor Water District. The scholarship fund is always seeking tax - deductible charitable donations. Contact Greg Reed at the Bangor Water District (947-4516 ext. 371) for more information.

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## Second Session Commences; Committee Selects New Chair

Legislators recently returned to Augusta for the Second Session of the 121<sup>st</sup>. There are a number of bills that have been targeted for action or monitoring and it is anticipated that there will be many more.

In order to provide greater coverage of legislative and regulatory activity, the association's Legislative and Regulatory Affairs Committee has formed 3 subcommittees. Each subcommittee will concentrate on the activities of a specific agency and the corresponding committee of the legislature that has jurisdiction over that agency.

Scott Minor of the Augusta Water District will chair the PUC/Utilities and Energy Subcommittee. He can be reached at 622-3701 x 130 or at [sminor@augustawater.org](mailto:sminor@augustawater.org).

Chris Crovo of the Portland Water District will chair the Drinking Water Program/ Health and Human Services subcommittee. He can be reached at 774-5961 x 3054 or at [ccrovo@pwd.org](mailto:ccrovo@pwd.org).

Rick Knowlton of Aqua Maine, Inc. will chair the Department of Environmental Protection/ Natural Resources Subcommittee. He can be reached at 236-8428 or at [rlknowlton@aquaamerica.com](mailto:rlknowlton@aquaamerica.com).

The committee has also selected a new chair. Rick Knowlton, who stepped down after many hours of effort, handed the reins over to Seth Garrison of the Bath Water District. Seth can be reached at 443-2391 or at [sgarrison@bathwd.org](mailto:sgarrison@bathwd.org).

LD 1655, An Act to Amend Certain Laws administered by the Department of Environmental Protection, addresses a problem concerning the use of herbicides to treat infestations of invasive aquatic plants. The existing provision that "chemical control agents may not be used on a water body that is a public water supply without the prior written consent of each public water supplier using that water body" is included under a statute that applies to

water bodies that have water use restrictions on them. By moving this language to its own section the protection will apply to all water bodies that are public water supplies. The public hearing was January 15. The association offered testimony in support of the bill; it is expected that the change will be enacted.

LD 1750, An Act to Improve the Ability of Water Utilities to Maintain a Contingency Allowance, is to be heard on January 21. The PUC/ Utilities and Energy Subcommittee is following that bill and will be offering appropriate testimony.



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### Sherm Smith Leaves Legacy

Sherman Smith, former Superintendent of the Kennebec Water District and MWUA President in 1972, died at his home in Bremen on December 2, 2003.

His studies at the University of Maine were interrupted by WWII, but he returned after the war and received a BS Degree in Civil Engineering and a Master of Science Degree. His professional career spanned 30 years,

(cont. from p. 3)

including 12 years at the Waterville Sewerage District and 15 years at the Kennebec Water District.

The funeral service was performed by his son Fred, who is a pastor, with the other siblings relating many memorable experiences. It was as one would expect from such a man.

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#### Position Opening Water Treatment Plant Operator

The Kennebec Water District is seeking a qualified individual to fill an open water treatment plant Operator position at its East Vassalboro treatment facility. The KWD plant is a 12 MGD Microfloc plant with a 5 person staff. Job duties include treatment operations, lab analysis, mechanical, electrical, computer (SCADA), maintenance, watershed protection, and system water quality tasks.

A Class IV water treatment certification is required for full position standing. This is a union position which offers a competitive wage and benefit package.

Send a résumé to:

Kennebec Water District  
Attn: General Manager  
PO Box 356  
Waterville, Maine 04903-0356

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## Augusta Recommends Sanitary and Water District Consolidation Within City Government

In February of 2003 the City of Augusta established a Utilities Committee to study the mission, functions and activities of the Augusta Sanitary District, the Augusta Water District and related components of Augusta city government so as to recommend changes and improvements to the Mayor and Council.

The three options that were evaluated were to maintain the status quo, to consolidate the two districts into one Augusta Utilities District or to bring the operations of the two districts within the city as enterprise accounts.

The committee has voted 5-2 to recommend to the council that it take steps to bring the operations of the two districts within the city as enterprise accounts. The City believes that, currently, the assets of these regional districts are owned by the city. Regardless of whether that is true, legislation would be required if the city were to implement the recommendation.

The City is projecting that the consolidation will save city residents on the order of \$5-600,000. In an October report to the Utilities Committee, City Manager William

Bridgeo discussed the prospect of shifting a half million dollars per year and a million dollars per year for fire protection charges and stormwater control and treatment charges, respectively, from Augusta's tax base to water and sewer rates. He also discussed the prospect of seeking legislation to facilitate the administration of utilities in Augusta, i.e. deregulation from PUC regulatory oversight.

Locally, efforts are underway to form a coalition of municipalities, utility districts and others for the purpose of ensuring that their rights are represented and that the infrastructure and other facilities in their communities are recognized as assets of the districts and not those of the city. They are also attempting to achieve broader representation on both the sanitary and water district Boards.

Assuming it is indeed formed, the coalition is proposing to submit legislation to modify the charters of the two districts. It would clarify that their territories include the communities served, it would increase the number of trustees so as to include representation from each community served (they would be elected as opposed to appointed) and the revised charter would specifically state that there would be no discrimination between customers based upon their location.

The Utilities Committee report was submitted to the Council on January 12 at an informational meeting and a public hearing on the report is scheduled for January 20.

As this issue of the newsletter goes to the printer the Augusta City Council has not accepted the report or its recommendations and neither the water nor the sanitary district has yet taken a position. City Manager Bridgeo serves as a commissioner of the Augusta Sanitary District, having recently been appointed by the Mayor.

It is expected that the association will be asked to join the coalition and support their efforts.

Updates on this unfolding event can be obtained by contacting members of the Legislative and Regulatory Affairs Committee, the Directors or the Executive Director.


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## Teleconference to Address Emerging Issues

The March 11, 2004 AWWA Teleconference, with downlink sites in Portland and Presque Isle, will highlight emerging operational issues in the water utility sector and consider their impact on operations and personnel.

Topics of discussion include control and reporting systems, the impact of new regulations as they relate to future operations and the repair and replacement of aging infrastructure. The possible impacts of the above on operations personnel will focus on the need for multi-skilled operators, development of a strategic plan and the need to establish benchmarks and performance indicators.

The session will feature a section on infrastructure challenges, a discussion of facility life expectancy and future design considerations, a panel discussions and a case study. Mark your calendar. Notices will be sent once they are received in the MWUA office.

## February Meeting Geared to Meet Changing Needs of Membership

The February Meeting and Trader Show is right around the corner and the Program Committee and staff have been diligently working to pull together the final details.

As was noted in the previous issue of Maine Water News, it has become increasingly obvious that the association must strive to identify and meet the expectations of the exhibitors and utility attendees. The conference has been restructured such that the various events better complement each other.

On Sunday evening a Meet & Greet, consisting of light hors d'oeuvres, a cash bar and a piano player in the Holiday Inn by the Bay lounge, will give everyone the chance to mingle, talk with old friends and develop new friendships.

On Monday, The Changing Face of Water Utility Operations will address the issues that Augusta Water District, specifically, is facing and that many others may be

dealing with in the future. It has been an incredible challenge to line up speakers for that session – perhaps in part due to the sensitivity of the topic - but the finishing touches are being applied to what will be an informational and motivating program.

We are fortunate to have Mark Iskanian, formerly with CMP, as the moderator for the session. He is prepared to share some interesting war room stories. We are also very pleased to have AWWA President-Elect Katie McCain provide the national perspective on this new way of doing business.

The two NEWWA sessions, Crisis Planning & Communication and Distribution System Protection, will allow attendees to equip themselves with the knowledge they need to deal with issues that - perhaps even 5-10 years ago - were not the front burner topics they are today.


The Show Preview will start and end an hour earlier, giving people more time to go out on Monday evening.

The Tuesday morning Fielding Water Quality Questions session will better prepare office staff and other front-liners to interact with an increasingly informed public that expects information as well as answers when they call the water system office.

The technical modules, to be held at the Civic Center, were implemented to expand the availability of training contact hours, while increasing attendance at the Trade Show. The fact that many of those modules will be presented by exhibitors will be of benefit to those who provide the services and those who use them.

The banquet has also been restructured to provide greater opportunity for camaraderie and networking. The buffet dinner, the presentation of awards and the remarks from the 2003 and 2004 Presidents will be as in the past. However the new twist is that the conference nightcap will be a buffet of select deserts and coffees and live music from a soft jazz band. It promises to be a very enjoyable evening.

A revised registration form (which now includes a Monday only option) is included with this newsletter. Be advised that space is limited, particularly for some of the technical modules.

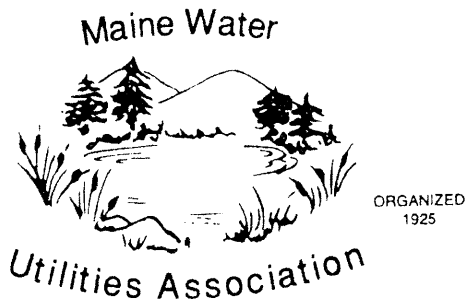


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**Cumberland County Civic Center and the Holiday Inn By The Bay**  
**Portland, Maine**

**Jeffrey LaCasse, President**

**Jefferson Longfellow, Program Committee Chair**

**SUNDAY, February 8, 2004**

7:00 – 10:00 PM **MEET & GREET**  
*Lounge at the Holiday Inn By the Bay*  
 \*Light Hors d'Oeuvres & Cash Bar

**MONDAY, February 9, 2004**

7:45 AM **SEMINAR REGISTRATION**  
*Holiday Inn By The Bay*

8:30 AM **The Changing Face of Water Utility Operations (3.5 TCHs)**

8:30 AM **Crisis Planning & Communication - Prepare Yourself (.5 CEUs)**

8:30 AM **Distribution System Protection (.35 CEUs)**

12:15-1:30 PM **BUSINESS BUFFET LUNCHEON - INCLUDED WITH SESSIONS A, B, & C**

1:30-2:30 PM **A Roundtable Forum On Organizational Structures For Water Systems (1.0 TCHs)**  
 The Water District:  
*Nan Crossman, Westwood/Dedham Water District*  
 The Regional Water Authority:  
*TBD, Massachusetts Water Resources Authority*  
 The Private Water Company:  
*Donald Ware, Pennichuck Water Works*

3:00-6:00 PM **SHOW PREVIEW 2004**  
*Cumberland County Civic Center*  
 Food, Drink, Door Prize Drawings

**For additional information on the February Meeting & Trade Show, call the MWUA office at (207) 832-2263.**

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**TUESDAY, February 10, 2004**

8:00 AM **TRADE SHOW EXHIBITS OPEN**  
*Cumberland County Civic Center*

All Day Visit the NEWWA booth for Drinking Water Week advice and consultation.

8:30-9:30 AM **TECHNICAL MODULES-Civic Center**  
**ATVs-Source of Supply Threat?**  
*Captain's Club (1.0 TCHs)*  
**Procuring Consulting Services (QBS)**  
*Training Corner (1.0 TCHs)*

9:00-11:45AM **OFFICE SESSION: Fielding Water Quality Questions (2.5 TCHs)**  
*Holiday Inn By The Bay, Vermont Room*

10:00-11:00 AM **TECHNICAL MODULES-Civic Center**  
**Chainsaw Safety: Captain's Club (1.0 TCHs)**  
**Coatings Technology: Training Corner (1.0 TCHs)**

11:30 - 1:00 **Free Luncheon: Cumberland County Civic Center - Sponsored by Associate Members**

11:30-12:30PM **TECHNICAL MODULES-Civic Center**  
**Videotaping Well Bores & Remote Locations:**  
*Captain's Club (1.0 TCHs)*  
**Chemical Feed Pumps:**  
*Training Corner (1.0 TCHs)*

1:00 – 2:00 PM **TECHNICAL MODULES-Civic Center**  
**Alternative Retirement Options:**  
*Captain's Club (1.0 TCHs)*  
**Hydrants: Training Corner (1.0 TCHs)**

3:00 PM **TRADE SHOW EXHIBITS CLOSE**

5:00 PM **SOCIAL HOUR**  
*Holiday Inn By The Bay*

6:00 PM **BANQUET**  
*Holiday Inn By the Bay*  
 \*Annual Award Presentations  
 \*Presidential Address & Installation of New President

8:00 PM **PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION**  
*Holiday Inn By The Bay*  
 \*Immediately following the Banquet featuring Dessert Buffet, Coffee and Beverages

**Directions**

The Civic Center and Holiday Inn By The Bay can be accessed as follows: From I-295, take Franklin St. Exit. Follow Franklin St. to Middle St., turn right onto Middle St. Stay on Middle St. (which turns into Spring St.) for about one mile. The Civic Center will be on the right; the Holiday Inn is just up the street on the left. For parking information check out: [www.portlandmaine.com](http://www.portlandmaine.com)





**MAINE WATER UTILITIES ASSOCIATION**  
**78<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL FEBRUARY MEETING AND TRADE SHOW**  
*with NEW ENGLAND WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION*  
 February 9 – 10, 2004  
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**INSTRUCTIONS – Please complete all sections.**

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Registration deadline is January 27, 2004.  
 Program schedule and forms also available  
 on the web at [www.mwua.org](http://www.mwua.org)

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 Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**EVENT REGISTRATION – Please check all that apply**

- TWO DAY FULL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION** @ \$130/person \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Two-Day Full Conference Registration covers Monday Training Sessions (including material handouts and certificates), Monday Luncheon, Trade Show, Tuesday Office Session, Tuesday Luncheon, and Technical Modules *Please select all the sessions you plan to attend below! Pre-registration is required.*
- ONE DAY MONDAY SESSION ONLY CONFERENCE REGISTRATION** @ \$110/person \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - SESSION A: The Changing Face of Water Utility Operations (Incl. Luncheon) (3.5 TCHs)**
  - MONDAY ROUNDTABLE on Organizational Structures For Water Systems (1.0 TCHs)**
  - SESSION B: Crisis Planning & Communication – Prepare Yourself (Incl. Luncheon) (.5 CEUs)**
  - SESSION C: Distribution System Protection (Incl. Luncheon) (.35 CEUs)**
- MONDAY BUFFET LUNCHEON ONLY (Note: Sessions A, B & C Include the Luncheon)** @ \$30/person \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- TRADE SHOW ONLY (For name badge purposes only; there is no charge.)**
- TUESDAY ONLY - OFFICE SESSION AND TECHNICAL MODULES** @ \$25/person \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*Please select all the sessions you plan to attend below! Pre-registration is required.*
  - TUESDAY OFFICE SESSION – Fielding Water Quality Questions (2.5 TCHs)**
  - TUESDAY TECHNICAL MODULES (Please check all you plan to attend!)**
  - 1.  **ATVs-Source of Supply Threat? (1.0 TCHs):** *Captain's Club* or 2.  **Procuring Consulting Services (QBS)** (1.0 TCHs): *Training Corner*
  - 3.  **Chainsaw Safety (1.0 TCHs):** *Captain's Club* or 4.  **Coatings Technology (1.0 TCHs):** *Training Corner*
  - 5.  **Videotaping Well Bores & Remote Locations (1.0 TCHs):** *Captain's Club* or 6.  **Chemical Feed Pumps (1.0 TCHs):** *Training Corner*
  - 7.  **Alternative Retirement Options (1.0 TCHs):** *Captain's Club* or 8.  **Hydrants (1.0 TCHs):** *Training Corner*
- SOCIAL HOUR, BANQUET & PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION DESSERT BUFFET** @ \$40/person \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL AMOUNT DUE OR TO BE BILLED** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**PAYMENT OPTIONS**

- Check Enclosed**
- Charge my credit card** \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Visa or Mastercard Only) Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Maine Water Utilities Association is a non-profit membership organization which was organized in 1925. The purpose of the association is to enhance public health, safety, and welfare by advocating safe drinking water through the advancement of knowledge of the design, construction, operation, maintenance and management of water works through education, development and promotion of legislation, standards and policies and an exchange of information and experience.