

MAINE



WATER

NEWS

January 2006

A Publication of the Maine Water Utilities Association

Number 126

We Have Plenty for All

Judy Kelley, President

Here is a look at water supply and demand in our water-rich state:

Annual Supply

- 24,000,000,000,000 (that's 24 trillion) gallons of water fall on Maine in a "normal" year with 42 inches of precipitation (We are at 70 inches + through November 30, 2005!)
- About 8,400,000,000,000 gallons (35%) evaporate (gotta love that water cycle)
- About 12,000,000,000,000 gallons (50%) run off into rivers, lakes, ocean
- About 3,600,000,000,000 gallons (15%) end up in the groundwater

Annual Demand (biggest users)

- About 37,000,000,000 gallons (0.15% of total annual supply) is used by paper mills (rivers and lakes)
- About 34,000,000,000 gallons (0.14%) is used by water utilities (8 billion gallons from groundwater and 26 billion gallons from surface supplies)
- About 719,000,000 gallons (0.003%) is used by agriculture (various sources)
- About 559,000,000 gallons (0.002%) are used in snowmaking (various sources)
- About 448,000,000 gallons (0.002%) are used in bottled water (groundwater)

I included all the zeros on these numbers on purpose—we annually get lots of water in this state! I hope you agree that Maine gets an incredible amount of fresh, clean water that falls on the state each and every year, and our human uses and demands don't even scratch the surface in term of quantity. Despite these facts, there are three

important statewide debates happening in Maine right now that revolve around the use of water- who gets to use it, how much is available, and should Maine tax it.

On the issue of taxing water, we now know that there were not enough qualified signatures to have a referendum vote next November where Maine citizens would have been asked to impose a tax of 20 cents for each gallon of bottled Maine water. To quote a respected Maine businessman (not in the water business) on the state's propensity to tax and spend, "This is a model for why businesses are exiting the state of Maine." But, while this latest proposed tax is dead for the moment, I do expect it will resurface. When it does, we should all be armed with the facts and numbers above, and quote them early and often in your conversations with anyone about this issue. It will blow them away, and hopefully convince them that taxing water, bottled or otherwise, is a ludicrous idea. The Maine bottled water industry provides good jobs and promotes Maine's pristine natural resources worldwide, with a product that is plentiful, clean and renewable.

The second debate happening in the state is on the issue of sustainable stream flows, and the allocation of surface water between people and aquatic life. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection was charged by the Maine Legislature to develop rules that govern the allocation of surface supplies – lakes, ponds, rivers and streams, and the amount of required flows downstream. As currently drafted, an unintended consequence of the draft rules could hinder the ability of some Maine water utilities to use existing surface supplies to the degree that they have been used in the past, and could force the costly, and controversial, development of additional supplies, or to prepare costly studies in order to get permission to continue to use supplies as have been used for the past 100+ years. MWUA is actively involved in this debate and discussion, but it may involve legislation, where we will need to call for the entire MWUA membership's help.

Water News
is published bimonthly 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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(cont. from p.1)

Thirdly, there is a Maine task force that has just started to review current state law regarding the regulation of groundwater use, as a subset of the Land and Water Resources Council. This Council, as directed by the Maine Legislature in the last session, is charged with "conforming and equalizing" the rules governing groundwater use in Maine, with the goal of ensuring scientifically sound state policy that the withdrawal of groundwater does not cause undue adverse effect on Maine's waters. This group is charged with proposing any necessary changes to state law in order to accomplish its mission, with any new rules to be adopted by March, 2007.

I can't help but wonder, though, what are the problems that we are trying to fix? There doesn't seem to be anything seriously "broken" with the use of water in the state, and we are fortunate to have plenty of supply. Regardless, these three debates on our surface supplies, our groundwater supplies, and the ability to tax the use of water will set the stage for the water utility profession long into the future. While the association's board and committees are actively involved in these issues, I encourage all our members to stay informed and know your Maine water facts, since you have the power to influence and impact these important policy decisions.

2006 MWUA Meeting Dates Set

Maine Water Utilities Association holds bimonthly meetings throughout the year to bring its membership up to date training and timely news. The schedule for 2006 is: February 6th -7th in Portland, April 13th in Rockport, June 8th in Island Falls, October 12th in Bingham and December 14th in Auburn. The association's summer golf tournament will be held on August 9th and the annual clambake will take place on August 10th.

First Session Legislative Report Available on line

A report, covering the association's activities during the First Session of the 122nd Maine Legislature, was recently mailed to water utilities. That legislative report is now available online at: www.mwua.org/FIRST_SESSION_122nd_Maine_Legislature.htm.

80th Annual February Meeting & Trade Show to be held February 6 - 7, 2005

The February meeting has long served as the venue for the demonstration of new products and the exchange of operational tips and techniques. The association's Associate Members provide much in the way of resources and energy in order to make the trade show such a success. The Program Committee, the Directors, the Education & Operations Committee and other volunteers all contribute to this effort as well.

The conference will, once again, be a great opportunity to obtain the latest information in the water works profession. Those arriving early should consider joining us in the lounge of the Holiday Inn by the Bay on Sunday for a Super Bowl Meet & Greet party. On Monday there will

be a full day of training at the Holiday Inn, followed by the Trade Show Preview. Tuesday will be a full day at the Cumberland County Civic Center.

Check out the details in the brochure (or online at www.mwua.org) and make plans now to attend.

Farewell to a Friend

Donald K. Brawn, 77, retired Superintendent of the Newport Water District and former Chief of the Newport Fire Department died unexpectedly October 27, 2005. Don was born August 27, 1928 in Newport, the son of Harvard and Thelma (Sheridan) Brawn.

He was educated in Newport Schools. He married Eudora Frazier, April 20, 1946 in Newport. Don was hired by Maine Water Company to run the Newport system. He worked to get his required certifications and became the superintendent. He retired from the Newport Water District in 1997, after 20 years of service.

He was a member of the Newport Fire Department for 30 years and served as chief of the department for 25 years, retiring as an honorary chief. He was an avid outdoorsmen enjoying hunting, fishing and camping. He spent many happy days fishing on Wilson Pond with his wife and partner, Dody.

March Satellite Teleconference to Feature Innovative Operator Tools

The next American Water Works Association Satellite Teleconference will be held on Thursday, March 16th at the University of Maine in Presque Isle and the Portland Water District in Portland. SCADA, AMR, GIS and other technologies will be discussed. 0.3 CEUs will be awarded for training. For additional information, visit www.awwa.org.

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Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program Receives Governor's Award

The Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (VLMP) received the Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence at an awards ceremony in November. The award, presented by Governor Baldacci, recognizes the VLMP's commitment to environmental stewardship through its mission of training citizen volunteers to monitor and protect Maine's lakes and ponds.

The VLMP, a statewide nonprofit organization, fosters stewardship by training, certifying, and providing

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support to individuals throughout Maine who monitor the water quality of lakes and ponds, and conduct surveys to detect invasive aquatic plants, such as milfoil. The VLMP is the oldest and, with over 1,800 volunteers trained, one of the largest citizen lake monitoring programs in the U.S.

The VLMP provides credible water quality and aquatic plant data to state and federal agencies, educational institutions, lake associations and others who have an interest in the ecological, aesthetic and economic value of Maine's lakes and ponds.

According to Scott Williams, VLMP's Executive Director, "volunteer lake monitors are at the very core of Maine's effort to ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy the clear, clean waters of our lakes." The Governor's Award is a fitting tribute to their dedication and commitment."

To learn more about the program, visit <http://mainevolunteerlakemonitors.org>.

Nerd Corner

I once was lost but... Ever find yourself trying to, well, find yourself? As I store more and more stuff on our computers I find it increasingly hard to find it. One solution is a free download called Google Desktop. This is an application that indexes information on your hard drive and hard drives on your network. By indexing this information, a search is very fast because Google has already found everything for you in advance. It works way faster than searching using Windows Explorer. And it's free from Google. This is a feature that Microsoft will be building into its next Windows OS. This will also search resident e-mail applications like Outlook. It's pretty sweet. Check it out!



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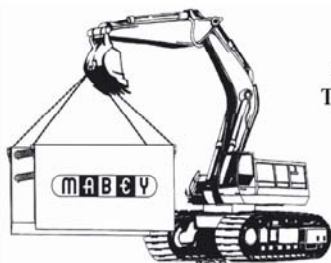
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www.mwua.org

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Website Design Class in the Works

MWUA's Public Awareness Committee is in the planning stages of developing a training session on website design. The PAC is seeking input from members on where, when and how they should provide this training. If you are interested in participating in the class, please take a minute to complete the following survey and return it to MWUA, PO Box P, Waldoboro, ME. 04572 by February 15, 2006.

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Shirley Churchill

Shirley Retires!

The Augusta Water & Sanitary District hosted a retirement party on December 16th for Shirley Churchill. Shirley was a dedicated employee of the Augusta Water

District for 25 years and has long served on the MWUA Legislative and Regulatory Affairs Committee as clerk a/k/a the glue that holds the committee together. She will certainly be missed at the district; however the good news is that she will continue to review and monitor legislative documents for the association.

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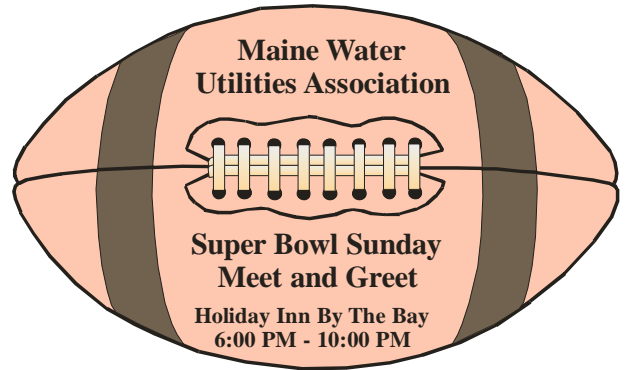
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