

# Maine Water News

*A Publication of the Maine Water Utilities Association*

May 2010, Number 151

## Be a Part of the Changes at MWUA

*Kathy Moriarty, President*

This issue of MWUA newsletter has a fresh look, a new logo! The new logo is just one of the recent changes at MWUA. This year we have a full plate of new programs and training opportunities. Our office in Waldoboro will be moving to Augusta and plans are in place for changes to our website.

Be involved in these changing times. The best way for MWUA to grow is to encourage more members to get involved and promote creativity into our programs. We have a lot of good things happening in our committees. Try one out or encourage someone you know to volunteer. It's a rewarding experience giving committee members networking opportunities, learning insights, and professional growth and development. See if one of these MWUA committees is the right fit for you.

**Education and Operations:** Would you like to help develop technical training sessions? The Ed and Ops Committee plans these sessions throughout the year to assist water utility staff and management to effectively operate their systems while providing TCH credits for professional development.

**Legislative & Regulatory Affairs:** Are you interested and excited about effecting change on the legislative front? The Legislative Committee follows and develops strategies impacting state and federal legislative issues which affect the water utility profession.

**Program:** Did you attend the MWUA February trade show and conference this year? How about the MWUA Clambake in August? The Program Committee organizes these events. They also develop timely topics for bimonthly membership meetings, which provide valuable networking and technical sessions to water utility managers.

**Public Awareness:** Did you see the Drinking Water Insert in your local paper on May 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup>? The Public Awareness Committee was responsible for the development of this communication piece. MWUA

Scholarship, MWUA website development, and our new logo are a few projects they are currently working on.

**Water Resources:** Are you interested in water quality or source water protection? The Water Resources Committee represents and advocates water supply interests relative to source water protection and public health issues. They also organize the successful source water protection seminar each year.

**Water Use Efficiency:** If you are interested in benchmarking water use and finding effective means for utilities to promote the wise use of water, volunteer on the Water Use Efficiency Committee. This committee is our newest committee. They have already developed a CD containing Maine water utilities water use data and plan to use the MWUA new website for data exchange.

All of these committees have great people volunteering their expertise and knowledge. They are the core of what MWUA does. I thank all of our committee volunteers for their time and energy and ask you to get involved... learn, grow, and give back. Make it happen.

For more information about MWUA committees, contact MWUA executive director Jeff McNelly.



*Aqua Maine's filtration facility under construction (see inside article)*

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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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## **The April Meeting**

The April bimonthly, held at the Gardiner Lion's Club and hosted by the Gardiner Water District, was an infrastructure related session with a slight twist. Superintendent Paul Gray provided a system overview and he was followed by Jeff Musich of Wright-Pierce, who described the operational and legislative initiatives which have recently been pursued by the Gardiner and Hallowell Water Districts.

In order to forgo the need to develop a new source of supply, Gardiner will be purchasing water from Hallowell. Because that water is non-fluoridated, a legislative bill was introduced this past session - and ultimately enacted - that authorized them to do that. That bill, LD 1756, is now Private and Special Law Chapter 37.

The Gardiner Water District is required to provide all of its customers that may be affected by the change from fluoridated to non-fluoridated water with written notice of the change. Gardiner is also required to inform the customers that may be affected by the change that if a customer wishes to continue to receive the benefits of fluoride, the customer should contact the customer's dentist or health care provider.

The leasing of facilities was the first of the technical session presentations. Kevin Doyle of TD Bank did an excellent job of organizing and presenting the details and nuances associated with the leasing of facilities. He discussed why companies might lease, the components of leases, lease structures and examples, equipment types, documentation and other aspects to consider under a potential lease scenario. Office copiers, water meters, or vehicles are the items that might come to mind when one thinks of leasing; however the field is much broader than that.

Todd Brown of Utility Service Company discussed the asset management of tanks through a professional maintenance program. Attendees found this to be informative and, indeed, queried Mr. Brown as to specific details.

A high point of the meeting was when Greg Cataldo received the Jim Doherty Excellence in Volunteerism Award and Mike Broadbent received the Sid Anthony Award of Merit. The original plan was to bestow these awards at the February meeting but Greg was away at a family event and, appropriately enough, Mike was swept up by a major water main break that kept him in Richmond and up for several hours.

The Lions Club members prepared a very nice lunch. All said, it was a very productive day.

## **Looking Forward to June...**

The June bimonthly will be held at the Presque Isle Country Club on June 10<sup>th</sup>. The meeting will include a talk about energy efficiency, as well as discussions about the Caribou and Presque Isle water systems transferring to new groundwater supplies.

There will be a MWUA golf outing the day before at the Country Club, starting at 1PM. We invite you to experience one of the nicest golf courses in Maine. If you play only a little or a lot, you have to try this course. We look forward to seeing you there.

## Streamside Therapy

*From the Editor's Desk*

The current proposed rulemaking by the PUC reminds me that one of the primary reasons for MWUA hiring an Executive Secretary, two decades ago, was the fact that we were spending considerable sums of money for others to represent our interests before that agency. There was much activity on the regulatory and legislative fronts then and much of it involved economic regulation. If anyone were to read the "Old Codger" columns in the Journals they would get a good sense of the fun we had back then.

I think things are getting better. In spite of the angst created by Chapter 660, I see the rulemaking as an opportunity. The few dealings that I have had with PUC staff recently have, for the most part, been positive. I am optimistic that the final outcome will be one that serves the customer well. The litmus test will be that the rule does not result in unwarranted processes or costs for any water utility – whether they have a staff of 30 or 2.

There is an arena where the public is not being served very well, and that is the SRF match fiasco.

MWWCA's Legislative Liaison, Andrew Gilmore, and I met with leadership from both sides of the aisle on several occasions in order to gain support for the inclusion of funds in the bond package, in order to cover the 2011 match requirements. We also met with the Governor's staff. The majority party made it clear that we had to get the Republicans on board in order to make this work. The meetings with leadership were very productive; we were told that we were at the top of their priority list.

So what happened?

One never knows for sure what transpires behind those closed doors but the story we heard was that the Governor's staff member offered up the \$5.2M as something that could be taken out. When queried as to the impact of cutting the \$5.2M the response was that "no projects would be delayed and no money would be lost" if they took away the second year of match. Define delay...

That may not be the whole story but that's what we heard. And how it happened is probably not as important as the fact that it did happen.

I sometimes think of these things when engaging in leisure time activities. Like when I'm picking fiddleheads. You really don't have to be that sharp or especially that attentive when engaged in this springtime ritual. There's no need to be on guard for poisonous snakes and you really can't be adequately checked for ticks until you get home – so it's a good opportunity to let your mind wander.

Is it time to rethink our SRF match strategy?

Should we continue to dedicate substantial resources to securing a bond only to have our funding pulled out of the package at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour? Perhaps our effort would be better directed toward a more focused and sustainable solution.



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### Legislature Wraps up - SRF Match Cut out of Bond Package

The 124th Maine Legislature adjourned on April 12th after enacting a final bond package. The previous week they had failed to secure the required two thirds majority in the Senate, on the \$85 million bond packet which had been reported out of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee.

That \$85M package included an additional \$2.0M and \$3.2M (for water and wastewater, respectively) which would have been added to the previously enacted bond referendum that will be going to voters this June. That referendum includes \$6.4M which was projected to be adequate to provide the 20% match required to secure the Drinking Water and Clean Water SRF capitalization grants for 2010 and 2011. Due to an increase in the federal SRF grant allocation for

2010, that \$6.4M covers the 2010 match and leaves only \$0.6M left over for 2011.

The final outcome was a package totaling \$57.8M, which includes eliminating \$13.5M from the previously negotiated June ballot. Hence the net impact is \$44.3M. The additional \$5.2M in match money was eliminated during the final negotiations but fortunately the *original* \$6.4M is intact for the June ballot.

Ultimately it came down to managing multiple crises. Since there is enough money in the June referendum for the 2010 match, the additional match for 2011 was something that was there to cut in order to reach compromise.

MWUA efforts will now turn to the June referendum. Voters very narrowly approved the bond referendum that provided the match for the 2009 programs. A grass roots effort is being planned, in conjunction with the Maine WasteWater Control Association, to garner support for Question # 5.



## Aqua Maine Receives Efficiency Maine Grants

Aqua Maine, Inc. recently received two energy efficiency grants from Efficiency Maine, one for a retrofit at their Millinocket Division and one to cover a portion of the cost of an active solar thermal system at the Mirror Lake Water Treatment Facility in Rockport.

The improvements in Millinocket were made to modify the operation of a water filtration facility that was designed to meet average system demands of 700,000 gallons per day (GPD) and a maximum system demand of 1,500,000 GPD based on the historical demand for water in the community. With the shut-down of the Millinocket paper mill, system demands have dropped to an average of 400,000 GPD and a maximum of 600,000 GPD.

The project included nine new VFD drives, new tank level transmitters and flow meters, new chemical feed pump controls, a new SCADA control package and

a UPS to ensure uninterrupted power supply. The total cost of the project was estimated at \$162,000 and Efficiency Maine pre-approved the project for a \$52,400 rebate. The projected reduction of 37% in energy requirements to produce and pump water equates to a savings of \$18,000 per year.

In Rockport the company is constructing a new microfiltration membrane filtration plant, in order to comply with the Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule. A standard component of the membrane filtration system is an electric immersion heater used to warm water needed for routine membrane cleaning; a process that requires approximately 2,500 gallons of water heated to 95°F each day.

The membrane filtration facility is projected to increase Aqua's electricity demand by 300,000 kWh/year; 130,530 kWh/year is attributable to the immersion heater.

Modeling software was used to predict heating loads and to optimize the size of an active solar thermal system that could be installed to offset the electrical power needed to operate the electric immersion heater. It was determined that a system with 1,000 square feet of solar panel surface area would provide the most economical installation. The 1,000 square foot panel will

generate over 350 MMBTU annually and reduce purchased electricity by 103,500 kWh/year. This represents a 79% reduction in purchased electricity for this process.

The total capital cost of the solar thermal heating system is \$165,000 and that cost will be reduced by \$41,250 through the Efficiency Maine grant. Over the 20 year life of the equipment, the solar panel is expected to save more than \$300,000 in electricity costs, at current rates.

For more information, please contact Rick Knowlton of Aqua Maine, Inc.

The deal, which has been in the works for a number of years, involves land contained in the Mary C. Fenn Trust, which owns more than 1,500 acres in the watershed.

The city will buy 451 acres. The Frenchman Bay Conservancy will hold an easement on that land and collaborate with the city to develop low-impact, non-motorized public recreation while, at the same time, protecting water quality. The Forest Society of Maine will hold a working forest easement on 745 acres. The easement will protect the conservation values of the property and provide for the sustainable harvest of timber.

In a related action, the city recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the Maine Department of Conservation (DOC) that will allow the department to construct a boat launch on a portion of the 1,200 acres that DOC owns on the lake.

Under the agreement, the city will have administrative authority and oversight of the boat launch. A key component of the deal will be the ability to inspect boats going into the lake for the presence of invasive aquatic species. The city's operation of the facility will be similar to the operation of the city's existing facility at the southern end of the lake.

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**Ellsworth Moves to Enhance Watershed Protection, Address Boat Launch Issue**

The City of Ellsworth is moving forward with a partnering arrangement that will protect almost 1,200 acres of the Branch Lake watershed, which is the city's water supply. For their part, the City Council has approved borrowing \$1.5 million. The Land for Maine's Future program will provide \$900,000, and private donations will provide \$50,000.



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**COMMITMENT & INTEGRITY DRIVE RESULTS**

The new DOC facility which is to be constructed has been a source of contention for a number of years. The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife suspended stocking of the lake a number of years ago, citing the lack of public access. Although the city's existing facility is open for use by the public, a causeway and bridge at the southern end of the lake prevents large boats from accessing the majority of the water body.

The DOC plans to construct a new access road from the main highway to the new launch site.

### New Logo Rolled Out at April Meeting

The association has a new logo! Those who visited the Public Awareness Committee booth at the February meeting know that there was a logo contest. Those ideas were then taken to a professional designer and a number of logos were reviewed by that committee, with a final recommendation made to the Directors at their April Board meeting.

The new logo is on the cover of this newsletter and is also on the website. Check it out.

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### Get Out the Vote on the Bond

As noted elsewhere in this newsletter, the match for the 2011 Drinking Water and Clean Water SRF match took a hit during the final bond package deliberations. However, the \$6.4 M which was in the original June referendum is intact. It will appear as the fifth - and last - question on the ballot. The question



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states that the total request of \$10,250,000 will leverage \$33,250,000 in federal and other funds.

The bundling of other projects with the SRF match request turns the 5 to 1 match into about a 3 ¼ to 1 match.

It needs to be remembered that when the stand alone bond referendum for the 2009 matches was sent to the voters, it was narrowly approved by a few thousand votes. It is ironic that voters in rural Maine largely voted NO, even though many essential projects are funded in those localities. Many of those are a very attractive blend of principle forgiveness and zero interest loans.

There will be a targeted effort to educate voters as to the needs and benefits of the SRF programs. System managers will be asked to write letters to the editors of local papers and other media outlets. We hope we can count on everyone to step up to the plate in order to spread the message.

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### Augusta Office Moving Closer to Reality

Back in August the Board voted to relocate the MWUA office to within 10 miles of the Augusta State House, within one year. An ad hoc committee was assembled to work with staff to investigate and review options and to provide a recommendation to the Board. That process is well underway, as a number of properties have been viewed and proposals have been received.

It is expected that a decision will be made within the next several weeks.

### Website Redesign in the Works

The association website, which has been online for at least 15 years, is getting a face lift. And that's not all. An ad hoc committee, consisting of a member from each committee, is busy selecting a template which will be used to create a new look and to optimize the functionality and usefulness of the home page.

The next phase will focus on attributes, capabilities, and other features designed to make the website a preferred destination. There is a laundry list of things waiting to be accomplished. If you have an idea, send it to the office and we will add it to the process.

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### DWW Supplement Focuses on Benefits of Water System Infrastructure

By the time this issue hits the streets, the second National Drinking Water Week supplement, focusing on the importance of water supply and water systems, will have been distributed to the readers of Maine's daily newspaper readers, statewide. This year's supplement, titled: What Does Your Water Utility do for You? will be distributed on Monday May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The theme of this year's issue focuses on the importance of infrastructure and is yet one more effort to educate the public about all that is involved in providing safe and adequate water to their taps.

As was the case last year, this accomplishment was made possible by the association's Public Awareness Committee. They are to be commended for their good work, as are the members of the other committees who develop and deliver training, address important water resource issues, advocate for the interests of the profession and deal with a whole host of other topics and interests.

A downloadable file will be placed on the website. In addition, extra copies of the supplement will be available at the office.

### Upcoming Training Sessions to Cover a Breadth of Topics

The Education and Operations Committee is lining up a number of sessions for the next few months. Topics have been developed which will appeal to a variety of interests. On June 8th and June 15th a custom



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### PUC Commences Proposed Chapter 660 Rulemaking

The Maine Public Utilities Commission recently issued a Notice of Rulemaking for a proposed rule Chapter 660: Consumer Standards for Water Utilities. They also propose to repeal Chapters 81 and 86, as the purpose of Chapter 660 is to consolidate those two chapters.

This action follows a similar rulemaking that was conducted previously to develop similar standards for electric, telephone and gas utilities. A number of water system customer service personnel and managers met recently to discuss the proposal and to develop comments.

In reviewing the rule, it appears that the concept is to impose many of the customer service requirements, which have been developed for electric, gas and other larger utilities, on water utilities.

A primary concern is that there must be adequate consideration of the ability of Maine's water utilities to absorb or accomplish the changes desired by the Commission. There are probably half a dozen different software programs being used by water utilities. These new requirements would require modifications of most - if not all - of the packages in order to manage data differently and to produce the desired reports. It can all be done, but it all comes at a price. The impact on smaller systems could be particularly severe.

Obviously, the transference of a rule designed for electric, telephone and gas utilities to the universe of Maine's water utilities is not something that can be considered a done deal on the first draft.

Discussions will continue as the systems prepare for the hearing, which is scheduled for May 7. Written comments are due on May 14.

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designed session titled Chloramination - The Science will be held in Bangor and Portland, respectively. Later on in the month the eagerly anticipated and never duplicated June Office Sessions will be held in three locations.

The week of June 21st, the New England Water Works Association will deliver their Introduction to Cross-Connection Control Surveying at three locations.

In addition the Water Resources Committee and the Water Use Efficiency Committee are each developing training to be held later this summer.

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Presque Isle

**HOSTS:** Al Hitchcock, Caribou Utilities District & Stephen Freeman, Presque Isle Water & Sewerage Districts

**LOCATION:** Presque Isle Country Club, Route 205, 35 Parkhurst Siding Road in Presque Isle, Maine. (207) 764-0430

**DIRECTIONS:** To get to the golf course from Presque Isle take Route 163/167 East to the intersection of Route 205 (Parkhurst Siding Road) and turn left. The club is located about a half mile in on Route 205

**PROGRAM**

- 8:00 AM – 8:30 AM      **Registration, Continental Breakfast**
- 8:30 AM – 8:40 AM      **Introduction/Welcome to Presque Isle**  
*James Bennet, City Manager of Presque Isle*
- 8:40 AM – 9:15 AM      **Hard Water: Moving From an Antiquated Surface Water System to a New Groundwater Supply**  
*Stephen Freeman, Superintendant, Presque Isle Water & Sewerage Districts*
- 9:15 AM – 9:45 AM      **Easy Water: Moving off the Aroostook River to a New Groundwater Supply**  
*Al Hitchcock, Superintendant, Caribou Utilities District*
- 9:45 AM – 10:00 AM    **President & Executive Director Announcements and Upcoming Events**  
*Business Meeting & Legislative Update*
- 10:00 AM – 10:15 AM    **Break**
- 10:15 AM – 10:45 AM    **Regulatory Update**  
*Larry Girvan, Field Inspector, Drinking Water Program*

**TECHNICAL PROGRAM**

- 10:45AM – 12:15 PM    **Efficiency in the Works- Dollars and "Sense": Are You Finding All The Efficiency You Can?**  
*Chuck Kelley, Industrial Instrumentation & Controls Instructor, NMCC*  
*Owner of Kelly's Industrial Electronics and Limestone Water & Sewerage Districts Trustee*
- 12:30PM                    **Buffet Luncheon**

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*President*

Nicki Pellenz, Frank Kearney  
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or register online by following the link found on our website: [www.mwua.org](http://www.mwua.org)

**HOTEL INFORMATION:** Hampton Inn, 768 Main St, Presque Isle 207-760-9292 (3.6 miles/7 minutes from PICC)  
Northeastland Hotel, 436 Main St, Presque Isle 207-768-5321 (4.2 miles/8 minutes from PICC)

**MAINE WATER NEWS**  
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