

Maine Water News

A Publication of the Maine Water Utilities Association

May 2013, Number 169

4 Days in April

Don Gobeil, 2013 President

I'm endlessly fascinated at how connected we are as a society in today's world, and the immediacy by which events in one part of the country ripple far and wide across the country and the world. The AWWA annual Fly-In was held this year on April 16, 17 and 18. The tragic Boston Marathon bombing happened on April 15. I recall thinking at the time while watching the coverage unfold was how quickly other cities were reacting to the news and taking steps of their own to protect their citizens. Nowhere was this more evident than in Washington, D.C. Heightened security measures are nothing new to the D.C. area and represent an unfortunate but necessary byproduct of living in a volatile world.

Naturally, I wondered how the national attention and mood over the developing tragedy would affect the Fly-In. The AWWA Fly-In is an annual outreach event intended to assemble water industry professionals from all over the country. It is a concentrated effort designed to enable face-to-face visits with congressional representatives to discuss/lobby for legislative solutions to issues important to us, to build awareness of the challenges faced by our industry and to hopefully develop relationships with policy makers. I was concerned that Steve Cox and I would not have the full attention of the people we were scheduled to meet, or worse, that meetings would be canceled due to the uncertainty over the magnitude of what was still a very unstable situation.

What I actually experienced made the trip quite memorable and reassuring. While there was definitely a 'no fooling around' aspect to the security checks we encountered at every congressional office, there was also a palpable sense from the people we met that the nation's business must go on, and that everyone understood that using security concerns to alter how we live and work is exactly the wrong approach and would simply embolden our enemies. We found our meetings to be very productive and the people we met with well prepared and engaged. I was impressed that they all

appeared to have a solid understanding of the history of the Safe Drinking Water Act, the ongoing critical importance of the SRF program, the growing problem of how to address infrastructure needs, and the unintended consequences of well-intended regulation.

I came away from the experience with a couple of impressions. First, that the commitment that the MWUA has shown over the years to sending directors to D.C. to participate in the Fly-In is beneficial and not simply a junket. It helps carry our message to national policy makers, allows for valuable networking opportunities with industry professionals from throughout the country and helps to solidify MWUA as a go-to resource available to our representatives for continuing dialogue and feedback on issues and initiatives. Secondly, that in spite of the dramatic events unfolding all around us, the resolve shown by the people of Washington and the rest of the country to unite in an effort to overcome this latest terrorist event gives us strength and helps us all heal. Washington as the center of our government is continually cast as a place where partisan gridlock prevails and self-interest rules. It takes an experience such as this bombing to show us that there will always be more that unites us than divides us.



Director Steve Cox and President Don Gobeil with Senator Angus King at the 2013 AWWA Fly-In

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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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June Meeting to be Held in Caribou

The Caribou Utilities District will be the host for the June Bimonthly meeting. The meeting will be held at the Caribou Inn & Convention Center on Thursday, June 13th.

Alan Hitchcock, CUD General Manager, will provide an overview of the district. Larry Girvan from the Maine CDC Drinking Water Program will provide the regulatory update. A legislative update will also be provided.

The technical program will feature a discussion of well inspection and rehabilitation by Greg Smith of Wright-Pierce. Greg will speak to utilizing wells to provide an ample supply of safe drinking water while maintaining a sustainable supply for the future. Gene Weeks, from Blake Equipment will cover well pump rehabilitation and VFDs.

On Wednesday, there will be golf at the Loring Country Club. Contact Joe Hersom of E.J. Prescott at (207) 735-7723 to play, or for additional information.

The association has reserved two cabins at Caribou Cabins for Tuesday and Wednesday evening. Anyone who would like to reserve a spot should contact the office at their earliest convenience – as spots are limited.

New Technology Committee Schedules First Meeting

At their April meeting the Board of Directors authorized the formation of a Technology Committee.

Technology is constantly evolving and is an integral part of what water professionals do on a daily basis. The Directors recognized that this new committee would provide an opportunity for the people who are interested and involved in technology at their respective systems to network, and share knowledge and their experiences.

The plan is for this committee to develop and deliver interesting and informative sessions – suitable even for those who may be technology challenged – on a regular basis.

The committee will address a number of topics. Initially, they will focus on SCADA, geographic information / global positioning systems, programmable logic controllers, variable-frequency drives, cell phones/tablets/laptops, automated meter reading, meters, instrumentation and leak detection.

Matt Zetterman of the Kennebec Water District will coordinate the organizational meeting of the committee. That meeting will be held June 19th at Kennebec Water District, 6 Cool Street, Waterville.

Questions can be addressed to Matt at 872-2763 or call the MWUA office. Please RSVP if you plan on attending at info@mwua.org or 623-9511.

Golf and Clambake Dates Fall a Week Later than Usual

Due to scheduling logistics, the annual Clambake Scramble Golf Tournament and Clambake will be held on August 14th and 15th, respectively. **This is a week later than normal.**

The Golf Tournament will be at Val Halla Golf Course in Cumberland Center and the Clambake will be held at Thomas Point Beach in Brunswick. *Mark your calendars to ensure that you arrive at the correct venue on the correct day!*

Legislative Activity at High Level

The 126th Maine Legislature has quickened its pace since the last issue of Maine Water News hit the streets. In this issue we will provide a brief update of what is happening.

LD 239 An Act to Improve the Return to the State on the Sale of Spirits and To Provide a Source of Payment for Maine's Hospitals has had a public hearing before the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee. The Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee has conducted an independent analysis of the best way to utilize the annual revenues from the State's liquor contract. The conclusion is that the Governor's plan to purchase a revenue bond for the purpose of paying off the hospital debt is the appropriate approach. Under that scenario, the "cascade", i.e. the funds remaining after the annual payment to bond holders, would be used to secure the annual SRF match requirements. There has been discussion of using the cascade for other purposes; the association and others will need to continue to advocate for the SRF match needs.

LD 135 An Act to Require all Government Documents to be Posted on the Internet has received an Ought Not to Pass recommendation from the committee.



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LD 303 An Act to Authorize the Public Advocate to Publish and Distribute Consumer Information would have authorized the Public Advocate to publish information and advice for consumers in the State concerning services such as telecommunications, electricity and gas delivery and supply and municipal drinking water services. An amendment to the bill removed the references to municipal drinking water.

LD 441 Resolve, Directing the Public Utilities Commission to Develop a Plan to Reform Water Regulation had a public hearing on April 3rd. The resolve would direct the Public Utilities Commission to develop a plan to reform water regulation and report to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology no later than December 31, 2013. The resolve would authorize the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology to report out a bill to reform water regulation to the Second Regular Session of the 126th Legislature. An amendment to LD 441 would limit development of the plan to consumer owned water utilities, would ensure that any plan protects the interests of water utilities and their ratepayers with regard to the provision of, and charges for, municipal fire protection, water main extensions,

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and readiness to serve charges for small water utilities. It would extend the date of the report to January 31, 2014. The committee voted to report the bill out Ought to Pass as Amendment; however they are waiting for a final language review and perhaps additional amendment language.

LD 674 An Act to Clarify the Natural Resources Protection Act would, among other things, change to 75 feet the setback for significant vernal pool habitat. The association testified in support, stating that the 75 foot setback was more appropriate than the existing 250 foot setback. The bill has received an Ought Not to Pass recommendation from the committee.

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LD 1177 An Act to Implement the Recommendations from the Discontinued and Abandoned Roads and Stakeholder Group and LD 1273 An Act Pertaining to the Closing of Municipal Roads for Community Use are two bills that present problems concerning legally located utility facilities in roads or ways that are to be discontinued. The association is communicating those concerns in order to protect those facilities and the right to be in those public ways.

LD 826 An Act to Eliminate the Opt-out Charges for Smart Meters was a bill that initially focused on meters that measure electricity consumption. The bill was amended to include water meters in the definition of smart meters. That, potentially, would prevent water utilities from installing new meter technology. That bill will be carried over to the Second Scission; the association will continue to oppose it.

LD 1342 An Act to Ensure Just and Reasonable Sewer Utility Rates would define sewer districts and sanitary districts as sewer utilities under Title 35-A and would give the Public Utilities Commission authority to investigate sewer utility rate changes if the commission receives a petition that meets certain criteria requesting it to do so.

The association and the Maine WasteWater Control Association conducted a survey of water,

wastewater, and joint water/wastewater systems to determine their views on what LD 1342 proposes to accomplish. The majority of MWUA members that are joint water/wastewater systems responded to the survey. 88% of the respondents do not favor giving the Maine Public Utilities Commission authority to regulate the rates of sewer or sanitary districts.

The work session on LD 1342 has been held; various stakeholders are collaborating with the committee analyst on alternatives to PUC regulation.

The April Meeting

The Hollywood Casino in Bangor was a nice venue for the April meeting this year. The technical topics were UV and ozone, presented by CDM Smith. Then the operators took over to discuss practical implications of applying and operating these new technologies.

The lessons learned were interesting and informative; obviously there are many technical operations and particularly safety aspects that need to be factored into the design and operation.

Following a very amble lunch, some of the attendees took advantage of what the facility had to offer.

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ETTI Named 2013 Contractor of the Year

Enterprise Trenchless Technologies, Inc. (ETTI) of Lisbon Falls, ME has been named 2013 Contractor of the Year. ETTI has served New England since 1995, providing Directional Drilling, Natural Gas Contracting, Utility Locating, Pipe Fusion, Vacuum Excavation, and Geothermal Services. Scott Kelly, Owner/President of ETTI, received the award Saturday night, March 9th, in Las Vegas.

ETTI was one of 12 contractors from all over the country nominated for the award. Each of the finalists participated in two industry round table sessions and were also the special guests of program sponsor Caterpillar Equipment at the NASCAR Kobalt Tools 400 race on Sunday March 10th at Las Vegas Motor Speedway.

The award recognizes those companies who exemplify the highest of standards of construction professionals: Business Acumen, Equipment Management Expertise, Attention to Safety, and Community Involvement.

ETTI continues to grow at a steady pace, employing 38 of the industry's most experienced and talented individuals, and has also recently surpassed 300,000 hours worked without a loss-time injury.

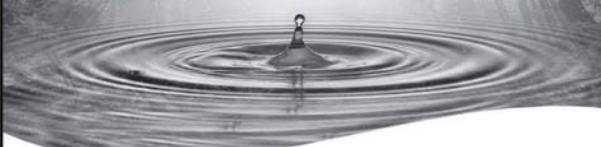
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Training Scheduled for May & June

MWUA's Education and Operations Committee has been working hard on coordinating training for this summer.

On May 21st, 22nd and 23rd, the seminar "Water Main Repairs, Maintenance, and Leak Detection Technology" will be held in Caribou, Brewer and Portland, respectively. Drinking water orders will be covered by the Maine Drinking Water Program, and water main leak detection and repair will be discussed by

E.J. Prescott. Utility Service Group will also talk about ice pigging and leak detection using Helium technology.

An Overview of the Water Treatment Process will be held on June 4th in Caribou, June 5th in Topsham and June 6th in Kennebunk. Plant tours are also included in this training, so make sure to sign up so you do not miss out on that opportunity.

This year's office session will focus on preparing for and responding to customer water quality complaints. The Maine Public Utilities Commission will also cover the new rules of customer reserve accounts and infrastructure surcharges.

For more information and to register, go to www.mwua.org.

Operator Proficiency Subcommittee

This new group has met twice now, and they have even started their own Facebook page as a way to share current events, training and anything else that may be of interest to the water profession. If you are interested in this subcommittee please go "like" their Facebook page here:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Operator-Proficiency-Committee/287047938095185>

For more info, please contact the MWUA office.



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HOST: Alan Hitchcock, General Manager, Caribou Utilities District

LOCATION: Caribou Inn & Convention Center, 19 Main Street, Caribou Maine 04736

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PROGRAM

- 8:00AM – 8:30AM **Registration**
- 8:30AM – 8:40AM **Introduction & Welcome to Caribou**
Austin Bleess, Caribou City Manager
- 8:40AM – 8:55AM **Overview of Caribou Utilities District**
Alan Hitchcock, General Manager, Caribou Utilities District
- 8:55AM – 9:05AM **Regulatory Update**
Larry Giroan, Field Inspector & SRF Project Manager, Maine CDC Drinking Water Program
- 9:05AM – 9:20AM **Legislative Update**
Jeffrey McNelly, Executive Director, Maine Water Utilities Association
- 9:20AM – 9:30AM **Management Candidate School Presentation**
Robert Lento, Mars Hill Utility District
- 9:30AM – 9:45AM **Break**

Golf on June 12th!

There will be a golf outing at the Loring Country Club the day before the meeting (June 12th). If you are interested in playing, please contact Joe Hersom of E.J. Prescott at (207) 735-7723 or joe.hersom@ejprescott.com.

TECHNICAL PROGRAM

- 9:45AM – 10:45AM **Well Rehab and Inspection**, *Greg J. Smith, P.G., C.G., Wright-Pierce*
 - ◆ Utilizing wells to provide an ample supply of safe drinking while maintaining a sustainable supply for the future.
- 10:45AM – 11:45AM **Well Pump Rehab and VFDs**, *Gene Weeks, Sales Engineer, Blake Equipment Co.*
 - ◆ Procedures for well pump maintenance and troubleshooting
 - ◆ When does a VFD really save you money?
- 11:45PM – 12:00PM **Q & A**
- 12:00PM **Luncheon**

Don Gobeil
President

Bruce Berger, Michael Broadbent, & Joe Hersom
Program Coordinators

Registration for June 13, 2013 Bi-Monthly Meeting
PLEASE RETURN REGISTRATIONS/RESERVATIONS BY: June 6, 2013
2.0 Training Contact Hours

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