

# Maine Water News

*A Publication of the Maine Water Utilities Association*

September 2011, Number 159

## **A Time for Reflection**

*Steve Cox, President*

It feels like the seasons have turned yet another corner. The air is dryer, temperatures are cooler, the kids are back in school, and the morning commute needs headlights. Maine has experienced its first and hopefully last hurricane event of the season, and construction crews are embarking on the last main replacement projects before fall flushing and winter maintenance becomes the priority.

Hurricane Irene was a great test for water utilities to prepare for storm related emergencies. Contingency plans for long term power outages, road washouts and flooding were reviewed and most utilities discussed safety when working in harsh weather conditions. Fortunately, Mother Nature spared us significant damage.

Maine Water Utilities may have avoided tragedy from weather; however, the Maine water utility profession suffered tragedy far worse than any loss of infrastructure. As most of you are aware, we lost Weston Haskell on August 18th in a construction related accident. Like many of you, I knew Wes as the former Old Town Water District Superintendent and Assistant General Manager/District Engineer for Bangor Water. He was always willing to help a fellow water professional. I knew Wes as a listener and a thinker, so when he did speak you'd better be listening. It wasn't until I attended the service for Wes, that I became aware of how little I did know about him. Wes clearly was able to balance work, family and his own interests, hardly a small task for the busy lifestyles we all lead.

Wes did it right! Whether his work in the water utility profession, hobbies around the house, a sailing trip across the Atlantic or his relationships with people, he was true to his peers, friends, family and himself. He worked hard, played hard and was very serious about the relationships he had with loved ones.

I have had a difficult time accepting this because I know Wes was very thorough, with an eye for detail and a great awareness for safety. A tragic accident is my

only explanation. That said, I guess my simple message is don't overlook the obvious, slow down, focus on the task at hand and cover each other's backs.

We will all miss Wes. Specifics of the accident are not completely clear; however, it appears as though a simple miscommunication or distraction led to this tragedy.

## **The Annual Golf Tournament and Clambake**

MWUA's golf tournament was once again held at the Val Halla Golf Course in Cumberland on Wednesday, August 10<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately, it was a rather rainy day, but the golfers seemed to have fun in spite of the rain. The players were extremely generous in donating to the scholarship fund by participating in various raffles. As in previous years, Steve Sloan and Bruce Berger did an excellent job in efficiently coordinating the event.

Thankfully, Thursday's weather was much nicer than the day before, which aided in the making of another successful MWUA clambake. The attendees were able to network with other water professionals, while enjoying good food and a beautiful day right on the water in Brunswick. Thank you to Brunswick & Topsham Water District for once again being wonderful hosts. We had a great turnout, and look forward to next year's annual festivities.



*Winning Team at Golf Tournament - Again*

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 is published bimonthly by  
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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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**Results of the Annual Golf Tournament**

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Place Team</b>
Porter Gervais
Brian McGuire
Josh McGuire
Mike Pelkey

<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Place Team</b>
Steve Cox
Peter Goodwin
Greg Leighton

<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Place Team</b>
Dan Burdin
Josh Ordway
Jan Pilawski
Jim Shugarts

<b>Ladies Long Drive</b>
Jen Andrews

<b>Mens Long Drive</b>
Porter Gervais

<b>Closest to Pin #3</b>
Porter Gervais

<b>Closest to Pin #11</b>
Doug Letellier

**October Bi-monthly Meeting**

The October meeting is scheduled for the 13<sup>th</sup>, and will be held at 49 Franklin in Rumford, and there will be an overview/history of Rumford Water District's water system. The technical portion of the meeting will consist of a discussion on electronic billing/payment options, aeration systems, and a case study on oil contaminated soil. Check out the registration form at the end of this newsletter and register today!

**Fire Protection Task Force: Last Call!**

As mentioned in the previous issue of Maine Water News, MWUA is organizing a committee to discuss all aspects of fire protection service. This group will review the work of the Private Fire Protection Taskforce of 1995, the April 2009 presentation at the Richmond bimonthly meeting and more recent happenings. MWUA directors will be involved in this effort, and other association members have volunteered to join this group as well. If you would like to be involved in this effort, please contact the office.

**Aqua Maine Sold to Connecticut Water**

It was announced on July 27, 2011 that Connecticut Water Service, Inc. has entered into an agreement to purchase Aqua Maine, Inc., which is currently owned by Aqua America, Inc. Aqua America is one of the largest US-based, publicly-traded water utilities, serving almost 3 million residents in states scattered throughout the US.

Connecticut Water is one of the ten largest US-based publicly-traded water utilities and, after this transaction, will serve about 106,000 customers in Connecticut and Maine. This agreement gives Connecticut Water a greater presence in New England and also a better opportunity to grow throughout the northeast region. Aqua Maine serves about 48,000

people in Maine, and owns 11 water systems. Connecticut Water will be acquiring about \$33.7 million in rates, and 16,000 customers. This acquisition requires regulatory approval by the Maine Public Utilities Commission, and is scheduled to be finalized in 2012.

### Chapter 140 Rulemaking Terminated

In January of 2011, the Maine Public Utilities Commission commenced rulemaking (Docket No. 2010-



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412) to amend portions of Chapter 140, specifically to correct confusion as to what is required on the annually filed infrastructure maps. Other changes were proposed as well, such as the elimination of the project cost threshold of \$500,000 for reporting changes to infrastructure on these maps.

In June of 2011, the Maine Legislature enacted Resolve 2011, Chapter 69: Resolve to Direct the Public Utilities Commission to Develop a Plan to Reform Telecommunications Regulation. This Resolve directs the Commission to discontinue telecommunications infrastructure mapping changes suggested by the rulemaking. The Resolve also contemplates that the Commissioner's regulatory reform plan will address changes to the infrastructure mapping requirements. Comments made relative to the terminated rulemaking will be considered if another rulemaking is opened to comprehensively address Chapter 140.

### Weston Bradford Haskell III Obituary

Weston Bradford Haskell III died on Aug. 18, 2011, as the result of a construction site accident in

Searsport. Wes was born April 1, 1953, in Boston, MA. Wes spent many years dedicating his time to the water profession, including working at Bangor Water District, and Old Town Water District. He also served on the national licensing board for water system operators. He retired in the final two years of his life, and developed his career as a consulting engineer. He will be greatly missed and his many contributions to the water profession will be felt for years to come.

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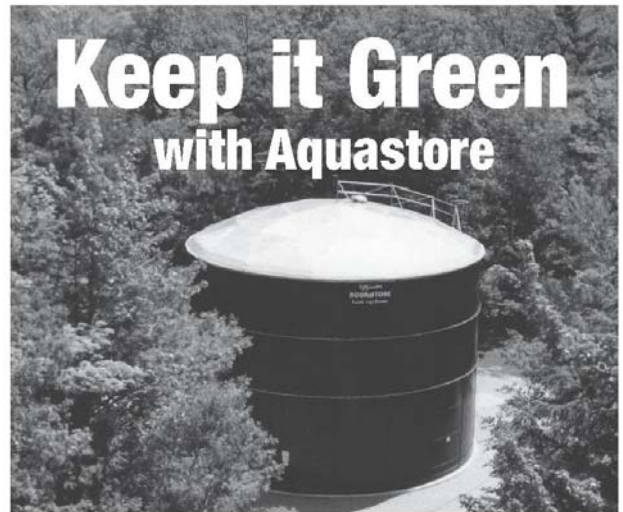
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**Nominating Committee Offers Slate for 2012**

The Nominating Committee has selected a slate of candidates as nominees for Directors for 3-year terms, starting in 2012.

There are three seats to be filled on the Board. The terms of Gordon Johnson of Portland Water District, Don Gobeil of Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells

Water District and Jon Ziegler of Boothbay Region Water District expire at the end of 2011. Johnson became a Director in January of 2006 and Gobeil and Ziegler became Directors in January of 2009.

The committee has selected the following candidates:

Gordon Johnson, Portland Water District

Don Gobeil, KKW Water District

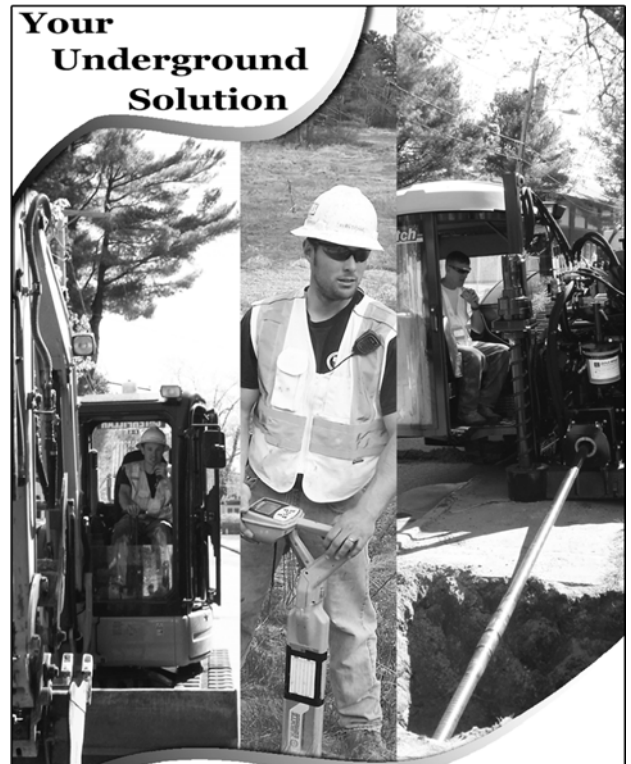
Jon Ziegler, Boothbay Region Water District

Nominations for Directors are presented at the October Meeting by the Nominating Committee or from the floor by any member. The By-Laws require that the membership be notified, in writing, of the committee's selections for the nomination of Directors at least ten days prior to the October meeting. Eligible candidates who can be nominated from the floor include Individual, Retired and Honorary Members of the association who are members in good standing.


Current Directors whose terms expire at the end of 2012 include Stephen Cox of Aqua Maine, Inc. and Alan Frasier of Brunswick & Topsham Water District.

Current Directors whose terms expire at the end of 2013 include Kathy Moriarty of Bangor Water District and Alan Hitchcock of Caribou Utilities District.

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**Dig Safe Workgroup Zeroing in on Recommendations**

As was noted in the last newsletter, a Dig Safe Work Group has been tasked by the legislature to examine pre-excavation marking standards for excavators; marking standards for owners and operators of underground facilities; enforcement procedures and standards and the appropriate use of penalties; and clarification of incident reporting and ensuring that incident investigations involve appropriate fact-finding

and do not assume or require inappropriate admission of fault.


At the last meeting the group adopted a number of recommendations. Included among them were a proposal to establish a standard 18" tolerance zone for both member and non-member operators, and the use of 80 % of fines for the purpose of non-member utilities, who agree to become members, to create digital mapping. In addition there was a proposal to change the requirement relative to notification of private landowners.

Under the latter scenario, the private landowner would not be required to mark out facilities. The excavator would not be required to wait 72 hours from the time of notice to the private landowner to the start of excavation and the excavator would be responsible for all damages to private facilities.

The association has submitted a memo to the workgroup which identifies the problematic nature of an 18" tolerance zone (particularly for deeply buried facilities) and which suggests that the group have a more comprehensive discussion of the implications of the latter two recommendations.

The Public Utilities Commission and the chair of the work group is to submit a report to the Energy,

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Utilities and Technology Committee no later than January 15, 2012 that includes all findings and recommendations supported by at least 2/3 of the appointed members of the work group. The PUC has been directed to submit provisionally adopted rules to the Second Regular Session of the 125th Legislature necessary to carry out the recommendations of the work group and any legislation necessary to carry out the recommendations of the work group.

**HOST:** Rumford Water District, Brian Gagnon

**LOCATION:** 49 Franklin Reception Hall: 49 Franklin St., Rumford, ME 04276 Phone: (207) 369-0129

**DIRECTIONS:** Take Rt. 108 into Rumford, Straight through set of lights, cross bridge over Androscoggin River, immediate right onto Franklin St, slight left at top of the hill to stay on Franklin St., facility on left.

**PROGRAM**

- 8:00 AM – 8:30 AM      **Registration, Continental Breakfast**
- 8:30 AM – 8:45 AM      **Introduction & Welcome to Rumford**  
*Carlo Puiia, Rumford Town Manager*
- 8:45 AM – 9:00 AM      **Overview of Rumford Water District**  
*Brian Gagnon, Rumford Water District*
- 9:00 AM – 9:15 AM      **Regulatory Update**  
*Normand Lamie, Maine Drinking Water Program*
- 9:15 AM – 9:30 AM      **Legislative Update**  
*Jeffrey McNelly, Maine Water Utilities Association*
- 9:30 AM – 9:45 AM      **Nominating Committee Report**  
*John Storer, Nominating Committee Chair*
- 9:45 AM – 10:00 AM      **Break**

**TECHNICAL PROGRAM**

- 10:00 AM – 10:45 AM      **Aeration System** *Jerry Lowry, Lowry Engineering*  
An overview of Rumford’s innovative water air stripping for corrosion control that was installed on their wells for copper and lead control. Aeration also helped to adjust the pH.
- 10:45 AM – 11:30 AM      **Electronic Billing & Payments** *Sam Eorard, Invoice Cloud*  
Find out how water utilities can save money and speed cash flow by using Invoice Cloud to seamlessly move away from paper invoices and checks to electronic bills and payments.
- 11:30 AM – 12:15 PM      **Watershed Protection from Fuel Oil Contaminated Soils** *George Seel, Maine Department of Environmental Protection & Al Hodsdon, AE Hodsdon Engineering*  
Case study of Rumford’s experience with oil contaminated soil and its impact on siting a well. Lessons learned and information for your utility.
- 12:15 PM                      **Lunch**

Steve Cox  
*President*

Nicki Pellenz & Sid Hazelton  
*Program Coordinators*

**2.5 Training Contact Hours will be granted for this session**

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REGISTRATION FOR MWUA OCTOBER 13, 2011 MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
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**Affiliation** \_\_\_\_\_

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