

MAINE WATER NEWS

A Publication of the Maine Water Utilities Association

May 2020, Number 210

President's Message

Brian McGuire

To Our Members,

It is our hope that this newsletter finds you safe and well, not only your co-workers but all your families as well.

There is no doubt that few of us have experienced what we are currently facing. The results of this current pandemic have created a completely different way of doing business. For some of our members on the coast many summer accounts came into the state early and demanded service activation immediately. This taxed an already depleted number of available employees because of social distancing and the attempt to minimize risk for utility employees by splitting crews and limiting certain service calls. Obtaining personal protection equipment, sanitizers and the like has also presented challenges. Loss of revenue due to reduced demand from manufacturing and commercial accounts is starting to become a problem for many systems.

While the federal government has attempted to help by allocating trillions of dollars to help businesses and individuals to survive, it has done little to assist the utilities that provide a service that helps the public avoid contacting the virus... water utilities. In the very beginning all science and medical experts advocated that everyone washes their hands and to do so frequently. Yet we are not even on the radar to receive financial support. The public needs the service and product we supply for their very health. Why are we an afterthought for financial relief? Makes you wonder does not it. Well over the weekend there appears to be a glimmer of hope. In an article published by the Association of State Drinking Water Administrators (ASDWA) it said the following:

“Yesterday, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee advanced out of committee two bipartisan water bills: America’s Water Infrastructure Act of 2020 (AWIA 2020) and the Drinking Water Infrastructure Act of 2020 (DWIA 2020). ASDWA [provided written testimony](#) on the draft legislation last week.

AWIA 2020 provides approximately \$17 billion in new federal authorizations to invest in infrastructure projects nationwide. The bill sets a two year goal for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to complete its feasibility studies for potential projects.

DWIA 2020 reauthorizes Safe Drinking Water Act programs that support drinking water infrastructure and provide resources and technical assistance to communities facing critical drinking water needs”.

The link for the article is <https://www.asdwa.org/2020/04/28/asdwa-submits-testimony-to-senate-committee-on-drinking-water-legislation/>. If you would like to read more of the article.

Continued on Page 2

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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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Another resource that may prove helpful is CIFA which stands for Council of Infrastructure Financing Authority. The hyperlink for their website is <https://www.cifanet.org/>. Both organizations are working hard to support our profession in attempt to make sure that we are parts of any discussions for financial relief moving forward.

It has been mentioned that one of the best things we can do currently is to reach out to our national delegations while they are home. Your efforts to do so can often have profound affects on what they do or do not do regarding funding our financial needs over the next several months. Why not consider writing a letter on utility letterhead asking them for their support?

MWUA is currently working hard with Maine Water Environment Association, JETTC and RCAP to coordinate training offerings to help you obtain the TCH's (Training Contact Hours) to fulfill the requirements by the licensure authorities. To this end we are exploring ways to still host our conference in 2021. It may be a virtual conference. We are attempting to pull together meaningful, quality and well thought out virtual training classes online for your benefit and professional development. We should be announcing some very exciting news soon that will help us accomplish this goal.

We have been hosting a weekly call between state and regional regulators in attempt to both communicate our needs and receive guidance from them. If you would like to participate in these calls, please reach out to me via phone or email and we would be happy to include you. They take place every Wednesday at 2:00 PM via Zoom.

The June meeting and clambake have been cancelled. Currently we are still making plans to host the golf tournament. Please monitor our website to see if that changes. We have posted many links on our website to various supplies along with meaningful articles that may prove to be helpful managing resources during this pandemic.

Until we can be together again physically, we hope all of you remain safe and well.

Brian McGuire

SAVE THE DATES!

The following is a list of our currently scheduled events through 2020. These are based upon the Restarting Maine's Economy and the Rural Reopening Plan put out by the state.

35th Annual Golf Tournament

This year's golf tournament is currently scheduled for Wednesday, August 12, 2020. We will be following the state's guidelines for COVID-19. Watch our website for all the details.

2020 Clambake

Unfortunately, with the state's guidelines for reopening, we will not be able to hold the clambake or tapping contest this year. We will miss everyone getting together. We hope to see you all back in 2021!

Bi-Monthly Meetings

The Bi-Monthly Meetings for the rest of the year are:

June 11, 2020 CANCELLED

October 8, 2020 in Bath

December 3, 2020 in Yarmouth

Annual Source Water Seminar

The Annual Source Water Seminar will be held on September 10, 2020 at the Augusta Civic Center. The Water Resources Committee is busy working on the seminar. Public/Customer Perception of Drinking Water.

Technology Seminar

The Technology Committee is busy working on the seminar. It is currently planned for October and will be in Gardiner. The topic is drones.

Virtual Trainings

We are in the process of creating some virtual trainings. We hope to have these up and running early this summer.

PAYMENT POLICY

MWUA no longer uses the "Bill Me" feature for any events. Instead you will be invoiced immediately. Payment will be due upon receipt. All payments must be received one week prior to the event. If payment is not received, you will not be registered for the event.

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NEW WEBSITE

MWUA has a new website! We are very excited with our new website. Please let us know what you think. We are always looking for suggestions and new ideas on how to make our website more useful for our members. Email either Cindy or Bruce (cwade@mwua.org or bberger@mwua.org).



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March 25, 2020

For Immediate Release

DN Tanks announces the following transition in the company's New England Region:

Corey Meyers, P.E. joins DN Tanks as the New England Regional Manager. Corey's role will be sales and project development services for wire-wound prestressed concrete tanks throughout the six New England States. Corey comes to DN Tanks with ten years of water and wastewater experience with a national consulting engineering firm. Corey is a registered professional engineer in Massachusetts and Connecticut and is an active member of NEWWA and NEWEA. Corey and his wife Heather live in East Boston and are the proud parents of a new baby boy.

Chris Hodgson, DN Tanks former Vice President and Regional Manager has retired from DN Tanks effective December 31, 2019 following 39 years of service with the company. Prior to DN Tanks, Chris served for five years with US Pipe in upstate New York. Chris has held many positions during his tenure with DN Tanks including sales, marketing, and sales management roles. In addition to his career with DN Tanks, Chris has been an active member with numerous local water associations and AWWA Sections throughout his career. He was awarded the K. O. Hodgson Award (named for Chris' father) by NEWWA in 2008 for contributions to the water industry by a service provider. In 2018, Chris was awarded AWWA's John Lechner Award as national recognition for similar career service. Chris served as President of New England Water Works Association from 2017 to 2018. Chris was recently elected to AWWA's Board of Directors to represent NEWWA for a three-year term. He will serve in that capacity in retirement. Chris and his wife Jane live in Hollis, NH and will now spend more time travelling to California to visit their grandchildren.

About DN Tanks: DN Tanks, based in Wakefield, MA, designs and constructs prestressed concrete liquid storage tanks. Our mission is to provide our clients around the world with the highest quality liquid storage tanks at the best long-term value with unsurpassed customer service and satisfaction. The hallmarks of our work are long-term performance, durability, reliability, minimal maintenance requirements, and lowest cost of ownership. www.dntanks.com

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Coronavirus Pandemic and Water Utilities

For general information from EPA about COVID-19 and water, see www.epa.gov/coronavirus. The risk of transmission of COVID-19 via drinking water is low. However, there are other impacts to drinking water and wastewater utilities, which may include, but are not limited to:

- Staff shortages due to absenteeism;
- Supply chain disruptions (chemicals, materials, personal protective equipment);
- Field operations interruptions (repairs, meter reading, sampling); and
- Inability to maintain all operations.

Many water and wastewater utilities have created pandemic resilience plans based on best practices and experiences from past global outbreaks such as the avian flu in 2003 and swine flu in 2009. Utilities should review and update those plans and stay in close contact with their local health department and regulatory agency as the COVID-19 situation is dynamic and evolving rapidly. Water and wastewater systems need the most up-to-date information in order to make decisions that are right for their utility based on the pandemic impacts to their specific community.

Sign up for any COVID-19 alerts or notifications available from your regulatory agency and local emergency management agencies and health departments to stay up to date.

General COVID-19 Information

- U.S. Coronavirus Website
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Drinking Water and Wastewater COVID-19 (CDC)
- World Health Organization COVID-19 (WHO)
- Association of State Drinking Water Administrators COVID-19 (ASDWA)
- Water Information Sharing and Analysis Center COVID-19 (Water ISAC)
- Water Environment Federation COVID-19 (WEF)
- American Water Works Association COVID-19 (AWWA) • Coronavirus Research Update (WRF)

Information on Hygiene and Water Safety

- OSHA Guidance for Wastewater Workers COVID-19 (OSHA)
- Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Waste Management for COVID-19 (WHO, UNICEF)
- Memorandum on Identification of Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers During COVID-19 Response (DHS)

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April 2020 Bi-Monthly Meeting Cancelled Due to the Coronavirus

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