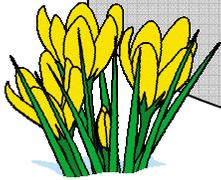




INFLOWMATION

Westford Water Department Newsletter



Water Commissioners:

- Elizabeth Denly, Chairperson
- Leslie A. Thomas, Vice Chair
- Hugh C. Maguire, Secretary
- Titus Palmer, Alternate Member



Department Contacts:

- Stephen Cronin, Superintendent
- Marco Philippon, Water Treatment Manager
- Larry Panaro, Business Manager
- Mark Warren, Environmental Compliance Manager



Inside This Issue:

Changes to CCR; Littleton Road Project;	1
Fire Hydrant Replacement	1
Cost of Leaks; Organic Lawn Care	2
Water Conservation Stages	2
Open House/Expo	3
Rain Barrel Sale	3
Residential Cross Connections; Private Well Corner	4
Bottled Water Vs Tap; Flushing Program	5
Quick Stats; How to Reach Us	6

IMPORTANT CHANGES TO CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORT DELIVERY

This year the Water Department will begin electronic delivery of the annual Consumer Confidence Report (CCR). In past years copies of the CCR were mailed to all Water Department customers. In order to reduce waste and economize we will now provide our customers with a direct link to an electronic copy of the CCR on the Water Department website. **Visiting the following website address will take you to the current CCR:**

<http://www.westfordma.gov/ccr>

The CCR contains important information about the source and quality of your drinking water, and is well worth the time to review. Since electronic delivery will become our primary method for providing the annual CCR it's important to note that:

- **The Westford Water Department will no longer be mailing out paper copies of the CCR unless requested.**
- **Please call at 978-399-2457 (or send email to mwarren@westfordma.gov) if you would like a paper copy delivered to your home or business.**

In addition, copies of the CCR will still be available at the Water Department, Town Hall and other municipal and community buildings.

Littleton Road (Route 110) Water Main Replacement

Article 21 approved by a 2/3 majority at the March 24 & 26, 2012 Annual Town Meeting.

The second phase of the Route 110 Water Main Replacement project will start this Spring to replace undersized mains with larger ones to improve fire flow. The first phase of the project was completed in November of 2012.

Construction should take several weeks, and through traffic should be maintained in the area—although this is subject to change. For current project updates and additional detail visit the Water Department website at www.westfordma.gov/water—or the Westford Engineering Department website at www.westfordma.gov/pages/government/towndepartments/WestfordMA_engdept/index

Fire Hydrant Replacement Program

As part of our hydrant replacement program the Water Department plans to replace 6 fire hydrants in the Forge Village area during 2013. There are 39 fire hydrants in Westford that are “2 nozzle” type fire hydrants. Some of these hydrants were installed as far back as 1907. These hydrants are constructed with a 4” supply line instead of the more typical 6” line—which offer better flow.

Some of these older hydrants are not valved individually, which means that we would need to turn off water to the entire street to service them. Replacement of these older 2-nozzle hydrants will benefit the neighborhoods by increasing available fire flow and reduce the extent of inconvenient water shut-offs in the event of service.

The Co\$ of leaks

Using a drip gauge I recently measured a kitchen faucet leak of about 1 drop every 2.2 seconds (27 drops per minute). This small leak results in a loss of about 34 gallons per day or 12,410 gallons per year. At our current rate of \$4.19 for 100 ft³ of water (which is 748 gallons of water) this leak will cost the customer approximately \$70 per year.



A common source of household leaks is the toilet, which frequently are quiet and hard to detect. A constantly running toilet can waste more than 200 gallons of water per day. That translates into 73,000 gallons of water per year which in Westford will cost the customer \$410 per year! A quick and easy way to determine if your toilet is leaking is to place a drop of food coloring into the toilet tank wait 15 minutes (the Water Department also provides free Toilet Tank Leak Detecting Tablets). If color appears in the bowl then you have a leak. Replacing the toilet flapper—an inexpensive and relatively simple procedure—should fix the leak, and save you a lot of money.

Another major source of leaks—and water bill “sticker shock” - is the irrigation system. Even seemingly small pinhole leaks can result in water bills of hundreds of dollars! Larger irrigation leaks can be in the thousands of dollars! Some simple tips to conserve water and money on your irrigation system are: Keep your system well-maintained and regularly check for leaks; install a moisture detector to your system to prevent watering when it’s raining; only water in the morning or evening (to reduce evaporation), and don’t overwater—established lawns only require one inch of water per week.



Use your meter to check for hidden leaks. First make sure there is no water being used in the house (i.e. turn off all water and water-using appliances), then note the reading on your meter. Check the meter again in 15 minutes—if it moved then you have a leak. Some meters have a leak detector built in - a little red triangle on the face. If there is no water being used in the house and the little red triangle is moving that means you have a leak somewhere (Note: slight back and forth wiggling of the red triangle is normal and does not indicate a leak).

The Westford Water Department is a proud partner with the EPA’s Watersense® program to increase water conservation awareness and promote efficient water use behaviors. Visit the Watersense®, website at <http://www.epa.gov/watersense> for a lot of great water conservation ideas.



Organic Lawn Care

The Westford Water Department encourages the practice of organic lawn care. Why? Well, pesticides applied to the lawn can pollute the groundwater, and Westford’s drinking water source is entirely groundwater. It’s pretty simple: the less toxic chemicals we put into the environment the safer our drinking water supply.

Visit the Healthy Lawns for Healthy Families link on the Water Department website (www.westfordma.gov/water/healthylawnshealthyfamilies). This site provides a lot of helpful information to get you going with organic lawn care including, organic lawn care basics, calendar for treatment, how to work with your current lawn care company, accredited lawn care professionals, links to related websites, and much more. Come to our open house event in May (see page 3) to get advice from organic lawn care specialists.

Water Conservation Stages

Stage I Voluntary water use restrictions will go into effect on May 1 and run through October 31. During this time we ask that customers follow the odd/even day watering schedule and only water before 9 am or after 6 pm. Odd/even means odd-numbered addresses may water on odd-numbered days, and even-numbered addresses on even-numbered days. If it becomes necessary to implement the **Stage II Mandatory** water use restriction then customers must restrict watering to the odd/even schedule and before 9 am and after 6 pm. Pool filling is prohibited under Stage II. If **Stage III Emergency** water use restrictions are implemented then all outdoor non-essential water use is prohibited. Notification of the water use restriction stage will be accomplished by outdoor signage, notice in the local newspaper, town email notices, website announcement, and postings at town hall.

WATER DEPT OPEN HOUSE AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS EXPO

Mark your calendar for the Water Department Open House and Environmental Health & Wellness Expo on Wednesday May 15, 2013. This year's event is a collaborative effort between the Westford Water and Health Departments. Lots of vendors and information on...

- **Water Conservation**
- **Organic Lawn Care**
- **Backflow Prevention**
- **Water Testing Laboratory**
- **Rain Barrels for sale**
- **Irrigation Specialist**
- **Drought Resistant Grass Seed**
- **Recent Water Projects**
- **Tick Control**
- **Water Department Tours**
- **Emergency Preparedness**
- **Organic Soil/Composting**
- **Title V/Septic Systems**
- **Private Wells**
- **Mercury Recycling**
- **Recycling**
- **Sustainable Westford**
- **Free Giveaways**
- **Kid Fun, and much more!**

- **Date: May 15th**
- **Time: 5-8 pm**
- **Where: Westford Water Department**
- **Address: 60 Forge Village Road**
- **Parking: At the Water Department**
- **Kimballs Ice Cream and free giveaways provided!**

Winners of the Water Department Grade 4 Poster Contest and the Health Department Grade 5 Recycle Contest will be announced at the Expo!

RAIN BARREL SALE

The Westford Water Department is partnering with The Great American Rain Barrel Company to provide a town rain barrel program. Rain barrels will be on sale during the Open House (see above) or can be purchased on line. Visit the Great American Rain Barrel Company website at <https://www.greatamericanrainbarrel.com> and click on "Shop Community Programs" and click on "Westford". The deadline for purchasing rain barrels is June 5th, and pick-up will be on Wednesday June 12 from 5:00-7:00 pm at the Water Department.

Rain barrels are a great way to conserve water and have a ready supply of temperate water for gardens. The attractive barrels offered in the sale are 100% recycled, come in 3 environmentally compatible colors, 40% of retail price, are heavy-duty, and will last indefinitely.

Water shortage is a growing global concern. In New England residential water usage can increase as much as 60% during the spring, summer and fall seasons from outdoor watering needs such as watering gardens, lawns, filling pools and, washing cars. Barrels can offset that usage; saving homeowner's money and helping the community manage water supplies. Rain barrels can also reduce runoff. In watershed areas, runoff from homes and developments can harm existing water sources because overtaxed storm sewers discharge polluted runoff. Over time this takes a toll on the fragile aquatic ecosystem that the area is dependant on.

Homeowners can easily connect the barrels to their downspouts and significantly offset their watering needs. In this region there is typically 16" of rain from May 1st – September 30th. For every inch of rainfall a 1000 square foot surface can collect 620 gallons of water, that means that over the course of the extended summer months an average roof of 2400 square feet could see more than 20,000 gallons of fresh rainwater passing over its surface from May through September. That is a pretty significant source of water that homeowners could be tapping into for free.



Residential Cross-Connections

Now that Spring is here folks will be spending a lot more time working on their yards. A lot of people are unaware that yard work can unintentionally create instances of cross connection between the public water supply and sources of pollution or contamination.

Once a hose is connected to a chemical sprayer, draped into a filling pool, or slung into a bucket full of who-knows-what a connection is established between the public water system and a source of pollution or contamination. Why is this a problem? As we all know, water in our houses plumbing system is under pressure and flows in one direction. This is usually true. However, a sudden drop in pressure in the water main (say due to a fire hydrant being opened) can reverse the flow of water in your pipes. This is known as backsiphonage. Backsiphonage can draw the chemicals from the sprayer, water from the pool, or that stuff in the bucket into your plumbing system or even into the water main in the street. **At Right: A hose bibb vacuum breaker installed between the spigot and hose—Good! Below left:**

Example of a cross connection—hose submerged in filled bucket— Bad!



The good news is that there is an easy way to prevent this. By simply attaching an inexpensive hose bibb vacuum breaker (pictured at the upper right—attached between the spigot and garden hose) to your outdoor spigots you can prevent any potential backsiphonage of hazardous or non-potable material into your water supply. Hose bibb vacuum breakers are readily available in the plumbing section at most hardware stores. In addition, a limited number of these backflow prevention devices are available for free at the Water Department. Good practice is to never submerge a hose into a filled bucket or pool.

Irrigation systems present another common residential cross connection, and should be protected by an appropriate backflow prevention device.—usually a pressure vacuum breaker (PVB). In certain cases a reduced pressure zone (RPZ) device may be required. Without proper protection, mud, fertilizer, pesticides, or worse (do you own a dog?) could be back siphoned into your drinking water.



InFLOWmation is published twice a year for all residents and businesses of Westford. Our goal is to keep you informed of events, our challenges and our accomplishments. We also strive to educate and encourage good stewardship of our water resources.

Private Well Corner

The Westford Water Department services roughly 75% of the town. The remaining residents rely on private drinking water wells. Some residents maintain a private well while also having public service, and typically the private well is used only for irrigation. Something to keep in mind is if you have both a private well and public service then there must be no connection between the two systems. A cross connection between a public water supply and a private well is prohibited by the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR) 22.22.(2)(j). For example, if you have a private well used to supply potable water to the house and a connection to town water then you most likely have a prohibited cross connection—which must be removed by disconnecting the private well or discontinuing public water service. For questions regarding private wells contact Darren MacCaughey, Director of Environmental Services, Westford Health Dept.: 978-692-5509 or at dmaccaughey@westfordma.gov.

Is Bottled Water Better than Public Drinking Water? You be the Judge.

Both public drinking water and bottled water must meet safety standards. Public drinking water must meet safety standards set by the EPA while bottled water is regulated by the FDA as a food product and must meet standards set by that organization. While testing is required for both public drinking water and bottled water—only public water suppliers are required to provide customers with an annual quality report—also referred to as the Consumer Confidence Report. Many times bottled water is just municipal water that undergoes an extra treatment step.



Taste is purely objective, and many times bottled water is considered more desirable. Most public drinking water suppliers are required to disinfect the water, and chlorination is a very common means of disinfection. To some chlorination can impart a characteristic taste to the water. However, this is easily diminished by simply using a common water filter or by letting the water sit in your refrigerator for a few hours.

In expense public drinking water can't be beat. A gallon bottle of water in the supermarket can cost \$1.00 or more while the cost of 1 gallon of Westford water is a little over 1/2 of a cent! Depending on how much bottled water you drink, the savings from drinking tap water can be substantial.

For more information on bottled water visit the MassDEP website at <http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/drinking/bottled.htm>.

Water Main Flushing Program

As part of our ongoing maintenance program, Westford Water Department will be completing a comprehensive flushing of the water mains, in the North Street section of Graniteville and Nabnasset areas of Town. We are scheduled to **begin the flushing program on April 16, 2013 and be completed on May 17, 2013. Flushing will be completed between the hours of 8:00 AM and 3:00 PM.** This schedule is **subject to change** as weather conditions and length of flushing times may vary. Please check the website for updates (www.westfordma.gov/water).



Flushing is completed to maintain water quality throughout the distribution system.

This program involves opening fire hydrants and flushing valves to create increased water flows which dislodge and clean out naturally occurring sedimentation in the pipelines.

Minor flooding of streets, periods of low pressure and/or periods you may be without water could occur.

Discolored water may result from the flushing so we recommend that you fill bottles with water for use during this time. If you experience colored water after the scheduled completion time, please run the cold water for 5 to 10 minutes to clear your service line. If your water does not clear or if you have concerns regarding this flushing please call the Water Department at 978-692-5529.

Please avoid washing clothes during the dates and times above.

Westford Water Department reassures customers the water is safe to drink and any discoloration should clear up after the water is run a few minutes.



Westford Water Department
INFLOWMATION
April 2013
60 Forge Village Road
Westford, MA 01886

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Permit No. 12



Postal Patron
Westford, MA 01886



Hours of Operation:
7am to 4pm Monday-Friday
(except Holidays)
How to Reach Us

Main Phone Line	(978) 692-5529
Superintendent	(978) 399-2455
Water Treatment Manager	(978) 399-2456
Business Manager	(978) 399-2453
Environmental Compliance Manager	(978) 399-2457
Billing and Property Transfers	(978) 692-5529
Accounts Payable	(978) 692-5529

Visit our website:
www.westfordma.gov/water

After Hours

In the event of a water emergency outside of the work day, call the Police Department at 978-692-2161. The police dispatcher will contact our on-call personnel for quick response.

Quick Statistics for 2012

Gallons treated: 491.923 million gallons
Gallons Residential Water Used: 380.49 million gallons
Maximum Daily Finished Water Consumption: 7/13/12—3.095 MG
Residential per capita daily usage: 68 gallons per resident/day



Thanks for reading!

For real-time information on water main breaks and service interruptions visit the Water Dept. website at www.westfordma.gov/water.