

WATER / WASTEWATER COMMISSIONERS

2014 Annual Report

The current members of the Milford Board of Water and Wastewater Commissioners include Chairman Mike Putnam, simultaneously serving as a member of the Milford Board of Selectmen, Vice-Chairman Dale White and Mr. Robert Courage. The Commission's goal continues to be that the Water Utilities Department provides quality service at reasonable cost to our customers. NH RSA-38 (referencing water systems) and NH RSA-149-I (referencing wastewater systems) empower the Board of Commissioners with the authority and responsibility to manage and oversee the Milford water and wastewater operations. This Board extends a special "thank you" to the Water Utilities staff members for their dedicated service throughout 2014, and a warm welcome to Town Administrator Bender.

In addition to overseeing major repairs with regard to the 500,000 gallon Dram Cup water storage tank, the Commission continues to actively pursue additional groundwater supply to reduce Milford's dependency to purchase water from Nashua's Pennichuck Water Works when water demand exceeds what can be safely pumped from our Curtis Wells. Milford's contract with Nashua to purchase bulk water on an as-needed basis with Pennichuck expires in 2020.

Water and Wastewater Capital Reserve funds are responsibly utilized for various projects that meet established guidelines. The Commission appreciates the data provided by Milford's Director of Financial Operations, Mr. Jack Sheehy, during the compilation of the sewer rate study performed by Underwood Engineers, including an extensive inventory of the wastewater treatment facility and investigating several prioritized capital improvement projects, all of which have an impact upon user rates. The most critical project identified for 2015 is the replacement of the ultra-violet disinfection system which has been on-line since 1991 since the manufacturer has given notification that they cannot guarantee replacement parts availability for Milford's system beyond early 2015. Should the U.V. system fail, the wastewater treatment facility would be in violation for bacteria. Eleven other projects are on the prioritized ten year capital improvement plan and are based upon anticipated changes to the facility's discharge permit mandated by the EPA and overseen by the NH DES. A 12% sewer rate increase becomes effective with bills rendered as of March 1, 2015. This increase reflects approximately an \$8 increase per quarterly billing for an average residential customer

The Commission encouraged and approved two significant changes during 2014: one being the reduction of the major contributor to the wastewater treatment process odor problem. Sewer sludge biosolids are now transported offsite instead of being composted onsite. Septage receiving has been expanded from two towns to a total of eight towns.

The Commission supports extending the 12" water main along west Elm Street to provide water to those who sorely need it, add five hydrants to increase fire protection,

and to foster a future water connection with the Town of Wilton municipal water system, as has been encouraged by the NH DES, Water Supply Division. The Water Department's policy is to maintain the existing water distribution system and not expand infrastructure. Water infrastructure benefits the entire town, not just the water users. Even those not connected to Milford's water distribution system benefit from the expansive availability of the public water supply in town buildings, cemeteries, schools and 482 hydrants for fire suppression purposes. Beyond these benefits, infrastructure brings substantial value to the town as a whole by drawing commerce that in turn expands the tax base. A warrant article will seek voter approval to fund the extension of the water main 3,283 feet along Elm Street. If approved, this project will be ready to get underway this summer, as time is of the essence in order to complete this project prior to the NH DOT initiating road improvements on west Elm Street during 2016.

Throughout 2015, the Commissioners plan to meet regularly on Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m., at the Water Utilities Department, 564 Nashua Street, on a two-week basis. Meetings are open to the public. Agendas and meeting minutes may be viewed at www.milford.nh.gov, click on Departments, then Water Utilities, then Water and Sewer Commissioners, then Agenda or Meeting Minutes.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael E. Putnam, Chairman
Dale A. White, Vice-Chairman
Robert E. Courage, Member

Reminder to Milford Water Customers: Consider the benefits of hiring a plumber to install a second, outside meter for irrigation purposes. Such a "bypass" meter will save you money because you will not be charged for the sewer portion for using water to improve your lawn or fill your pool. Planning ahead and making this investment in your home's plumbing system will prevent you from receiving a bill with an unusually high "spike" from appearing on your quarterly water/sewer bill AND avoid the need for you to request an abatement of the Board of Commissioners. Such abatement requests are granted to property owners on a one-time approval basis. Please do your part to responsibly conserve water. Check faucets and plumbing to correct water leaks.