

DISTRICT DIGEST

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BRUNSWICK SEWER DISTRICT *Protecting Maine's Environment*

TREATMENT OPERATIONS

Supervisor, Gregory Thulen, Receives Maine Operator of the Year Award from NEWEA



The New England Water Environment Association Operator Award is given annually to an individual who has shown a high interest and performance in wastewater operations and has made a significant contribution to the wastewater field.

Greg began his service at Brunswick Sewer District on May 29, 1974, as an operator. The treatment plant was only eight years old at the time. Greg became Chief Operator on Oct 11, 1983 and his title was later changed to Treatment Operations Supervisor. Throughout the years he has seen the good, the bad, and the ugly. He has been instrumental in the

growth of the District's treatment process. Greg's most rewarding work accomplishments have been the 1991 design and review of the secondary treatment upgrade, and always striving to make the plant better for the next generation of operators. He has also been involved with several committees or special projects that have supported the overall goals of the District.

We congratulate Greg for his years of service and his constant vigilance in properly maintaining our treatment plant. We are proud of what he has accomplished.

TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADE

In the last issue we noted the upgrade to the wastewater treatment plant based on a facility evaluation in 2012. The evaluation recommended a two-phased approach to upgrading the facility. The preliminary planning cost for the phase one work has been estimated at \$22 million. We do expect that as we develop and refine the design, the cost will decrease. We understand that we will have to increase the sewer rate to cover the project cost. With only the planning number to work with, it is estimated that the current rate of

\$47 per 1,000 cubic feet (\$31 per month for the average household) may increase to \$66 per 1,000 cubic feet (or \$44 per month for the average household). The increase is planned to be phased in over several years to lessen the impact to our ratepayers. A December 2013 survey of 22 Maine communities noted the highest rate to be \$10 (per 100 cubic feet) to a low of \$3.24. We are at \$4.69, placing us in 17th place.

For our part, we have been working diligently to reduce our operating cost. For the

treatment plant, which is the largest section of our budget, we have focused on the high cost items of electricity, heating, and chemical use. In 2009 the Plant used 1.25 million Kwh (kilowatt hours) of electricity at a cost of \$150,000. We have reduced our kWh usage each year since. For 2013 the Plant used 809,000 kWh at a cost of some \$84,000, a reduction of more than \$65,000 compared to 2009. In 2011 we converted from oil heat to natural gas. Our heating cost was just under \$18,000 for 2012 and \$24,000 for 2013.

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COLLECTION AND PUMPING DIVISION BUILDING

SAFETY GRANT

The Collection and Pumping Division will be moving its operations into the former Recycling Building at 180 Orion Street, Brunswick Landing. The District signed a 1-year lease for the 7,200 square-foot

building. Should the new location work out as we plan, we will consider a longer term lease with the possibility of purchasing the building.

The District was recently awarded a \$2,000 safety grant from the Maine Municipal Association's Risk Management (our Worker's Compensation insurer) to help cover the cost of this power lift gate on our Pump Station Utility Truck.



REMINDERS

- For those of you using water to make an ice rink, remember you may be eligible for an outside water use adjustment. Please call 729-0148 ext 110 to receive your credit.
- Before your contractor digs, remember to call Dig Safe (1-888-344-7233). It's free and it's the law.
- When experiencing a sewer system problem, please contact the District first. The 24-hour emergency pager is 580-3175.

RECOGNITION

Employee anniversaries for the 1st quarter 2014: Wesley Wharff 26 years, Jennifer Nicholson 20 years, and Bonnie Shippen 2 years.

TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADE

(continued from front)

This compared to an average of \$80,000 each year from 2007 through 2009. We reduced our chemical costs from \$98,000 in 2011 to \$45,000 in 2013. We changed our health insurance plan in 2010 which saved an average of \$30,000 per year. Our goal with the Treatment Plant Upgrade project is to use technology to allow us to operate the facility even more efficiently and continue our trend of reducing operating costs.

A key goal of these newsletters and the articles we are publishing in the local newspapers is to foster an awareness and understanding of our role in the community, and as importantly, the value that we as a public utility bring to the community. We want you to know what our plans are and what we are doing. We want you, our ratepayers, to be a part of our future.

DID YOU KNOW?

- On March 4, 1889, the townspeople of Brunswick instructed municipal officers to procure the first plan for sewer construction. \$200 was appropriated.
- Frederick Danforth completed the plan in February of 1890.
- The restored 1894 original plan is on display at the District's Administrative Office Building.
- In April 1894 the Sewer Committee of the Brunswick Village Corporation was charged with the construction of sewers. \$40,000 was appropriated.
- The first sewer regulations were adopted on October 29, 1894.
- In March 1896 Ernest W. Bowditch, Engineer, completed the first As-Built map of the sewers installed.