
"E-NEWS"

KENT COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY

NEWS LETTER

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New Year's Message 2012

As we begin the New Year in 2012 we thank all of our customers for your patience and support during the 2011 construction season. Many of you have already realized the benefits of these vital improvements to both water quality and overall service. This year we are preparing to further our progress on these infrastructure programs. Work continues on our future Mishnock Treatment Plant. Infrastructure replacement work for the upcoming year will take place in Coventry, Cranston, East Greenwich and West Warwick. The completion stages including final paving for last year's construction projects will commence as weather permits in early spring. Commencement of contractor activities on this type of work will be preceded by newspaper advertisement notification to assist our customers and municipalities in the coordination of activities during this period. We look forward to a very productive construction season and appreciate your patience and understanding as the construction activities progress throughout 2012.

During this economic downturn we are finding an increasing amount of billing delinquency. Delinquency adds to the cost of doing business due to additional mailing, printing, notification and billing costs. Water is billed on a quarterly basis and may be inadvertently overlooked in contrast to monthly billed utilities. Budgeting and on time payments is key to keeping expenses to a minimum and avoiding costly shutoff and turn on fees. Please contact us as soon as you feel you may experience any difficulty making your payment within the thirty day grace period following receipt of your bill. Depending on the circumstances we may be able to provide a payment plan to get you through a rough patch and save you from additional \$100.00 shutoff and turn on fees.

The Board of the Kent County Water Authority appreciates the opportunity to serve its customers and looks forward to working with you during this year on all of our programs that are aimed at benefiting our customers.

Mishnock Treatment Well Field Plant Rises

The Mishnock treatment plant construction is coming along on schedule. The foundation is in the final stages of completion. It's great to see the design of this vital Capitol Improvement project taking shape. The treatment plant is scheduled to come on line in approximately 18 months. The

completion of this project will improve water quality, provide additional daily supply and serve as an emergency source of supply capacity should something happen to our major wholesale supplier.



Big River Well Water Supply Assessment.

Progress towards development of drinking water production wells in the Big River Management Area has ceased. After decades of testing and investigative work the Water Resources Board ceased aquifer development and staff has been assigned into the Rhode Island Department of Statewide Planning.

This is a major setback in the provisioning of future drinking water supply for the state. Potable water supply is perhaps the most important component to statewide economic sustainability and it is now substantiated that reservoir storage is the overall long term cost effective solution to both drinking water and environmental viability in this state.

We continue to support the Big River Reservoir initiative for the state's future! Building the reservoir now doesn't mean we must tap the resource right away. But, prolonging construction of this essential resource will exponentially increase the overall future cost to construct the reservoir and also affect the future prosperity of our state. Reliable and redundant supply is crucial to our future growth and well-being. What other resource is available should the Scituate supply source become compromised or reaches its maximum output capacity or

safe yield? If you are troubled by this growing concern contact your area legislative representatives to voice your opinion on development of a second reservoir supply in this area for our state.

Cold Weather Protection

With the recent onset of colder weather we have seen a rise in “no water” complaints. All of these complaints were found to be associated to frozen pipes in the customer’s home. The possibility of frozen pipes and the potential for damage as things thaw is always present. Drafts on un-insulated pipes and failure to drain the branch connection to outside hose bibs are common occurrences leading to leaks and flooding as pipes thaw. Preparation for the cold weather is the most important step to mitigation of these types of problems. Thoroughly inspect your plumbing and make sure there are no openings or faulty windows in the vicinity of where the plumbing runs along the foundation or outer walls of your home. Many products are available for “Do It Yourself” fix for these types of problem areas. Know where your meter isolation valve is and make sure it is in proper working order. This is your first response to isolate the water to your plumbing should a leak occur. Even if you have not experienced problems in the past, it’s important to inspect your plumbing and perform annual preventative maintenance to protect your property from unforeseen changes as things age.

Water Conservation News

It may have once been thought that the New England area was abundant in potable water supplies. We are quickly coming to the realization that our everyday use is reaching the limits of our developed supplies. This is especially true during cycles of dry summers or periods of drought.

On average Kent County Water Authority customers consume approximately 8 million gallons of water each day. On hot summer days water use can more than double. Legislative mandates to reduce consumption may dictate implementation of outdoor water use restrictions on our customers to assure compliance. Legislative initiatives promoting priority water supply for economic development demonstrate the importance our state legislative representatives have placed on the impact that water supply has on the economic well-being of the state. If voluntary compliance with state mandates proves ineffective, our only recourse will be to impose a mandatory seasonal moratorium on outdoor water use until the overall demand falls in line with mandates set by the Water Resources Board. Each and every customer must take action to conserve today, because inevitably every customer will be affected.

Drinkable water supplies are a limited natural resource that requires affirmative conservation measures by all of us today. The effective use of water-efficient products and

practices can help save natural resources and reduce water consumption and costs. Products bearing the “WaterSense” label allow consumers to readily identify products and services that use less water and also perform as well or better than conventional models.

The next time you purchase water using a product (i.e. dishwasher, washing machine, and toilet) look for the WaterSense label. In general, WaterSense labeled products will be about 20 percent more water efficient than their less efficient counterparts in the same category. If a WaterSense product is not available you should consider ENERGY STAR labeled products as these are also made with efficiency in mind.

Backflow Prevention

The Rhode Island Department of Health Rules and Regulation outline mandatory and enforceable requirements concerning the installation of backflow prevention appurtenances in both new residential and commercial buildings. The new requirements focus on “containment.” Containment will require the installation of an appropriate backflow prevention device directly after the meter in the vicinity where the water service enters the building. Rhode Island plumbing code also requires the installation of thermal expansion controls in conjunction with the backflow device installation.

To be in compliance with the new regulations, the Kent County Water Authority has implemented revised full scale cross connection control requirements as part of its Rules and Regulations. Copies of the Kent County Water Authority Regulations can be obtained at our office or online at www.kentcountywater.org .

Notice to New Customers

If you haven’t had the opportunity yet, be sure to check out the new 2010 Water Quality Report on our website along with our new Wise Water Use Tips Brochure and our Household Water Audit Brochure at www.kentcountywater.org. The information for the 2011 Water Quality Report is currently being compiled. This report is scheduled to be posted on our web site and mailed to your home June 2012.

If you have any questions or comments please feel free to call our offices at 821-9300 between 8 am and 4 pm or email us at customerservice@kentcountywater.org.

Watch for our next issue in March.