

# Service Connection

The Maine Drinking Water Program Newsletter

*"Working Together for Safe Drinking Water"*

Fall 2014 • Volume 22, Issue 3



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## Is Your Seasonal Water System Ready for the Winter?



*It is often said "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Preparing your water system now for the long, cold Maine winter can save you a lot of time and expense when you reopen in the spring. The time you will need to spend winterizing depends mostly on the size, design*

*and complexity of your water system. Please consider the procedures outlined below when closing your water system for the season. Following these procedures will help ensure your water system is in good shape and will need fewer repairs when you reopen in the spring:*

- 1.** Inspect your entire system and look for problems and damage that need attention or repairs. Look for leaks and exercise valves to ensure they are working properly. Inspect your well cap for openings that could allow rodents, insects, or other contamination to enter, and correct, if necessary. The off season may provide a better time for these problems to be fixed, rather than trying to do it while you are open and busy.
- 2.** Turn off the power to your water supply pump.
- 3.** If there is potential for your pressure tank or storage tank to freeze, drain it. If there is no potential for your tanks to freeze, you may choose to leave them full.
- 4.** Drain all of the water from your internal plumbing. If your piping is designed to drain to the lowest point, it may be as simple as opening a water outlet at the highest point in the system and then opening a water outlet at the lowest point. If not, it may be necessary to connect

*Continued on page 5*

## New Process for Adding, Removing, or Modifying Treatment

The DWP recently adopted a new process for public water systems seeking to add, remove, or make changes to treatment at their water systems.



As part of the recent changes, when requesting approval of a treatment modification, addition, or removal at a public water system, a "Treatment Review & Approval Application" will need to be completed (prior to any changes) to provide applicable information as requested.

The entire new process is outlined in the new "Drinking Water Treatment Review and Approval Policy & Procedure." A link to this document, and the approval application, can be found on the DWP website at [www.medwp.com](http://www.medwp.com), clicking on "Public Water Systems," and then on "Treatment." If you have any questions about treatment review and approval, please contact your compliance officer.



Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention

An Office of the Department of Health and Human Services

## Service Connection

# DIRECTOR'S Corner



### Building and Maintaining Relationships

The drinking water “industry” in Maine is overflowing with hard working and dedicated individuals who are doing a great job protecting public health. I enjoy meeting you to better understand your challenges and to hear the stories of your good work.

In early September, I, and several other members of the Drinking Water Program Management Team, met with the Maine Water Utilities Association Board to discuss common challenges and areas of possible collaboration. We agreed to meet together twice a year, in order to remain well connected and further the goal of helping water systems provide safe drinking water. The specific topics discussed were not as important as our ability to maintain a positive and productive relationship. The fruits of these relationships will be an increase in capacity to protect public health in Maine.

Similar meetings are planned with the Drinking Water Program Management Team and the Maine Rural Water Association Board in the coming months.

As with most things in life, success usually comes down to good relationships. There are too many challenges in our work and personal lives to think we can just go it alone. Your ability to reliably deliver safe drinking water will depend on relationships. Here are a few examples:

**Protect Your Source** – Many water systems have adjoining property owners in close proximity to their well or surface water intake. Building positive relationships with your neighbors will decrease the risk of your neighbor intentionally or unintentionally doing something near your water source that could impact your water quality.

**Take Your Samples** – For most of the Safe Drinking Water Act regulations, water testing is required to demonstrate that the water quality meets the necessary standards. Your relationship with your laboratory will enable you to know the status of your water quality at critical moments.

*Continued on next page*

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The Maine Drinking Water Program Newsletter

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*'Director's Corner' Continued...*

**Maintain Your Treatment** – No one wants to find out that their treatment system is not working properly and could potentially put the health and safety of your customers at risk. Therefore, having regular contact with your water treatment company and/or materials supplier will decrease the risk of your treatment system being off-line when needed.

**Inspect Your Pipes and Tanks** – Although the actual inspection of pipes and tanks may not generally require a lot of relationship building (except with your own employees), the timely repair of a water line will often depend upon relationships with plumbers, excavators and other contractors.

Take the time to consider the relationships that could enhance your ability to provide safe water and if needed work to improve or maintain those relationships. The payback will be well worth it.

Yours for safe drinking water,

*Roger*



## Are these Water Samples “For Compliance”?

*Carlton Gardner, Compliance & Enforcement Team Leader*



When submitting water samples to your certified laboratory, please make sure to indicate that the sample is “For Compliance” on the Chain of Custody Sheet (COC). If you do not, your laboratory may not submit the sample results to this office, and you could receive a violation notice. Please communicate clearly with your certified lab, so they know exactly what your intentions are. **Note:** Samples submitted as "Operation & Maintenance" (O&M) cannot be counted as compliance samples. Remember to completely fill in the rest of the COC, including the public water system ID (PWSID), the name of the water system, where the sample was collected (example: Unit 23, kitchen faucet), date, time,

and add a signature where needed. Water systems that chlorinate must also include the results of a chlorine residual test collected and analyzed at the same time when a bacteria water sample is collected.

**Please sample as early as possible within the monthly or quarterly compliance period.** Sampling early will give you extra time, if there is a problem with the delivery service, a sample was received frozen or rechecks/ confirmation samples are needed. If you have any questions, please contact your compliance officer.

## Workshop and Chemical Spill Tabletop Exercise to be held for the Salmon Falls Watershed



Thursday November 13, 2014 at the South Berwick Fire Station from 8:30am-3:00pm.

DWP in conjunction with the New Hampshire

Department of Environmental Services, the Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), the York County EMA, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Maine Rural Water Association (MRWA) will be holding a Workshop and Tabletop Exercise to address the hypothetical scenario of a chemical spill above a public water system intake on the Salmon Falls River.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Mike Abbott, DWP Hydrogeologist, at 207-287-6196 or [michael.abbott@maine.gov](mailto:michael.abbott@maine.gov).



## New Staff

William Wallace



William Wallace joined the Maine Drinking Water Program on June 30, 2014 as a Compliance Officer for Region A (Southern Maine). Prior to joining the Maine Drinking Water Program, Bill taught high school Chemistry and Environmental Science for thirty-three years; at Hebron Academy in Hebron, Maine (17 years) and St. Andrew's School in Middletown, DE (16 years). Bill earned his B.S. in Wildlife Management with a Fisheries Minor from the University of Maine in 1977, and his M.A. in Liberal Studies from the University of Delaware in 2004. Bill can be reached at [william.wallace@maine.gov](mailto:william.wallace@maine.gov) or 287-1979.



## ENFORCEMENT CORNER

*Tera Pare, Enforcement & Rulemaking Coordinator*

### FALSE REPORTING TO THE DRINKING WATER PROGRAM

In Canada, Frank and Stan Koebel were formally sentenced on December 21, 2000, for their actions contributing to the Walkerton, Ontario (Canada) water disease outbreak, which caused seven deaths and hundreds of illnesses. Both Koebel men, working as the Walkerton Supply's Utilities Manager and Water Foreman, admitted to falsifying reports and insisting that the water was safe to drink. Yet, they were found to have improperly disinfected the well, falsified daily chlorine residual readings and lied about where microbiological samples were collected. In addition to the Koebel men falsifying reports and lying to cover up their negligence, the Walkerton Public Utilities Commission continuously insisted to the public that the drinking water supply was safe to drink, despite lab reports indicating a dangerous O157:H7 strain of E. coli.

Although this case demonstrates an extreme example of what can happen when drinking water reports are falsified, it is critical to remember that reporting actual data not only complies with state and federal drinking water and state criminal statute, it could save lives. Drinking Water Program staff routinely review monthly operating and water quality reports. The data is reviewed carefully, to assure that water is treated at the required safe doses and the correct frequency, in order to protect public health. Unfortunately, on more than one occasion, DWP staff have identified reports submitted by public water system suppliers that contain questionable data.

Remember, reporting false information on monthly operating reports not only endangers your customers, it is a crime in the State of Maine. If your public water system is one flagged as submitting questionable data, we will scrutinize future reports and may conduct a site visit to collect data directly. This process will verify or dispute the report's findings and provide evidence, if needed, for the Maine Attorney Generals' Office. Should you have any questions about reporting requirements, please contact your compliance officer at the DWP. Take the time to monitor properly and report your findings. You will avoid administrative and criminal sanctions and most importantly, keep your consumers safe from illness.

### *Continued from Cover...*

a compressed air source to the highest point and continue to release air into the system until all of the water is forced out of the lowest point. Make sure to cap off or screen any openings into your plumbing system and close all of the valves after the system is drained. For example, if you have plastic plumbing that runs on top of the ground that supplies different buildings while your system is open, when you disconnect the plumbing for the winter, make sure to cap off or screen the plumbing inlet to the building to prevent rodents and bugs from crawling in.

**5.** Other items to consider draining are jet pumps (after discontinuing power to the pump), chemical feed pumps, hot water heaters (don't forget to shut off power to the hot water heater before draining the tank), furnaces, dishwashers, toilets, plumbing to refrigerators with ice machines, back flow prevention devices and water meters. This list is not all inclusive, and you may have additional appliances or devices that may need to be drained to protect against freezing. Do not forget to add environmentally friendly anti-freeze to your toilet bowls and sink and shower traps to prevent the traps and bowls from cracking and to keep sewer gases from entering buildings.

**6.** Protect your distribution system by not leaving taps open in the off season. Never use automotive anti-freeze in your water system: it is a health hazard!

**7.** Turn the power off to all treatment systems. Properly discard any unused chlorine solutions and stock. For other treatment systems, follow the manufacturer's instructions for equipment, chemicals or filter media not in use for long periods of time.

Closing your system for the winter may be time consuming in some cases, but it will provide you with peace of mind, knowing that at start up, repairs to the system should be minimal.

If you shut down your water system for the winter, please make sure that you flush and shock chlorinate your system in the spring prior to re-opening for the season. We would also recommend collecting an Operations & Maintenance (non-compliance) bacteria sample to make sure that your water system is bacteria free before you open for the season. You can find the shock process and other procedures for opening your seasonal water system at the following Drinking Water Program link: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/environmental-health/water/resources/wakeupyourwatersystem.htm>.

## **The Revised Total Coliform Rule (RTCR): Sample Siting Plan Revisions**



All systems have (or are supposed to have) a plan detailing where their total coliform bacteria samples are taken.

This assures regular sampling and uniformity if others might perform sampling duties. Under the current Total Coliform Rule (TCR) recheck or repeat samples are required to be upstream and downstream within 5 service connections of the original

sampling point. This simplified method works for confirming the presence of the bacteria but often does not help identify "why" and "how far" contamination may have occurred.

The RTCR will allow systems to write procedures to identify different repeat sites. For example, these sites might be used to determine if the contamination is the water source or a storage tank. Repeat sites still need to be upstream and downstream and include the original site.

All systems should be using the time in 2015 to review and

revise their sample siting plans. Plans must be completed and available for DWP review by April 1, 2016.

Important Considerations for Sample Siting Plan Revisions in the RTCR:

- All systems, no matter the size, will have 3 repeat samples for each positive sample; the original and an upstream and downstream site.
- All repeats must be taken and analyzed for Total Coliform and E. Coli.
- Maine is intending to allow small groundwater systems to use a source water sample as a dual purpose sample under certain circumstances.
- Sample siting plans will need to identify a standard sampling time for locations. i.e. 2nd Tuesday of the month or quarterly near dead ends.
- The plan should show representation of the entire distribution system.

Watch for training specific to sample siting plans with your training providers.

# Water Operator Board News

*Teresa Trott, Licensing Officer*



### Renewal Time

It is renewal time once again. Renewal notices will be mailed by Nov. 1st and **are due by December 31, 2014**. The earlier you renew, the sooner you are able to apply Training Contact Hours (TCHs) to your next cycle! Renewal notices have a summary of classes you attended on file with the Board. The number of TCHs required for license renewal is determined by the highest level of license held. The renewal fee is \$75 per person. If you have met your TCH requirements, all you will need to do is send in a check for your renewal

fee!

### Other Reminders

- Have you moved? Changed jobs? If so, please send updated addresses by email to [doris.labranche@maine.gov](mailto:doris.labranche@maine.gov).
- Check your operator number on the website for current TCHs on file with the Board. Training providers submit attendance sheets on a regular basis to save you from photocopying. The website will also show your renewal date.
- Relevant In-house safety can be counted towards your renewal. However, the same topic can only be counted one time in a renewal cycle. First Aid and CPR courses, although important, do not qualify for TCHs.

### EPA Funded Training

- Grants have been given by EPA to providers for free training and outreach. Watch the training calendar on the website for classes. Check frequently!
- Maine Rural Water Association (MRWA) receives funding through National Rural Water Association for their free classroom trainings. They also have some outreach and technical assistance funding available.
- Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP) will be providing technical assistance and training to several systems. This outreach is capacity building, hands-on assistance.
- Environmental Finance Center (EFC) will be partnering with AWWA for FREE web-based and online training modules. The EFC will also hold a class on rate structuring and also have a one-on-one technical assistance process.

### Water Operator Board Open Seats

Three long-time members of the Board have decided to step down: Trevor Hunt (Managerial Representative and long-time Board Chair), David Bartlett (Non-Transient Non-Community Representative and Board vice Chair), and Chris Crovo (Engineer Representative). They have served on the Board through many of the changes and improvements to licensing practices. The drinking water profession has benefitted by their leadership. If you see them at a meeting, please thank them for their dedicated volunteer service. The Governor's Office is accepting applications to fill the vacancies. For more information, contact Doris LaBranche at [doris.labranche@maine.gov](mailto:doris.labranche@maine.gov) or 287-5699.



## Important Reminder for Monthly Operating Reports (MORs)

Please remember that if you add a chemical to your public water system, then you must submit a Monthly Operating Report (MOR) by the 10th day of the following month. Please remember to put your public water system's name and PWSID # on the MOR. For those public water systems with a designated water operator, the designated operator must sign the MOR. MOR forms as Word documents or Excel files can be found at [www.medwp.com](http://www.medwp.com), by going to "Public Water Systems," then clicking on the "Reporting Requirements" link, then "Monthly Operating Reports." Then, click on the "Monthly Operating Report" page link. Contact your Compliance Officer with any questions about MORs.



## 53 Maine Public Water Systems Recognized with National Water Fluoridation Quality Awards

*Judith A. Feinstein, Director, Maine CDC Oral Health Program*

In early September, the Maine CDC forwarded Water Fluoridation Quality Award certificates from the US CDC for calendar year 2013 to 53 public water systems. This award recognizes public water systems that adjust the fluoride concentration in drinking water and achieve a monthly average fluoride level within the optimal range for 12 consecutive months in a year, as documented in the CDC's Water Fluoridation Reporting System (WFRS). All 50 states used WFRS to provide census information to WFRS in 2013, and 33 states had at least one community system that earned the award. Nationally, 2,184 public water systems across the country received these awards.

Water operators in Maine do an excellent job of keeping fluoride levels within the appropriate range for optimum benefits for the public. Maine WFRS continues to have solid data that illustrates the attention to quality control that Maine's public water systems dedicate to providing quality water. Maine now has 15 consecutive years of this data, demonstrating the ongoing efforts that have gone toward assuring quality, safety, and compliance with standards.

We join you and your customers in valuing your ability to demonstrate the attainment of quality service, and helping to improve the overall health of people living in your community.

### The 53 Maine public water systems receiving the Water Fluoridation Quality Award for 2013 were:

Anson and Madison Water District;	Water Department; Fryeburg Water	& Rockland Division, Freeport Division,
Ashland Water & Sewer District;	Company; Gardiner Water District;	Hartland Division, Millinocket Division,
Baileysville Utilities District; Belfast	Great Salt Bay Sanitary District;	Skowhegan Division; Mars Hill and
Water District; Berwick Water	Greater Augusta Utility District;	Blaine Water Company; Mechanic Falls
Department; Bethel Water District;	Guilford-Sangerville Water District;	Water Department; Mexico Water
Boothbay Region Water District;	Houlton Water Company; Indian	District, Norway Water District; Old
Brewer Water Department; Bridgton	Township Tribal Water System;	Town Water District; Passamaquoddy
Water District; Brunswick–Topsham	Kennebec Water District; Kennebunk,	Water District; Greater Portland Water
Water District; Caribou Utilities	Kennebunkport & Wells Water District;	District; Steep Falls Water System;
District; Dexter Utility District;	Lewiston Water & Sewer Division;	Presque Isle Utilities District; Rumford
Dixfield Water & Sewer Department;	Limestone Water & Sewer District;	Water District; Sanford Water District;
Dover-Foxcroft Water District;	Lubec Water District; Machias Water	South Freeport Water District; Van
Eagle Lake Water & Sewer District;	Company; Madawaska Water District;	Buren Water District; and Winterport
Ellsworth Water Department; Fort	Maine Water Company Biddeford Saco	Water District.
Fairfield Utility District; Fort Kent	Division, Bucksport Division, Camden	



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