



Winter 2006

Service Connection

THE DRINKING WATER PROGRAM NEWSLETTER
"Working Together for Safe Drinking Water"



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Caribou Utilities District Converts to Groundwater

Larry Girvan, P.E., Field Inspector



In 1965, the board of the Caribou Utility District, as they are now known, recognized that in the long term, their community would be better served if it were possible to find a new ground water source to replace their existing surface water supply. A three-year search of properties on the west side of the Aroostook River was unsuccessful.

In 1996 they began their search again for a viable ground water supply. A location was found on the east side of the Aroostook River. The District then started looking for funds for engineering design, land acquisition and project construction.

Project construction began in early 2005. The overall project required installation of approximately 10,000 feet of new or upgraded

water lines which includes a 700' directionally drilled river crossing, installation of two high-yield groundwater wells, construction of a new pump-station and purchase of about 95% of the land within the 2,500 day time of travel zone in the well head protection area. The water plant was completed in August 2006.

The District has invested more than \$3,800,000 in these upgrades, \$1,800,000 of which were from the Maine Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Program. Because of this investment, the District now has a 40% increase in production capacity with a new 2 MGD plant, almost complete control of their well head protection area and has simplified the water treatment process so much that they have been reclassified from a Class IV to a Class II treatment plant.



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Inside
this
Issue:



Director's Corner	page 2
Groundwater Rule	page 3
Public Water Supply Protection	page 4
Setback Waiver Policy	page 5
Water Operator Updates	page 6
Sample Sheet Information	page 6
State Revolving Fund Update	page 7
Rule Changes	page 7

Director's Corner

As I write this article I'm listening to writer and historian David McCullough speak about the value of history. Mr. McCullough talked about President George Washington's first year in office. Apparently George made quite a few mistakes that year but he was able to persevere and succeed because of his fundamental "belief in the cause."

It's not comparable to the British invasion, but we too will soon be faced with an onslaught of sorts. After many years in the making, the US EPA adopted the Final Groundwater Rule October, 2006. The rule may have sweeping effects on Maine's 2000 or so groundwater systems.



The Lead and Copper Rule (short term revisions) will be adopted in 2007. A new Total Coliform and Distribution System Rule is on the horizon, as is compliance with the LT2 Surface Water Treatment Rule and the Stage 2 Disinfectants/Disinfection Byproducts Rule (DBP).

As many of you know, some systems are now having difficulty

complying with the Stage 1 DBP rule; Stage 2 will likely exacerbate the problem.

Beyond compliance with federal rules, on November 16, 2006, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Board of Environmental Protection provisionally adopted the In-Stream Flow Rule. Because it is a major substantive rule, it must go to the Legislature for review and approval then

back to the DEP for final adoption.

It is unclear how the final rule will affect our surface water systems. As now written, the Drinking Water Program will determine "system

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See **Director**, page 3

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Director, from page 2

design capacity” for some surface water systems. The rule will likely undergo significant scrutiny in the legislative session.

Another likely topic for legislative discussion is the Transport of Water Act (bulk water transport permits) as interest in groundwater extraction and bottled water has grown significantly in the past year.

Finally, it is critically important that we secure our state match for 2007 and beyond. We have received \$27 million in project requests for next year. Without state match these projects cannot be funded.

At the start of the millennium we developed our very first strategic plan. Although the effort was intense, the plan itself was modest and focused on fundamentals. We thought “Working Together for Safe Drinking Water” generally captured our mission. Half a decade later, I think we chose our words well. We can accomplish very little without the help of the drinking water community. Thank you for all the good work you do.

Happy holidays.

Yours for Safe Drinking Water,
Nancy Beardsley

Groundwater Rule

David Braley, Senior Geologist



In October, EPA finalized the Groundwater Rule (GWR). This regulation defines the testing and treatment requirements for all systems using groundwater. The basic components of the rule are:

Sanitary Surveys: States must conduct sanitary surveys for all systems that use groundwater on the following schedule:

- Community systems - every three years unless they already have 4-log disinfection or it is determined that they have had outstanding performance, in which case they may be extended to every five years.
- Non-Community systems - every five years.

Source Water Monitoring:

The GWR specifies three types of monitoring.

- Triggered monitoring: required whenever any system has a positive coliform sample;
- Assessment monitoring: required for systems determined by the state to be at risk of fecal contamination; and
- Compliance monitoring: required for systems serving over 3,330 and using 4-log treatment.

Significant Deficiencies:

Significant deficiencies and fecal contamination (failed tests) must be corrected within 120 days of discovery/notification or a plan must be developed after discussion between the state and system to outline specific steps and completion dates.

Public Notice/Violations:

Systems are required to provide Tier 1 notification for the detection of fecal indicators, Tier 2 notification for treatment technique violations or failure to take corrective action as required, and Tier 3 notification for monitoring violations. Consumer Confidence Reports must also include GWR information.

Primacy: States must adopt rules and apply for primacy within 2 years of GWR publication in the Federal Register. The Rule was published in the Register in November, 2006.

To read the complete Groundwater Rule, visit www.medwp.com.



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Resolve, Chapter 140: Integrating Public Water Supply Protection Into the State of Maine's Vision

Andy Tolman, Water Resources Team Leader



Avid readers of this newsletter (and there are at least a few) will remember that we've been

working at the Legislature's direction to identify and fill gaps in Maine's water supply protection. This fall, we held a set of four public meetings with a group of interested parties to help us flesh out the recommendations we made to the Natural Resources Committee last session. We had a good group of state agency, local government and non-governmental organizations participate in the meetings, who gave a lot of useful input. We are now writing a draft report which will go to this year's legislative session.

The third recommendation has taken on a new emphasis.

We went into the meetings discussing an approach modeled after shoreland zoning (mandatory local zoning based on state minimums) for protecting source protection areas. We spent much of our time discussing the implications of working through 341 towns to implement a program. We decided as a group that providing similar standards through a state-wide

approach would be more effective and easier to implement. We still have details to work out with DEP, among others, before the report is complete.

This winter should be an interesting time at the Legislature. Keep your eyes open for hearings on this Resolve and possible legislation to help us all work together for safe drinking water.

The recommendations:

1. All state agencies consider water supply protection in their actions and decisions.
2. Provide assistance and incentives to encourage low-impact recreational, forestry and agricultural uses in public water supply protection areas.
3. Provide a state-wide minimum protection for public water supplies by including them as protected natural resources under the Natural Resource Protection Act, and by providing review standards for activities in water supply protection areas under Site Location and other environmental laws.

Water Operator Board Meeting Dates for 2007

January 25	Board Meeting	DHHS, 286 Water Street, Augusta
February 24	<i>Applications for April Exams postmarked</i>	
March 15	Board Meeting	DHHS, 286 Water Street, Augusta
April 10 & 12	Examinations	Augusta and Presque Isle
May 19	<i>Applications for June Exams postmarked</i>	
June 14	Board Meeting	Brunswick & Topsham Water District
June 26	Examinations	Augusta
September 8	<i>Applications for October Exams postmarked</i>	
September 19	Board Meeting (Wednesday)	Sunday River, Newry
October 23 & 25	Examinations	Augusta and Presque Isle
November 15	Board Meeting	Brunswick & Topsham Water District
December 31	2005 - 2007 License renewal date	





Well to Contamination Source Setback Waiver Policy for Public Water Systems

Nathan Saunders, Field Inspection Team Manager

After the March 2006 reorganization of Drinking Water Program (DWP) staff, the Field Inspection Team reviewed existing rules with help from DWP geologists. A new policy has been approved that reinforces setback waiver requirement changes to the Rules Relating to Drinking Water adopted in 2001. This policy will also promote consistent administration of waivers for well-to-contamination-source setbacks.

A key part of the new setback waiver policy is that certain conditions must be present for a PWS to request a waiver for a well-to-contamination-source setback of less than 300 feet. The new setback policy identifies circumstances for consideration of reduced

setbacks, maintaining consistency with Maine’s Well Drillers Rules. Some of the conditions that may allow consideration of a setback waiver request include the following: not enough property; permanent structures blocking the way; or the presence of lakes, ponds, streams or wetlands that prevent a 300-foot setback.

Another key part of the new setback waiver policy is for PWSs activated or substantially changed after 10/24/2001. Any setback of less than 150 feet requires a hydrogeologic evaluation to identify the risk involved with the reduced setback. A DWP Geologist will review the hydrogeologic

evaluation to determine if a waiver can be granted with special conditions, or should be denied.

The new policy is available for review at the DWP website (www.medwp.com) under “Download Documents” and then “Policies”. The flow chart included may help to clarify the policy. If you have any questions on this policy, contact Nathan Saunders at 287-5685.



CONGRATULATIONS

to..... Bruce Burnham of Birch Island Corp. Water System, our 2006 Calendar Contest winner! BRUCE wins the grand prize, unautographed copies of “There’s a Hair in My Dirt! A Worm’s Story” by Gary Larson AND “While You’re Here, Doc” Farmyard adventures of a Maine Veterinarian by Bradford B. Brown DVM. BRUCE’S name was randomly selected from those entries with the correct answer (or close to it) to the daunting question featured in the month of February... How much bleach does Farmer Fred use in a week’s time to run his chlorinator? (answer: about a liter)

CONGRATULATIONS BRUCE!



Water Operator Updates

License Renewal

Operators have a grace period of 60 days to renew their licenses. Licenses that expired December 31, 2006 become inactive on March 2, 2007. Licensees will be charged a \$50 reinstatement fee.

Training Calendar

The Water Operators Professional Development Training Calendar is available online at www.medwp.com and lists current, pre-approved training opportunities. Starting January 1, 2008, the Training Calendar will only be available on our website.

Rule Change

Water operator rules are being revised. Proposed changes involving fees, operator training requirements and the point system for treatment plants will be published on our website.

Exams

The results from the October exams for each Operator Class are in the table below. Congratulations to all successful operators.

Exam Type and Class	Exams Taken	Exams Passed
VSWS	8	5
Class I Treatment	12	8
Class II Treatment	11	6
Class II Treatment (DE)	12	4
Class III Treatment	10	3
Class IV Treatment	9	2
Class IV Treatment (DE)	5	3
Class I Distribution	20	13
Class II Distribution	10	8
Class II Distribution (DE)	7	5
Class III Distribution	6	4
Class IV Distribution	6	0
Class IV Distribution (DE)	2	1

(DE) - Direct Entry exam option

Contact Rebecca Reynolds, 287-5295, for more information about approved operator training or to get paper copies of the Training Calendar or Designated Operator Forms.

Required Sample Sheet Information: Dates and Times

Carlton Gardner, Compliance and Enforcement Team Leader

When a water system collects a water sample to send to a lab, there is always a place on the sample sheet for the time and date of collection. Often, the time is not filled in.

Is it really that important? EPA regulations require that the total coliform analysis be started within 30 hours of collection. If the time is left off the sample sheet (now called the chain of custody), how is the lab to know if the sample is less than 30 hours old? The State lab will make an effort to call their customers. All labs have received a notice that they should verify that the sample is less than 30 hours old. During an audit last year EPA noted this as a potential issue.

What happens if I don't write the time of collection? If there is not a date and time on the chain of custody sheet test and the lab or system cannot verify the sample is less than 30 hours old, then the sample should be rejected and the system may be issued a failure to monitor violation. Please always record the time and date on the chain of custody sheets for all water samples collected.



Drinking Water State Revolving Fund

Roger Crouse, Assistant Director



As we enter 2007, the ability of the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund to provide funding to the many needy water systems in Maine is in question. At this time we have no source

of the “State Match” necessary to draw down the federal funds. The federal government is prepared to give the State of Maine approximately \$8.3 million if we can secure a 20 percent “State Match,” approximately \$1.66 million.

Thirty-nine water systems have applied for over \$28 million in construction projects for 2007. Even with the new State and Federal funds, only about half of the project requests will be funded. A complete list of the projects that we anticipate funding in 2007 can be found on the Drinking Water Program website, www.medwp.com.

Despite the current challenges, we have had many successes over the past year. Caribou, Waldoboro and Lisbon have new sources of water that will meet their community needs for many years to come. Brunswick/Topsham and Castine have new water storage tanks. New water main has been installed in Eastport, Port Clyde, and Rockland. In addition to these completed projects there are many more underway from Waterboro to Eagle Lake. If you have any questions about the DWSRF please contact me at 287-5684 or roger.crouse@maine.gov.



Drinking Water Program Rule Changes

Tera Pare, Rulemaking Coordinator

The Drinking Water Program adopted all proposed changes to the “Rules Relating to Drinking Water” (10-144 CMR 231) on September 17, 2006.

A majority of the updates are updated references to the DWP’s Division, Bureau and Department. The Drinking Water Program now resides in the Division of Environmental Health, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services.



Substantive changes included the following:

- Increasing the number of potential DWP positions funded by AFM revenues;
- Adding a DWP-approval requirement for variances;
- Adding a 1,000-foot setback requirement from Underground Storage Tanks;
- Adding filtration avoidance language; and
- Updating references to the Federal Register (40 CFR 141.11 *et. seq.*)

The newly effective “Rules Relating to Drinking Water”, are available at www.medwp.com. If you prefer a paper copy, call the Drinking Water Program at 287-2070. For any questions about these rule changes, please contact Tera Pare at 287-5680, or tera.pare@maine.gov.



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