Starting a Fire District

by Brent Desranleau

In 1993, the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources published a step-by-step guide to help a community organize a fire district. What follows is an excerpt from that document.

What is a Fire District?

Fire districts are municipal corporations. Their purpose is to manage certain functions of town governments that either are not available throughout the entire town, or are better administered by a distinct, special-purpose entity. Fire districts have been formed to manage community

A hydrant maintenance program includes bi-annual inspections. Generally, hydrant maintenance is performed in the spring and fall of the year and often in conjunction with water system flushing. Additionally, during cold weather, hydrants should also be inspected after each use.

When possible, using the lateral valve of the hydrant to control flow while flushing or inspecting not only saves wear on the hydrant valve, but also ensures proper operation of the lateral valve. Operation and inspection of each hydrant should include exposing and exercising the lateral valve. Buried valve boxes should be raised to ground level to facilitate the ease of valve operation.

Inspection should also include checking for proper drainage. The hydrant can be opened fully (allowing air to escape through a partially opened hose valve) with all caps securely tightened. A partially open hydrant valve will allow water to escape through the drain holes. This technique can be used to clean drain holes but care must be taken not to erode the support around the hydrant base.

Inspect your hydrant for leaks around the operating stem and nozzles, at the flanges, and at any seals or packing. Next, close the hydrant, open the hose valve or cap and allow the hydrant to drain. A properly draining hydrant should drain five feet in approximately twelve minutes. Replace any deteriorated or missing gaskets or O-rings if necessary. Also, clean nozzles with a wire brush and tighten just slightly greater than hand tight. Use food grade oil or grease to lubricate the hydrant stem and nozzle threads.

The positioning and location of your hydrant is also of great importance. The distance from the center of the pumper nozzle to the ground should be eighteen inches, allowing for circumferential use of a hydrant wrench. Similarly, the distance

Continued on page 4.
Who We Are
Rural Water started supporting water and wastewater systems in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont in 1982. We provide many services, including training, source protection planning, and onsite assistance through our experienced staff. Massachusetts Rural Water Association (MRWA), New Hampshire Rural Water Association (NHRWA), and Vermont Rural Water Association (VRWA) collaborate on this newsletter.

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News Leaks is an official publication of MRWA, NHRWA, and VRWA. It is published quarterly for distribution to operators, owners, managers and board members of water and wastewater systems in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont, as well as to association members, water and wastewater service providers, regulators, and other friends. Opinions expressed in the newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of MRWA, NHRWA or VRWA.

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Executive Notes
by Michael Wood-Lewis
Sometimes the trick is knowing a good thing when you’ve got it.
I think that that’s the case with our annual event at the Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, Vermont, held on May 2-3 this year.
Some folks have suggested that we grow the event to more people, more days, more exhibitors. Others have suggested a change in venue for various reasons.
But when you listen to the hundreds of people who attend any given year, you hear some very special comments. Several vendors told me that this is their favorite trade show of the year. Others said they appreciate that the operators come ready to ask questions and actually conduct business. The training is always highly rated in our exit surveys.
There’s also some intangible ingredient that several attendees mention, but is hard to describe. Essentially, people seem glad to be there. Folks are friendly and productive and having a good time.
The lovely setting right on the edge of beautiful Lake Morey and top notch food definitely help. But mostly it’s the people who show up and participate.
So, from all of the directors and staff at Rural Water in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont, thanks to all who came this year and made it another great event. We look forward to another strong three-state success next spring at Lake Morey!

A Warm Welcome to Our Newest Members...
Ashland Water & Sewer
Berlin Water Works
Hedgehog Community Co-op, Inc.
Massamont Insurance Agency, Inc.
New Salem General Store
Overlook Farm / Heifer International
Pleasant Valley Estates Co-op
Poker Hill School
Public Works Supply Co., Inc.
Rocking Stone Farm
Seaman Cottages
Tasker’s Mobile Home Park
Town of Farmington
Vare-Tech, LLC
Vermont Technical College
View Drive Water Community

...and a Big Thank You to our Long-Standing Ones!

Stephen Finanowski of the Edgmont Owners Association in Killington picks up his 15-year membership award at Rural Water’s Annual Trade Show & Training Event in Fairlee, Vermont.

Lewis Sumner of the Halifax School in West Halifax, Vermont picks up his 10-year membership award.
Letters

We are writing to you to express our deep gratitude for the professional and swift response of the representatives of your organization. The weather was at its worst that day, but we still managed to get very clear and definitive images of a sewer main and lateral in our very old sewer system.

We were very impressed by the state-of-the-art equipment used for image detection. David Kaczenski was able to isolate and define our problem areas and that helped us to eliminate a lot of guess work.

Thank you again for your assistance.
Sincerely,
Keith R. Newton, DPW Supervisor, Town of Royalston, Massachusetts

On behalf of the Bethlehem Village District I wish to thank New Hampshire Rural Water and particularly Jay Matuszewski for their work on our behalf last week.

Nearly one-half of our customers were experiencing very low pressure and all of the problems that come with that. Because of the mid-winter frost we were unable to find any leaks in our system. Jay was able to respond to our plea for help in a more than timely manner and with his skill and expertise in using leak detection equipment he was able to find our main problem quickly and right on the mark. Our water department employees were able to dig and repair the leak on the same day Jay was here and, of course, the pressure returned to our customers.

Again, we wish to commend Jay for his quick response and expertise in finding our problem. We wish that all those we deal with were as responsive and skilled. Your ability to have such employees available is a great benefit to us to belong to the NH Rural Water Association and we will, of course, remain as members for as long as New Hampshire Rural Water is available.

A Sincere Thanks,
Bethlehem Village District Commissioners, Bethlehem, New Hampshire

I have been working with Rural Water for about four years now and I am totally satisfied with their assistance to small water users like myself.

I have been managing water systems for ten+ years here at Mary Meyer Corp. and Rural Water has made my life so much easier and I am comfortable with the knowledge that I will do the job correctly because of your assistance.

Water management is important to the small business in rural areas. Our major job is to keep our company profitable and the day-to-day battle in that responsibility.

Our water supply is a responsibility that you help us with and reduce our fears of day-to-day operation errors. You give us the confidence and education that we need, and with your guidance can do a very good job of managing our water needs.

Thanks again for your help.
Sincerely,
Walter F. Meyer, Chairman and Water Manager of Mary Meyer Corporation, Townshend, Vermont
Hydrant Maintenance

Continued from page 1.

from the center of the breakable flange to the ground should be about three inches to ensure the hydrant will break at designed weak points if struck, and to allow the ground to heave in winter without placing stress on the hydrant by pushing the flange. Also, there should be thirty-six inches from the center of the operating nut around the hydrant that is clear of obstruction and allows for ease of operation. The area around your hydrants should be kept free of snow in the winter and trimmed in the summer.

Your fire hydrants should also be painted on a regular basis to protect them from the damaging effects of weather, age, and road salt. Also, the bonnets or caps of your hydrants can be color-coded to reflect the fire flow capability of each hydrant.

Simple and regular maintenance combined with a little TLC will keep your hydrants in great operating condition throughout the year and will extend their life expectancy significantly.

During fall inspections, all hydrants should again be checked to make sure they are draining properly. Hydrants that won’t drain, that are plugged, or that are leaking internally will tend to freeze during the winter months and will be left inoperable. Plugged hydrants or those that do not drain well should have any residual water pumped out of them.

Additionally, there are food grade anti-freeze solutions that can be added to the barrel to prevent freezing. Any fire hydrants found to be inoperable should be bagged and/or tagged immediately and reported to the fire department. Repair or replacement of the hydrant should then be planned as soon as possible.

In addition to regular inspection and maintenance of your fire hydrants, there are a few items that ought to be kept in stock. For each make of fire hydrant in your system, your water department should keep traffic repair kits. Other items you should consider having on hand include a supply of seats, O-rings, gaskets, bolts and food grade grease or oil.

Simple and regular maintenance combined with a little TLC will keep your hydrants in great operating condition throughout the year and will extend their life expectancy significantly. Instituting a hydrant maintenance program will also save your water system money in hydrant replacement costs and will improve the way the community sees your water system.

Starting a Fire District

Continued from page 1.

sewage systems, fire departments, and water systems. This document will focus on the formation of a fire district whose function is to provide water.

Why Should a Community Form a Fire District?
The four main reasons for a community water system to adopt the fire district form of operation are:

1. The consumers of the water system retain control of its operation.
2. The district is governed democratically because all registered voters have voting powers.
3. The system becomes available for various state and federal funding programs and municipal financing rates and terms that are not available to privately-owned water systems.
4. The district has the power to collect fees for water use and levy tax liens for non-payment of water rates.

Some of the disadvantages of a fire district include:

1. Members may not have a technical background, and the operation of a water system requires a certain level of technical skill. However, this can be overcome by the fire district hiring someone with the appropriate skills.
2. Members are not likely to realize the extensive time commitment until the fire district has been formed. This can cause a high turnover in the governing body of the fire district. Therefore, a fire district should be formed only when there is a genuine level of interest in the community.

Formation of a Fire District
Residents who wish to form a fire district should be aware of a set of legal requirements, powers, and duties that affect its operation. Particular attention should be given

Erik Peterson,
VRWA Water Systems Specialist
can be reached at ext. 331 or at epeterson@vtruralwater.org
to Title 20, Vermont Statutes Annotated, when instituting a fire district. This is not intended to replace the services of a lawyer; however, it will outline the requirements and powers of a fire district and should give you an idea when it is advisable to hire a lawyer and when residents may prepare the necessary information on their own. When a lawyer is necessary, it is best to hire one who has experience in municipal law. In fact, it is acceptable to ask a prospective lawyer if he/she has ever formed a fire district. This may save money and time.

**Determine the Level of Interest**

The first step in forming a fire district is to determine the general level of interest within the community. The best way to do this would be to talk to your neighbors individually and then call a meeting to discuss the idea. By law, 20 property owners who are full time residents (called “freeholders” in the statute) must sign a petition to be presented to the Board of Selectmen in support of a fire district. Before this is done however, it may be a good idea to determine the level of support with a pre-petition, or a simple survey that is distributed to all potential users. This way, the district could decide beforehand what issues are of concern to residents and could address these concerns before the petition is written. For example, there may be people within the boundaries of the district who do not want to be served by it. It is possible to include only those that wish to be included, but it must be clearly stated in the petition. Remember, it is best to avoid any conflicts before they arise.

**Drafting a Petition**

If at least 20 freeholders support the formation of a fire district, draft the petition or consider hiring a lawyer to draft the petition to ensure that proper wording is used. The petition should include powers and duties of the fire district.

For example, how will the district collect charges for water use, what will the districts powers be when making repairs to the water system, etc. It is best to address all areas of powers and duties that might seem useful in operating a water system in your petition. It may be helpful to talk with other fire districts in your area to find out what they have done.

A copy of the petition must then be filed with the Town Clerk and the Board of Selectmen. Filed with this petition must be a map of the proposed district that outlines the geographical boundaries. It is imperative that you properly file all material with the town.

**Notice of Public Meeting**

Next, the district must warn an official public meeting at which the Selectmen vote on the creation of the district. Your town clerk can assist in the requirements of this warning; however this is the responsibility of the district. You may find it helpful to notify the Board of Selectmen of your intentions beforehand in an informal meeting in order for them to voice any concerns before the incorporation meeting.

**Selectmen’s Acceptance**

At the official meeting, the Board of Selectmen must sign an order establishing the creation of the new fire district. This is presented by the district for the Selectmen’s signature. A lawyer should draft the order.

**Organizational Meeting**

After the acceptance of the fire district by the Board of Selectmen, there must be an organizational meeting of the district presided over by the Selectmen. At the first meeting, officers (called the prudential committee) are elected and additional committees and staff are assigned. This is the only meeting that the Selectmen must preside at. From here on, the prudential committee will govern the district. (See 20 V.S.A. sec. 2482-2487 for more on this issue).

**Developing Rules and Regulations**

The district must now develop a set of rules and regulations, including rate charges, services provided, owners responsibilities, etc. It is strongly recommended that an attorney assist with the drafting of rules and regulations. However, a district may save a significant amount of money if it decides on the content of the rules and uses the attorney primarily to insure proper wording of the document.

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**Elizabeth Walker and Brent Desranleau meet with Jeff Morin of Ryegate Fire District #1.**

**Brent Desranleau, VRWA Water Systems Specialist**

**VRWA Water Systems Specialist**

**VRWA Water Systems Specialist**

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Getting Creative to Fund Source Protection Activities
by Kevin McGraw

A recently completed review of the U.S. EPA’s Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) and Source Water Protection Program (SWPP) evaluated the effectiveness of these programs in the protection of public drinking water quality.

Lack of ready funding (surprise, surprise!) was cited in the report as a major obstacle to the long-term success of source protection programs nationwide. Given the many mandates states must comply with to administer public water supply and other environmental programs, voluntary programs such as source protection may receive a lower priority for implementation when resources are limited.

While this may be true, there are still many avenues to explore for source protection loans and grants. There are many potential federal funding sources through the EPA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), or the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Wading through the federal grant process can be cumbersome but with persistence (and helpful guidance from Rural Water’s source protection experts), there are creative ways to obtain funds through a wide variety of programs. A long list of federal funding examples is provided in an EPA document entitled “Funding for Source Water Protection Activities” (see web address below).

In addition to the federal funding possibilities, there may be loans and grants available to your water system through your state’s Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program. In Vermont, municipal water systems are eligible for low-interest Source Protection Loans up to a maximum of $200,000. This loan can be used to purchase land or conservation easements in a municipal water system’s Source Protection Area.

In New Hampshire, since 1997, the Department of Environmental Services (DES) has made small grants to water suppliers, municipalities, and other local organizations for the purpose of protecting drinking water sources. Protection projects funded through this program have included delineation of wellhead protection areas, inventorying potential contamination sources, development of local protection ordinances, performing land surveys as a precursor to land acquisitions, groundwater reclassification, shoreline surveys, drinking water education and outreach activities, and controlling access to sources.

Local Source Water Protection Grant applications for New Hampshire systems are due November 30, 2005. For a 2006 application package contact Johnna McKenna at 603-271-7017 or jmckenna@des.state.nh.us.

The New Hampshire DES Drinking Water Source Protection Program also funds agricultural nutrient management grants by providing funding to a grant program of the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Foods (DAMF). These grants fund on-farm and educational projects that reduce the risk posed by certain agricultural practices to water quality.

Also in New Hampshire, the Water Supply Land Conservation Grant Program allows DES to make 25% matching grants to municipal or non-profit water suppliers for the purchase of land or conservation easements within source water protection areas.

A typical Source Protection Area.
In Massachusetts, using a combination of state, local, and private funding sources, the sole source of drinking water for the towns of New Bedford, Taunton and Lakeville was protected. Nearly 4,000 acres of the Assawompsett Pond Complex were purchased in the effort, and conservation easements on 3,500 additional acres were secured. The common lesson to be learned in all of these states is that you may need to be creative in finding source protection funds. Collaboration with land trusts, conservation commissions, planning commissions, state agencies, federal programs and, in general, organizations you do not normally work with may be required.

A recently published guidebook by the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIW-PCC) is a good place to start. The document, entitled “Protecting Drinking Water Sources in Your Community: Tools for Municipal Officials,” has information about where to get financing for source protection and provides a good list of general source protection resources.

Yes, the recent government analysis that funding is a major obstacle to the long-term effectiveness of source protection programs is hard to deny. However, with clear planning of what the source protection needs of the water system are, and with a large dose of creativity, funds may be identified.

And don’t forget the Rural Water source protection pros. The VRWA, NHRWA and MRWA source protection staff can work with you to identify possible funding sources, and act as a liaison between your water system and all those organizations you do not traditionally work with.

Kevin McGraw, VRWA Source Protection Specialist can be reached at ext. 327, or at kmcgraw@vtruralwater.org

A reservoir in Hatfield, Massachusetts.
by Donny Boynton

NH Rural Water Feedback Forum

I would like to thank all the hearty souls who braved the icy roads and howling winds on March 9, 2005 to attend the Forum on Rural Water Programs in New Hampshire. The purpose of our meeting was to identify the training needs and onsite assistance required to best serve New Hampshire’s public water systems. Similar events were held in Massachusetts and Vermont.

Rule implementation and capacity development were discussed by the 31 forum participants. Here are some of the comments:

Rule Implementation

Arsenic and radionuclides are going to be hot issues for next few years. Lead and copper issues are about to change, so training and onsite assistance will need to follow suit.

Operators are not always getting a rounded assortment of educational experiences. There is a lack of motivation over and above receiving contact hours, which has operators attending repeat courses instead of new ones. Perhaps what is needed is a required core curriculum providing each level of certification with a required list of courses that best suits that type and level of certification.

Capacity Development

Too many consumers don’t drink public water and have a poor image of public water systems. More needs to be done to promote a positive image of the industry.

Consumer Confidence Reports need to reflect positive aspects of water systems. Positive press is needed to promote consumer interest. Invite the media to a display of fire fighting capacity (hydrant flushing) or a tour of the treatment facility or pump house.

Fire departments, city planners, building inspectors, selectmen and police all need to become familiar with the positive contributions water systems make to the sound development of any community. Positive education for all is essential.

A mechanism has to be devised to attract the people that develop budgets and plan for growth and those that respond to emergencies into the same training classes with operators and supervisors. This crowd has been missing from our capacity development training for too long. Operators cannot make their needs known without the support of key people that provide the funds and make final decisions.

Different agencies need to work collectively to educate the public and management to the various funding opportunities available. Funding should be advertised and used to stimulate economies, and started now while interest rates are low. If only further incentives could be provided for those that step up to the plate and start now.

Security is on all of our minds these days. Everyone has to be alert for all possible situations. Training needs to reflect every avenue to ensure security.

Once again, cross training between different agencies becomes the only feasible method for rural New Hampshire to keep abreast of security practices everywhere.

Rural Water’s training and on-site assistance do and will reflect the issues discussed at the winter forums. If you couldn’t be there, your suggestions are valued, so please contact Rural Water to have your voice heard. We are all “Protectors of the Waters.”

Donny Boynton, NHRWA Water Systems Specialist can be reached at ext. 333, or at dboynton@nhruralwater.org

by Lynda Laine

Drinking Water Week in Massachusetts

Spring has arrived and so have the Drinking Water Week activities for 2005. On May 5, the annual awards recognizing Massachusetts Public Drinking Water Systems was held in Brockton at the Massasoit Conference Center.

A total of 39 systems were recognized for their outstanding performance. The winners included systems from NTNC, small, consecutive, medium and large community categories. EPA awarded Environmental Educator awards to teachers and other representatives that promote environmental education within their communities.
In celebration of drinking water week, the National Theatre for Children visited 15 towns plus Boston and Springfield. The group is sponsored by the DEP Drinking Water program and water departments that want to promote water conservation, protection and awareness education within their communities.

**Rule Updates**

The lead and copper rule implementation has seen several revisions. Trainings have been held in the DEP regions and more will be scheduled to keep you up to date with the final criteria issues. Documentation is more important than ever for your sampling site selection and final approval.

New rule implementation has and will continue to be a hot topic for your systems. The Ground Water Rule is under review and has not been promulgated by EPA at this time. Upon the issuance of the final rule, DEP will implement the state’s requirements. So stay tuned for new rule announcements and their impact on your water quality operations.

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**Important Recertification Requirement**

Please note the end of the two-year water license term occurs on December 31, 2005. Renewal criteria for your license requires that you submit with your application the training credit hours (TCHs) or continuing education units (CEUs) forms with your renewal. If you do not attach the copies as proof of your continuing education, your license will not be renewed. This is the first time that this has been required. Please be prepared and ensure that you have your education credits completed.

Upon request, MRWA can arrange on site training for your system and surrounding operators. Give us call at 800-556-3792, and plan to attend our September 14th training day in Turners Falls (see page 14).

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Lynda Laine, MRWA Program Manager can be reached at ext. 324, or at llaine@maruralwater.org

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**Vermont Celebrates Drinking Water Week**

This year the Vermont Drinking Water Week Committee put together another great year of activities enjoyed by students and adults throughout Vermont. Vermont Drinking Water Week was celebrated May 1–7. The National Theatre for Children traveled to nine different locations performing eighteen times during their five day visit in Vermont. This year’s performance was “Water Pirates Run Aground” highlighting the importance of water conservation.

The poster contest had numerous entries, and this year’s winners are posted on our website (www.vtruralwater.org).

The 1st place students received a $100 savings bond and 2nd place students received a $50 savings bond. All winners were recognized and received a certificate at the Vermont Drinking Water Week Water Fair from Lt. Governor Brian Dubie.

This year’s Water Fair was held on the state house lawn on May 6th. More than 250 students from around Vermont enjoyed theatre performances, many demonstrations and educational displays, lawn games, and this year’s special features, the Morse Farm Maple Kettle Corn and music by Resolution.

As always, the Vermont Drinking Water Week Committee would like to give special thanks to the following Continued on page 10.

Special thanks also go to the many volunteers from various organizations and water systems that help with managing and participating in the activities of the water fair. If you wish to be part of next year’s program, contact Elizabeth Walker.
MtBE to be Banned by 2007
Legislation has been passed in New Hampshire and Vermont that will eliminate the use of the gasoline additive MtBE in each state by 2007. Originally used to boost octane and reduce vehicle emissions, MtBE is considered by the EPA to be a potential human carcinogen and has been discovered in 1,500 sites in Vermont. In 1997 in Vermont, a fuel delivery truck accident resulted in the contamination of about 38 drinking water wells. Most notably MtBE has been shown in increasing quantities in many New Hampshire sites, with highest concentrations found in deeper wells over 300 feet. Prompted by such findings, a New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services study found that MtBE concentrations in public wells in New Hampshire decreased with distance from underground gasoline storage tanks, thereby suggesting a direct link.

Does your Congressman Support Rural Water?
Rural Water has secured support for Rural Water funding again this year from a majority of our Congressional Members. This support allows us to run our circuit riders, training and other programs at no direct cost to operators. Below is a list of who is supporting Rural Water programs, and who has not yet committed. If your Senator or Congressman hasn’t signed on and you think Rural Water is important in your community, then exercise a little democracy and give him a call. (Those not committed are in bold.)

Massachusetts
Rep. Olver, 1st District
Rep. Neal, 2nd District
Rep. McGovern, 3rd District
Rep. Frank, 4th District
Rep. Meehan, 5th District
Rep. Tierney, 6th District
Rep. Markey, 7th District
Rep. Capuano, 8th District
Rep. Lynch, 9th District
Rep. Delahunt, 10th District
Senator Kennedy
Senator Kerry

New Hampshire
Rep. Bradley, 1st District
Rep. Bass, 2nd District
Senator Gregg
Senator Sununu

Vermont
Rep. Sanders
Senator Leahy
Senator Jeffords

Federal Bills
HR-215 To Amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to Require a National Primary Drinking Water Regulation for Perchlorate
Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Environment and Hazardous Materials
Main Sponsor: Hilda L. Solis
Description: Amends the Safe Drinking Water Act to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to promulgate a national primary drinking water regulation for perchlorate

Massachusetts Bills
S-170 An Act Concerning Bottled Water Labels
Main Sponsor: Karen E. Spilka
Description: All bottled water for sale in the Commonwealth shall be clearly labeled, in words that are sufficiently prominent, with the mineral contents and amounts of certain minerals. Such labeling shall include, but not be limited to the following: bicarbonates, calcium, chlorine, flourine or fluoride, iron, lime, magnesium, potassium, silica, sodium.

New Hampshire Bills
HB-69 Relative to Large Groundwater Withdrawals
Status: In Fish, Wildlife and Water Resources Committee of the House
Main Sponsor: Ira Trombley
Description: This bill proposes to appropriate $50,000 for an Agency of Natural Resources study of Eurasian milfoil and other aquatic vegetation in Pelots Bay of Lake Champlain with a goal of quantifying the amount of phosphorus that harvesting of aquatic nuisance vegetation removes from the bay.

Vermont Bills
H.0013 A Study of the Phosphorous Content of Aquatic Vegetation in Pelots Bay
Status: In Fish, Wildlife and Water Resources Committee
Main Sponsor: Ann Selbert
Description: This bill proposes to prohibit the use of hydrotrolic acid and sodium silicofluoride to fluoridate public water supplies. The prohibition would go into effect July 1, 2006.
What do you consider special? What do we use daily to help us see, read, and enjoy sunsets? Our eyes are special and a treasure to behold forever.

Eyes can be destroyed in a fraction of a second. If you damage them, they won’t grow back like fingernails or hair. They will be lost forever. We should always shield our eyes from potential dangers. No matter where we work and even at home, dust, flying particles, fumes, rock chips, harmful rays, chemicals, and vapors could expose us to potential eye injury.

As I stated earlier, flying particles are a big contributor to eye damage. Most of the time these particles are very small, moving rapidly, essentially invisible, and therefore can penetrate the eye easily. Chemicals are also a hazard and in the water/wastewater business; we need to be fully aware of chemical/laboratory safety.

In general, goggles are more protection than safety glasses and safety glasses are better than regular glasses.

Regular glasses are not rated for impact like safety eyewear is. Most places where we work will provide adequate training and education about eye safety, but it is up to you to value your eyes and take the extra step to do thorough research and use eye protection whenever possible.

Protective eyewear has come a long way since I started in the water/wastewater field. We used to wear unattractive, uncomfortable eyewear with that retro look of the sixties. Today, we have attractive fashionable safety glasses that can double for sunglasses and can protect the eye from ultra-violet rays.

There really is no excuse for not utilizing eye protection. You won’t get a second chance if something goes wrong and your eyes take a beating. Take care of your eyes and enjoy.
Let’s Reflect On
How The Road
Does Ramble
by Dick Kilhart

As the summer sun was warming and heating our daily lives, “Paine” began to install pipe with a great deal of hype.

Day One was slow, and little did we know, they wouldn’t finish until the first snow.

The dog days of August were soon here and the pipe had not been completed over there.

The “super” had scheduled vacation the last week in September, But there was certainly no end in sight, as we all remember.

The October sun was now cool, And it appeared that someone was soon to become a fool.

As Halloween approached, would we be tricked or treated, It sure seemed as though help was definitely needed.

Ah!!!! Thanksgiving, a U.S. holiday observed on the fourth Thursday in November was once a distant thought, but was now very much in sight with this newly installed pipe.

As the pavement was finally placed, A great big smile lit up my face. I am sure that many were curious, then furious and sad when your time was delayed, but glad when your busy time was obeyed.

They say that in every poem or short story there should be some type of silver lining, but I am not sure this will end until the State gets done fining.

When spring arrives, don’t be at all surprised, you sure will be disappointed, because it is likely that “Paine” will be reappointed.

Richard Kilhart, MRWA Water Systems Specialist can be reached at ext. 323, or at d kilhart@ maruralwater.org.

Water and wastewater operators have had many contractor experiences. With every experience there is always a story to go along with it. With contractors both good and bad, for some reason it always seems to be the bad that gets repeated time and time again.

Why is that so? I do have some thoughts and ideas, but I guess the best way to reflect on this rambling question is to write a short poem and shine some type of reflection on how the road does ramble.

Let’s reflect on the construction seasons of the past. This is a construction company that has created a great deal of pain for many of us, therefore we shall call them: “Paine” Construction.
2005 Annual Trade Show & Training Event

Our 2005 annual trade show was packed! The event was held on May 2-3, 2005 at the Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, Vermont. We’re working on next year’s arrangements and will post a date soon.

The 2005 show brought together operators and managers from Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont, as well as more than 50 exhibitors, regulators, and other industry professionals.

The networking lunch included our annual awards presentation. Outgoing Board President Peter Leidt was honored, as was Water Systems Specialist Jay Matuszewski, who has been with Rural Water for 15 years. This year’s Tony Torchia Awards were presented to John Sasur of Three Rivers Water Department, George Laney of Newport Water Works, and Ruth Taylor of Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (retired). Congratulations to all of this year’s winners!

For a comprehensive list of award winners and golf tournament results, please visit our website at www.vtruralwater.org.

On the Road, Again

Rural Water is pleased to announce that New Hampshire Circuit Rider, Scott Clang is officially “on the road again” (move over John Denver!). If you need to contact Scott, you can do so by calling 800-556-3792 x314, or by emailing slang@nhruralwater.org.

Welcome back, Scott!

Our Rural Water Family Keeps on Growing

Nicholas Peter Maurizi was born to proud parents Rob and Katie Maurizi on March 26, 2005, weighing 7lbs., 1 oz. and measuring 19 inches.

Congratulations, Katie and Rob!

In Memoriam

Jeff Manuck

Tragically, Jeff Manuck of Hersey Meters died in May after a terrible accident on I-91. Jeff, who was 23, was traveling to Fairlee, Vermont to participate in the Rural Water annual trade show. His family has requested that donations be made to a memorial fund in lieu of sending flowers.

The Rural Water staff and directors send their heartfelt condolences to Jeff’s family and friends.

Jeff Manuck Memorial Scholarship Fund

Attn: Julie Higbee
Connecticut Community Bank
1190 Silas Dean Highway
Wethersfield, CT 06109

Peter F. Putis

Long-time operator, Peter Putis from Arlington Water Company passed away on April 23, 2005 at the Albany Medical Center in Albany, New York. Peter played a significant role in both the Vermont Water Works Association, and the merger that created the Green Mountain Water Environment Association. He was known for making significant contributions to the regulatory process and will be missed.
by Jenna Costa

Find these words hidden in the puzzle below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AERATION</th>
<th>ALKALINITY</th>
<th>ARTESIAN</th>
<th>AQUIFER</th>
<th>BACTERIA</th>
<th>CLARIFIER</th>
<th>DRAWDOWN</th>
<th>HYDRAULICS</th>
<th>IMPELLER</th>
<th>MICROBE</th>
<th>PIPE</th>
<th>PRIME</th>
<th>SPRING</th>
<th>TANK</th>
<th>TURBID</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Art comes in many forms...

The result of a snow plow striking a shallow transmission main and -10° overnight temperatures in Lenox, Massachusetts last January. The bell portion of the main was hit. (Eyes and nose were added for artistic effect.)

Photos courtesy of Dick Kilhart.
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