

# Dennis Water District

Board of Water Commissioners

\*\*\*\*\*

Edward A. Crowell, *Chairman*

Paul F. Prue

Charles F. Crowell

## Main-Line News

[www.denniswater.org](http://www.denniswater.org)

Volume 16, No. 1

February 2009

Appointed by Water Commissioners

\*\*\*\*\*

David Larkowski, *Superintendent*

Sheryl A. McMahon, *Clerk & Treasurer*

James Ritchie, *Asst. Superintendent*

### Construction Project Well Underway

Kinsmen Corporation, the general contractor for the construction of the District's two iron and manganese treatment plants, has both buildings erected and the interior work, including filter piping, electrical components and pre-treatment equipment moving forward on schedule.

The District's self performing work has also been moving forward as planned. The 24,000 linear feet of raw and finish water mains are installed along with most of the work for the backwash water lagoons having been completed. The project also called for pump upgrades to 10 wells and the installation of variable frequency drives which are near completion. Included in the scope of work for the District were upgrades to the existing corrosion control treatment plants in order to accommodate the redirecting of water from the wells.

The Board is pleased to report that the project is not just on schedule but, on budget as well. To date, there has been only a slight cost increase in construction cost through change orders totaling \$10,000. The majority of these were for the replacement of worn pump parts, some modifications to light fixtures and deletion of some work.

If all continues to proceed according to plan, the new treatment facilities are scheduled to conduct preliminary start-ups in the late spring and early summer. Earth Tech, Inc. the design and consulting engineers for the project, will be training District operators during the initiation phase and for the first full year of operations.

The District anticipates extending an invitation to customers in the fall to an open house to view the facilities and observe the operations under "run" conditions.

The project is proceeding with all good speed and as such, it will be necessary to raise the water rates to meet the District's debt service obligation and anticipated increases in operational expenses when the treatment plants go on line. The exact amount of the increases had yet to be decided at the time this newsletter was being printed.

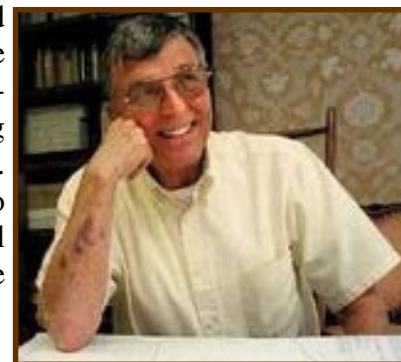


*Construction workers help guide the setting of one of six pressure filter vessels hoisted into place by a crane. The six vessels will be capable of removing iron and manganese from 4,000,000 gallons of water per day. The vessels are filled with Greensand Plus filtration media.*

### District Officials Mourn the Loss of Charles E. Chamberlain, Jr.

Charles E. Chamberlain, Jr. passed away on January 8, 2009, following a lengthy illness. The Board of Water Commissioners and District staff wish to express their condolences to his family and friends.

Mr. Chamberlain was an original member of the Dennis Water District Finance Committee having served continuously since it was established by District Bylaw in 1977. He brought a keen business sense to the meetings in which the District's annual budget and capital projects were reviewed by the Finance Committee and recommendations made to the District voters. Mr. Chamberlain served as Chairman and provided counsel and guidance. He shared a vision with the Water Commissioners and supported their efforts to build the best water system possible while maintaining reasonable water rates. His practical approach to budgeting and wonderful sense of humor will be greatly missed.



#### DATES TO REMEMBER:

**Annual District Election — Wednesday, April 22**

**Annual District Meeting — Tuesday, April 28**

## **WATER COMMISSIONERS SUPPORT CHANGES TO METER LAWS**

**Meter Tampering** — Did you know that taking water without a meter is a crime? Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 165 Sec. 11, establishes a \$100 fine against anyone having tampered with a water meter. Theft of water is a serious offense because all of the District's customers must cover the cost. The Massachusetts Water Works Association has drafted legislation that will increase the fine to a maximum of \$1,000. This is the current fine for tampering with an electric or gas meter. The Board of Water Commissioners supports this legislation because \$100 is simply not enough of a deterrent or reimbursement for stealing water.

All water used by all District customers must be metered. Anyone found in violation of the law will be fined. Failure to pay the penalty may result in the loss of water service to the property. Removing the water meter from the water service is against the law and is considered meter tampering. For many years the District has sealed water meters as a means of detecting meter tampering. The water meter cannot be removed from the line without breaking the seal. Preserving the integrity of the water meter seal is the responsibility of the property owner.

Seasonal customers are reminded that when you, your plumber or handyman, winterizes your home, the water meter must not be removed or loosened from the water service line. Customers must call the District and arrange to have their water service turned off at the street, drained and the meter removed. Only District personnel are authorized to perform this work as provided by the District's Bylaws.

**Meter Testing** — Did you ever use more water than you expected and think there was something wrong with the meter? Many customers who receive unexpectedly high bills and cannot account for the water believe that there must be something wrong with the meter. The testing of meters for accuracy is governed by Chapter 40, Section 39I, MGL. The law states that a meter is deemed accurate if it measures within plus or minus two percent. If the meter has under recorded by more than 2%, the District will bill for the water and charge for the meter test. If the meter is deemed within plus or minus 2% the District will bill for the meter test. If the meter has over recorded by more than 2%, the District will credit for the percentage over billed and there is no charge for the test. The District charges a service call to retrieve the meter from the property in order to perform the test.

The Water Commissioners are supporting draft legislation that will increase the meter testing fee from \$3 per test to an amount that accurately reflects the cost of the service.

*"Meters" continued in next column.....*

## **HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION DAY**

**Saturday, June 6, 2009  
Tony Kent Arena  
9 am to 1 pm**

Each year the Dennis Water District sponsors a HHWC Day in June. The Town of Dennis also sponsors a HHW Collection Day in September.

The free collection and disposal of residential HHW is an environmentally important service provided to the citizens of Dennis. Please continue to act responsibly. Save your HHW materials and bring them to the second Collection Day.

### **PROTECT OUR WATER SUPPLY.**

**NEVER pour HHW products down the sink or toilet  
or on the ground.**

*"Meters" continued....*

The District requires that a written meter test request form be signed and submitted by the owner of record. Historically, it is rare to find a water meter that tests outside of the accuracy tolerances provided by law.

Customers with questions regarding water meters are encouraged to call the District office or visit our website for reference information.

## **Wastewater Management Planning Update**

Since 2004, the District has provided continuous financial and administrative support for the development of a Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan for the Town. In order to make a permanent commitment to undertaking wastewater management, in April 2008, the voters approved the filing of special legislation which would designate the District as the entity that will provide an economical and efficient wastewater management system within the Town of Dennis. The proposed legislation was the collaborative effort of Representative Cleon Turner (*D-1st Barnstable*), consultant Nate Weeks of Stearns & Wheler, District Counsel Attorney John C. Creney and members of the District staff.

Upon the Water Commissioners' request, the Board of Selectmen has given their assent to having the District assume this role for the Town. It will also be necessary to have the Town of Dennis voters support the legislation at the Annual Town Meeting on May 5, 2009.

The District continues to wait for the technical reports to be completed by the Massachusetts Estuaries Project. A report on Sesuit Creek and Harbor is expected by July 1 followed by Bass River by December 31. Please visit our website for more frequent updates.