

Dennis Water District

Board of Water Commissioners

Paul F. Prue, *Chairman*
Peter L. McDowell, *Vice Chair*
Robert M. Perry

Main-Line News

www.denniswater.org

Appointed by Water Commissioners

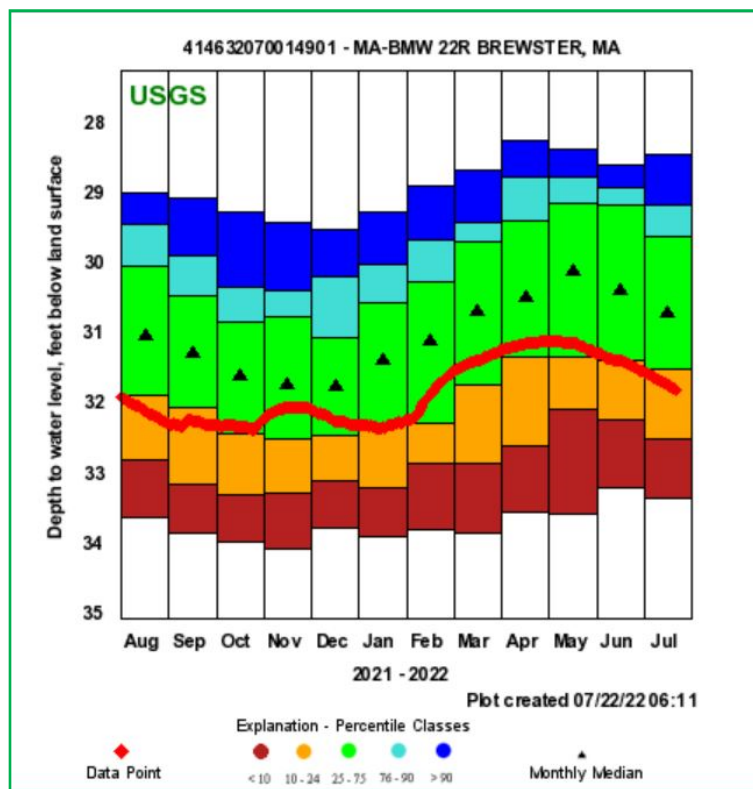
David Larkowski, *Superintendent*
Sheryl A. McMahon, *Clerk & Treasurer*
James Ritchie, *Asst. Superintendent*

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WATER LEVELS AND LACK OF RAINFALL CONCERN DISTRICT OFFICIALS

The Board of Water Commissioners has continuously been apprised of the status of groundwater levels for the District as well as what is happening regionally. District Superintendent, David Larkowski, provides the Board with data and graphs as he presents one of the most recent snapshots of the United States Geological Society's (USGS) monitoring well located in Brewster. It is known as MA-BMW 22R Brewster, MA.



This monitoring well has data history of the depth to groundwater spanning more than 52 years. He noted that the monitoring well is continuing to drop and sees the same reflected in the District's wells.

What happens when conditions are not normal? The District draws water from 22 wells. Individual wells vary in their production capacity where some wells are rated at 100 gallons per minute, others can be up to 700 gallons per minute when they are at peak performance. If the groundwater level is normal or high, these pumping capacities are easily maintained. When the groundwater levels are low, they affect the efficient operation of wells, particularly the shallow ones.

During pumping operations, the water surrounding the well is drawn down and if the levels are too low to begin with, it can result in damage to the well and equipment. In this situation, the pumping rate of the well is scaled back to allow the water surrounding the well more time to recover. This reduces

the overall capability of the District to meet the increased seasonal demand which, even under normal groundwater conditions, can be challenging. About 50% of the District's wells would be classified as shallow and are considered to be at risk when groundwater levels are too low.

Mr. Larkowski recently advised the Board that on July 21, Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Beth Card declared a Level 1-Mild Drought for the Cape Cod Region and the Islands. He continued to emphasize that adherence to the District's outdoor watering restriction limits lawn irrigation to essentially no more than every-other-day watering. This is established by the Odd/Even watering restriction: odd numbered street addresses - water on odd dates of the month and even numbered street addresses water on the even dates of the month. It was acknowledged that many customers may have irrigation controllers that cannot be programmed for odd/even dates. He encouraged those customers, and all customers for that matter, to water just three days per week according to the schedule below.

Odd-numbered addresses:
Monday, Wednesday & Friday

Even-numbered addresses:
Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday

The Superintendent specifically noted that following this schedule will seem like it is not in compliance with the odd/even day restriction. He assured the public that he and his staff will make note of this pattern of watering and it will not be considered a violation. He emphasized that what is truly being sought with the mandatory odd/even restriction is to stop customers from watering their lawns every single day.

During the meeting, the Board acknowledged that this year the District is prepared to enforce these restrictions. Under the District's bylaw, **Article 5-Water Use Restrictions**, authority is granted to enforcing officials the power to impose warnings and fines for violations. The Board of Water Commissioners voted a State of Water Conservation be in effect and a Mandatory Odd/Even watering schedule be imposed until ground water conditions improve. Authorized District personnel will be knocking on doors, first to educate customers about the groundwater conditions and the odd/even schedule and to issue a warning, if appropriate. Second, third and fourth visits will have \$100, \$200 and \$300 fines respectively.

1501

CITATION

DENNIS WATER DISTRICT
NON-CRIMINAL VIOLATION NOTICE

DATE CITATION WRITTEN: _____ ACCOUNT NUMBER: _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

MAILING ADDRESS IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

DATE OF VIOLATION: _____ TIME OF VIOLATION: _____

LOCATION OF VIOLATION: _____

ACTUALLY VIOLATED ON FILE: ☐ YES ☐ NO

PREVIOUS OFFENSE CHARGED: _____ PAGE TWO

ENFORCING OFFICIAL - CHECK ONLY ONE: _____ TOTAL FINE: _____

☐ WARNING (NO FINE)

☐ NON-CRIMINAL VIOLATION

X

VIOLATION ACKNOWLEDGES RECEIPT OF CITATION

X

NOTICE TO VIOLATOR

IF THIS CITATION IS ISSUED AS A NON-CRIMINAL VIOLATION, FAILURE TO PAY THE FINE OR TO REQUEST A HEARING WITHIN 30 DAYS MAY RESULT IN A CRIMINAL CHARGE AND FINE REVENUE LOSS.

WILL TO VIOLATOR YELLOW COURT COPY FROM DISTRICT

PROPERTY OWNER'S FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Water Services: Our water customers are often unaware that they are financially responsible for all repairs to their water service line from the connection on the street water main up to the water meter. This includes those water service lines that are connected to water mains on the opposite side of the street from the home or building. Dennis Water District is the only entity authorized to work on water services in Dennis, unless arrangements for hiring a private contractor is authorized by the District in advance.

Water Rates and Charges: District customers are responsible for the timely payment of all water rates, charges and fees. Water meters are read and usage is billed twice a year along with the Semi-annual Account Charge which is currently \$48. Water bills are issued in early February for water usage from July through December of the prior year and again in early August for water usage from January through June of that same year. Customers are responsible for the payment of all water that passes through the meter, whether used or lost.

Not having received a bill or notice does not, in any way, relieve a property owner from liability for timely payment.

Collection of Accounts: *Past Due Notices* are usually mailed on or about the 10th of the month. Interest at 7% (per annum) is calculated and posted for outstanding balances more than 30 days past due. *Demand Notices* are issued on accounts in excess of \$150 and more than 90 days past due. The current fee for the issuance of a Demand Notice is \$15. If payment, or an arrangement for payment is not made by the deadline in the Demand Notice a *Shut-Off Order for Non-Payment* may be issued. A \$40 fee is assessed once a Shut-Off Order is issued whether the water service is physically turned off or not. According to the provisions of Chapter 40, Section 42A (M.G.L.) all unpaid water bills are a lien on the real estate. Unpaid balances may be committed to the Town of Dennis Assessing as water liens to be collected with real estate taxes.

PFAS UPDATE

On July 11, 2022, the District conducted a routine sampling for PFAS at the South Water Treatment Plant. The plant had a previous PFAS detection of 2.3 parts per trillion (ppt). This is far below the Maximum Contaminant Level of 20 ppt. This most recent sampling resulted in having a Not Detected or "ND" designation. This is good news and these results were sent to Mass Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The District will continue to sample per DEP guidelines as well as continuing with our adjusted pumping rotation schedule.

PFAS stands for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances. PFAS are widely used, long lasting chemicals, components which break down very slowly over time. So long in fact, they are considered "forever chemicals". There are thousands of PFAS chemicals, and they are found in many different consumer, commercial and industrial products. This makes it challenging to study and assess the potential human health and environmental risks. For more in-depth information visit:

<https://www.epa.gov/pfas/pfas-explained>

Cross-Connection Control and Backflow Prevention Program

Protection of the Public Water Supply is very important and a vital component is proper backflow prevention and cross-connection control. Cross-connections are potential sources of backflow and are something that we need to prevent because of the potential adverse effects to public health and safety. If water backflows into the public water system, the system could become contaminated. Therefore, we urge you to implement proper cross-connection controls.

The Dennis Water District is required by Massachusetts Regulations (310 CMR 22.22) to have a cross-connection control program to prevent backflow. As part of this program, properly certified District employees are able to conduct property surveys (mostly non-residential) to look for potential cross-connections and require proper backflow prevention devices when a need is determined. Backflow prevention devices are tested by the District staff, also properly certified and in accordance with mandated schedules for the type of device installed. The type of device required depends on the hazard to which the backflow device protects.

Homeowners can and should do their part as well. The following are simple steps to take around your home and yard to avoid cross-connections and backflow.

- ⇒ Install hose bib vacuum breakers on all exterior spigots. These are available at hardware stores and plumbing supply houses.
- ⇒ Toilets should be equipped with a ballcock with an integral anti-siphon valve. **
- ⇒ Boilers should be equipped with approved backflow preventers and expansion tank(s) to prevent backflow of boiler water (which may be treated with chemicals). **
- ⇒ Install and maintain an approved backflow device on your irrigation system. **
- ⇒ All sinks, tubs and tanks should have a proper air gap to prevent backsiphonage. Typically 1-inch or more (as required by plumbing code) between bottom of the faucet/spout and rim or edge. **

You are encouraged to contact the District with any cross-connection questions you may have. We are here to help.

** Work may be required to be done by a MA Licensed Plumber and a Plumbing Permit may need to be issued. Contact the Plumbing Inspector for more information.

Hazardous Waste Collection Day

Saturday, September 10

9:00am to 1:00 pm, Tony Kent Arena

Sponsored by the Town of Dennis

For Information on items for disposal visit

www.denniswater.org