

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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An Advisory About Paper Checks

In May of this year, the United States Postal Service (USPS) cautioned that it has seen an increase in mail fraud incidents across the nation. The theft issues prompted the USPS to advise customers to avoid depositing mail in blue collection boxes or leaving it in their own mailboxes for a carrier to pick up. It is recommended that checks be mailed from inside their local post office to securely send mail.

What could happen if my check is stolen?

Thieves use a technique called "check washing" to scam you out of your money. That involves using chemicals that erase your writing on the check, such as the name of the recipient and the amount of the check. Once the payment is blank, they can fill in new information, including the amount. Last year, nearly 60 individuals were arrested in Southern California on check fraud after stealing more than \$5 million from at least 750 people.

How many people still use checks?

Check usage has declined from 19 billion checks in 1990 to about 3.4 billion in 2022. That is still a lot of opportunity for criminals to steal your money. "Despite the declining use of checks in the United States, criminals have been increasingly targeting the U.S. Mail since the COVID-19 pandemic to commit check fraud," wrote The Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, a part of the Treasury Department, in an alert sent in February.

PAY YOUR WATER BILL ONLINE SAFELY AND SECURELY

Visit the District's Website at www.denniswater.org and "**Pay Your Bill Here**" by eCheck (a/k/a ACH). There is a \$1.25 processing fee per payment, which can cover multiple accounts. You can also pay using a credit card, PayPal or Venmo. Various processing fees apply.

Of course, your check is always welcome at the District delivered by USPS or dropped in our outside box and will be processed without a fee. The outside box is unlike most USPS "blue-boxes" and is essentially tamper-proof. It is emptied daily.

Please note that paying via your own checking account with your bank's "Bill Pay" service is generally processed through third-party vendors and then aggregated by our payment processing vendor, Invoice Cloud.

EDWARD A CROWELL

1927—2023

Water Commissioner 1967–2009

A True Leader and Friend

Ed was first elected Water Commissioner in 1967 from a field of five candidates. Ed oversaw the continued growth and development of the District for 42 years, having served as Chairman for 32.



As Chairman his style was to enable District management and staff to achieve the Board's policies and goals by ensuring that they had the tools, equipment and training necessary to be an exemplary District. His leadership encouraged staff to take on projects that other water departments hire contractors for such as installing new water mains, power washing water tanks, building maintenance and more. As a result, through the years, the District won multiple state awards for progress, improvements and construction design.

Ed was a developer, owning and operating Crowell Construction in Dennis for more than 50 years, and at the same time he championed the acquisition of open space by the District and the Town for watershed protection and to preserve our natural environment.

His mission was the District's mission, to meet the water demand of the Town's citizens, businesses and visitors and while doing so, provide the best drinking water possible at the lowest cost. He was proud that the District was able to discontinue setting a tax rate for nearly 20 years while keeping affordable water rates and fees.

Those of us here at the District will always remember Ed's booming voice and generous laughter when he came to Board meetings and when he would stop by just to check in on daily operations. You are missed Mr. Chairman.

Ed is survived by his devoted wife of 40 years, Debbie Campbell Crowell, and his four children: Sandra and her husband Rick Sawyer of Brewster, Carver Crowell of Chatham, Dr. Ashleigh and her husband Paul Caplin of Knightdale, N.C. and Edward Tyler Crowell of South Yarmouth. Ed also leaves behind seven grandchildren

A LOOK AT THE DISTRICT OVER ED'S LEGACY YEARS

	No of Customers	No of Wells	Water Pumped (Millions of gallons)	Storage Capacity (Millions of gallons)	Acres for Watershed Protection
1967	6,156	9	276.5	8.5	226.7
2009	13,824	23	886.7	10.5	1061.64

CROSS CONNECTION

Identification and Prevention is Essential for Safe Drinking Water

What is a Cross Connection?

A “cross connection” occurs when the potable drinking water system is physically connected to a possible source of contamination. A connection to a private well, an industrial process containing harmful chemicals, a fire water storage tank, or even a hose left in a bucket of insecticide are all cross connections. If a sudden drop in pressure in the water main were to occur—if for example while fighting a fire or a broken water main, back siphoning could occur and draw harmful chemicals into the water distribution system.

Pressure Vacuum Breaker

This device is required on lawn irrigation systems to prevent pollution, fertilizers and insecticides from being pulled from your lawn and back into your house. Water flows out from the bottom section and the water pressure forces the spring loaded diaphragm at the top closed, allowing water to reach your sprinkler heads under pressure. If the water flow reverses, then the device allows air to enter from the top and “breaks” the vacuum. That’s why it’s called a Pressure Vacuum Breaker, or PVB. This device is so sensitive it can detect and instantly “break” a vacuum of as little as 1 PSI.

Atmospheric hose bib vacuum breaker

Without the proper protection, something as simple as a garden hose has the potential to contaminate or pollute the drinking water lines in your house. In fact, over half of the country’s cross-connection incidents involve unprotected garden hoses. There are very simple steps that you as a drinking water user can take to prevent such hazards, they are:

- ◆ **NEVER** submerge a hose in soapy water buckets, pet watering containers, pools, tubs, sinks, drains or chemicals.
- ◆ **NEVER** attach a hose to a garden sprayer without the proper backflow preventer.
- ◆ **BUY** and install an atmospheric hose bib vacuum breaker on any threaded water fixture. The installation can be as easy as attaching a garden hose to a spigot. This inexpensive device is available at most hardware stores and home-improvement centers.
- ◆ **IDENTIFY** and be aware of potential cross-connections to your water line.
- ◆ **BUY** appliances and equipment with a backflow preventer
- ◆ **BUY** and install backflow prevention devices or assemblies for all high and moderate hazard connections.

Hazardous Waste Collection Day

Saturday, September 9
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

OUR NEW WATER UTILITY SOFTWARE

As you may recall, the issuance of the February 2023 water bills was our first from our new cloud-based water billing system. Our provider and partner is Muni-Link, a leading municipal billing software company. This cloud-based solution provides an added layer of security through built-in backup and recovery systems that operate seamlessly and automatically.

When the District transferred the customer data to Muni-Link, we also provided the meter readings to be used for the February bills. From our “legacy” system, we had captured all of the meter readings, ran all of the exception reports to identify high usage and missing readings and confirmed that the readings being used would produce correct bills. The transfer of the data and migration to the new processes, as a new client went extremely well.

For the August 2023 water billing cycle, we began the process on schedule, however, there were delays in initializing the reading files used by employees to capture meter readings. And, there were some equipment failures along the way, which necessitated obtaining temporary readers. These delays in obtaining meter readings may result in your bill being slightly more than what is usually billed for the January—June water usage cycle.

Our legacy bill printing provided our customers with their current usage, their previous usage and the usage billed for the same cycle one year ago. We are working on providing previous usage on future water bills. In the mean time, if you register your account through our Customer Portal by clicking on **“Pay Your Bill Here”** on the bottom of our home page, you can review your usage history and even re-print previous bills.

It is not mandatory that you pay your bill online or sign up for Paperless Bills, in order to see your account, although we strongly recommend you do.

Please email customerservice@denniswater.org or call us at 508-398-3351.

