

# Dennis Water District

Board of Water Commissioners

\*\*\*\*\*

Paul F. Prue, *Chairman*  
Peter L. McDowell, *Vice Chair*  
Alan Tuttle

## Main-Line News

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

Appointed by Water Commissioners

\*\*\*\*\*

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

Volume 27, No. 2

August 2020

### Six-Million Gallon Tank To Be Painted

At the Annual District Meeting held on June 23, 2020, the voters attending authorized an appropriation of \$600,000 for the painting of the Route 134 Tank. Shortly thereafter, the Commissioners signed a contract with Utility Services, Inc. for \$598,100 to clean and paint the interior and exterior of the tank. The project is scheduled to take place this fall once the pumping demand slows down and the tank can be safely taken out of service. An independent evaluation of the tank's condition was received in November 2018. Scheduling this work was deliberately planned to be funded and undertaken once the new one-million gallon tank in West Dennis was completed and on-line.



Route 134 Tank, South Dennis

The Route 134 Tank was last painted in 2007. If you were to drive by it today, the main thing you will notice is weathering which is caused by thinning of the paint. It results in rust color bleeding through the paint. The project will include a power washing, grinding and priming of rust spots and two full coats of exterior paint. The interior will be power washed and rust spot touchups will be applied. All work is scheduled to be completed this fall and the tank restored to full service before winter weather sets in.

### MEETINGS DURING THE PANDEMIC

The Board of Water Commissioners generally meet monthly on the fourth Thursday at 10:00 AM in the Stone Hearing Room, Town Hall, 685 Route 134, South Dennis. However, in these unprecedented times the Board has found it necessary to be flexible in its meeting schedule.

In keeping with Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and his order of March 15, 2020 limiting the number of people that may gather in one place, meetings are physically closed to the public and conducted via remote participation. Information and guidelines for remote participation by the public can be found on the Board's posted agendas. Official postings of meetings are found on the Town of Dennis website: [www.town.dennis.ma.us](http://www.town.dennis.ma.us). The meetings can be viewed in Dennis on Comcast Channel 18 or on the web at [www.town.dennis.ma.us/channel-18/pages/live-stream](http://www.town.dennis.ma.us/channel-18/pages/live-stream).

Every effort will be made to ensure that the public can access the meeting in real time via technological means. In the event that is not possible, despite best efforts, a video recording, transcript, or other record of the meeting will be made available as soon as possible on [www.town.dennis.ma.us/home/pages/agendas-minutes-videos](http://www.town.dennis.ma.us/home/pages/agendas-minutes-videos).

### NEW WATER RATES IN EFFECT FOR THIS BILLING CYCLE

Water Rates and the semi-annual Account Charge have been adjusted for the first time since July 2009. In 2009, the two iron and manganese treatment plants went on-line and so did the debt service to pay for their construction. In order to meet that obligation, the Board found it necessary to raise the water rates where they have remained stable until this August 2020 billing cycle.

The annual cost of operations has continued to rise over the past decade. Efficiencies in both operations and utilities have helped mitigate those costs over the years but, a projected revenue shortfall had to be addressed, which meant raising rates.

The Department of Environmental Protection recently increased the Safe Drinking Water Act Assessment from .0089 cents to .0099 cents (rounded up to 1¢ per thousand gallons).

#### Water Use Rates - Per Thousand Gallons

First 50,000 gallons is \$3.00

51,000 through 100,000 gallons is \$3.50

101,000 gallons and up is \$4.00

Safe Drinking Water Act Assessment is 1¢ for every one thousand gallons

Account Charge is \$48 semi-annually to every customer regardless of the amount of water used.

### 2019 ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT AVAILABLE ONLINE

The Annual Water Quality Report (formerly known as the Consumer Confidence Report) has traditionally been mailed with the February water bill and the *Main-Line* newsletter. Due to testing results not available at the time of the water bill mailing, the report was incomplete and could not be mailed. EPA regulations allow water suppliers to notify customers of the availability of the report by a separate mailing, such as a post card. This past June, the District mailed post cards to every customer of record with information on how to view or obtain a copy of this report.

If you did not receive the post card, please visit our website or type [www.denniswater.org/awqr](http://www.denniswater.org/awqr) in your search browser. Printed copies can be mailed on request by emailing [customerservice@denniswater.org](mailto:customerservice@denniswater.org) or calling the office directly.

District officials are pleased to report that there were no contamination violations for 2019.

## FALL NORTHSIDE FLUSHING

This Fall, the District will continue its flushing program with the North system. This will begin mid-to-late September in the area of Old Bass River Road and Setucket Road. Customers are reminded to look for flushing signs in your area. Water is forced through the mains



and hydrants at higher than normal velocity in order to remove sediments. This process can and will cause some discolored water during the day as the flushing is conducted in your area. It is

advised that washing laundry not be done during the day in order to prevent the staining of clothing and other items. You are encouraged to check that your water quality is clear before doing laundry, if we have been in your area. If you experience discolored water, run the water until it becomes clear. If you should have any question please call the office directly at 508-398-3351.

## Cleaning Wells During Summer

One of the most important maintenance operations of any water supplier is ensuring that public supply wells, especially on Cape Cod with its tourist-based economy, can meet the summer demand. To accomplish that goal, the District annually evaluates the production and efficiency of its wells. If those evaluations indicate that well screens are clogged, those wells are cleaned by a professional contractor. This year Wells 11, 15 and 21 showed a reduction of pumping capacity of 28%, 33% and 32% respectively. As a result, the three wells were taken out of service and cleaned before the summer pumping season began in earnest.

Cleaning entails a process known as Aqua Freed. This cleaning method uses a freezing process that breaks up any encrusted iron built-up on the screen, the gravel pack and surrounding earth formation. Once the build-up is broken up, a surge block and pump are used to agitate the material and it is simply pumped to waste, essentially rinsing out the iron. This cleaning process once again clears the screens for water to freely flow into the well and thereby restoring its full pumping capacity.

### SPECIAL ADVISORY

If you do a search for Dennis Water District to pay your water bill online please make sure you are visiting [www.denniswater.org](http://www.denniswater.org) and not [www.doxo.com](http://www.doxo.com).

**NOT THIS**

[www.doxo.com](http://www.doxo.com) > info > dennis-water-district-ma

Dennis Water District (MA) | Pay Your Bill Online | [doxo.com](http://doxo.com)

Pay your Dennis Water District (MA) bill online with doxo, Pay with a credit card, debit card, or direct from your bank account. doxo is the simple, protected way to ...

## Board Authorized to Acquire Land for Watershed Protection

At the annual meeting held this past June, voters authorized the Board of Water Commissioners to acquire 7.306 (+/-) acres of vacant land at 635, 635A and 636 Old Bass River Road. It had been announced earlier that an agreement had been reached with the owners to purchase the property at a cost of \$700,000. The voters also authorized the Board to borrow these funds. The Treasurer advised the Board that formally issuing bonds for the purchase is not anticipated and that annual payments equal to ten percent of the principal, along with accrued interest, could be accomplished within the fiscal budget.

Two of the largest parcels (about 6¾ acres) are directly adjacent to existing watershed property held by the District and all parcels are within the Zone of Contribution for five drinking water supply wells. The acquisition is important to preserving as much open space as possible within watersheds. These parcels had the potential for a density of housing development that could have had an adverse impact on the water quality of the town's drinking water. Now the land will be preserved as open space in perpetuity.

## CONDITIONS "NORMAL" NO WATER BAN FOR DENNIS

This summer may be a little dry, which has led the State to issue a Level 1 Drought Advisory for the Cape due to a small drop in the normal rainfall over the last few months. This can be confusing with status conditions of local water departments. This does not mean that Dennis is in a true drought or has found it necessary to issue water-use restrictions. The reality is that our normal rainfall is 52" annually yet, for the past two years, the precipitation has been at 69" and 63". On the Cape that rainfall is stored in the aquifer. The USGS graphs help demonstrate that.

Naturally, the District always supports water conservation measures whenever possible. Lawn irrigation systems are the largest non-essential use of water. This is the perfect time to review how it is operating and determine if adjustments to the length of time and/or frequency might conserve water and save money on your next water bill. How much are you using each time it runs? Most people do not know the answer. By taking meter readings before and after it runs, you can estimate how much you use on a weekly basis. Monitoring monthly readings can help you identify possible leaks and again, save you a lot of money.

