

Walpole Utilities ~ 2009

2009 will go down as the year of “planning” for Walpole’s utilities. Due to the state of the economy, the loss of some large utility customers and the struggle to keep rates in check, Walpole Water & Wastewater did little in the way of upgrades or improvements. Much time was spent working with various firms on costs and possible funding options for some of the most urgent upgrades and mapping out a direction for the future of these systems. As the bonds that funded the construction of the “new” sewer system come to a close, it becomes obvious that with the magnitude of upgrades needed, we will require capital expenditures in the near future to maintain a compliant system. Walpole’s wastewater is pumped to Bellows Falls for treatment under a long-term agreement that originated in 1986. Bellows Falls is currently undergoing a multimillion-dollar upgrade of their treatment facility. These costs will be passed on to users of the treatment plant on both sides of the river and will be playing a major role in how Walpole proceeds with upgrades to the collection system and our aging pump stations.

In March we experienced a broken 8” water main under Great Brook on Watkins Hill. This created many challenges to repair due to its location, the time of the year and the loss of water service to a large portion of the “upper” system. After this was repaired we enjoyed a quiet summer and fall with no major problems until Christmas Eve at which time we experienced a broken water main on Main Street by ElmStreet. This was followed, as luck would have it, by another break on New Year’s Eve at our River Well pump station. Our thanks for everyone’s patience while these repairs were made and all of our employees for consistently stepping up to the plate at the most inopportune times to ensure your water stays flowing. I would also like to thank Jennifer Palmiotto and Granite State Rural Water, the association she directs, for the countless hours of assistance rendered to us at no cost to the users. From line location to Source Water Protection the services they provide help maintain affordable water.

We continue to upgrade our water meters. The new meters are radio read and prevent the meter readers from having to enter people’s homes and basements. If you have not had your meter upgraded and would like to schedule a time for this work to happen, please give us a call so we can schedule this work.

Each year with the spring utility bills, we send a copy of the Consumer Confidence Report. This report is an informational mailing, which is similar to the label on food and beverage products and contains information about our water system, the wells and their operation. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact us through the Selectmen’s Office at 756-3672. We are also working to establish an email list to contact customers in the event of an emergency. You can email us at water@walpolenh.us to be added to this list.

Respectively Submitted,

Mark Houghton

