

# Dedham-Westwood Water District 2013 Annual Report

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## **Mission**

The Dedham-Westwood Water District(DWWD)Board of Water Commissioners sets policy, prepares operating and capital budgets, and establishes rates along with rules and regulations for the Water District. The mission of the DWWD is to provide the residents and businesses of Westwood and Dedham with high quality drinking water for domestic purposes and for fire protection.

## **Water Supply**

The District continues to conduct its operations towards providing high quality, safe drinking water, in compliance with all federal and State Drinking Water Regulations as well as actively pursue land use and regulatory measures that will serve to protect the water resources used to supply our drinking water. The District's partial membership in the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority allows for the annual purchase of up to 36.5 million gallons of water which is available as a supplement, as well as for an emergency, to the District's existing water supply. The District conducted monitoring for lead and copper in the drinking water in the summer of 2013. The testing proved to the satisfaction of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection that the water treatment has been optimized to prevent these harmful metals dissolving into the drinking water. A summary of all water quality test results is mailed annually to all DWWD customers.

## **Water System Infrastructure Improvements**

This past year \$2.5MM was spent on capital improvements, which is a typical yearly investment. In total 19,013 feet of water main was installed or replaced in Pine St and Mount Vernon Streets in Dedham and in School Street, Shaeffer Lane and Pine Lane in Westwood. The DWWD water main replacement work cost \$1.5MM. There are 212 miles of water pipe in the system. The DWWD generally replaces one to three miles of pipe each year. In the past few years, DWWD replaced pipe in School Street, Pine and Schaeffer Lanes and the Edgewood and Beechnut Roads area. Still, there remains a significant amount of old unlined cast iron pipe to be replaced. A 2012 study of the system by Weston and Sampson Engineers recommended an annual investment into replacement water mains of at least \$1.4MM annually for the next twenty years.

Forty six new water services were installed this year and we replaced fifty old services, generally coordinated with Town paving schedules.

Other capital improvements included four hydrant replacements and thirty-four new hydrants were set. We replaced 1150 meters with the new radio style. Approximately 92% of our customers now have the radio style meters, which has greatly reduced the time needed to read the meters.

Plans and Specifications were engineered for the replacement of the emergency generator and heating system at the White Lodge Treatment Plant. Bids were solicited and the work is budgeted for 2014 at a cost of \$1.1MM. The capital budget approved for 2014 is \$4.5MM.



Bridge Street Treatment Plant and Pump Station

## **Water Conservation**

Water conservation continues to be an integral part of the DWWD mission and day to day operations. Last fall we conducted another system wide accoustical survey of the water distribution system intended to find water leaks on mains, services and hydrants which are not surfacing. Finding what's called "unaccounted for water" has been a long standing challenge for the DWWD as it is for systems such as ours that started well over a century ago. Water meters are also methodically replaced to assure accuracy and take advantage of new technologies. To date, 12,089 customer meters have been replaced with radio style meters. Rebates continue to be offered to promote the upgrade of fixtures and appliances

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to new low flow versions. We expanded the rebate program to be available to commercial accounts. Lastly, we continue to offer water resource protection and water conservation education in both Dedham and Westwood Elementary Schools, community Green Fairs, Earth Day programs and Farmer's Markets. Aside from being the right thing to do, water conservation is necessary to continue to comply with MADEP issued water permits, without which we could not withdraw the water quantities needed from the Charles and Neponset river basins. Along with four other Public Water Systems, we recently participating in a MADEP pilot program to look at the impact of new watershed specific, mitagory based water permit regulations. We also received a MADEP grant to focus on the impact of the new regulations on the Neponset River Watershed communities.

### **Financial**

DWWD continues to be a financially sound organization as evidenced by the recently completed financial audit conducted by the CPA firm of Melanson and Heath. The Moody's Bond Rating is Aa2. Water rates are comparable to most Massachusetts communities. Each year, the DWWD replaces water mains and services, meters, pumps and motors needed to keep the water works reliably running.