

CHATHAM WATER NEWS

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William G. Redfield, P. E., Director

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Spring Flushing & Chlorination Program

The Water Department will once again be conducting a spring water distribution system flushing program. The program is aimed at cleaning the system of any sediment that may have accumulated over the winter and to bring fresh water to those areas that have low water use during the winter months.

The Water Department will also be adding a small amount of chlorine to the water system as a precautionary measure to kill any bacteria that may be stirred up as a result of the flushing program. Flushing will begin about the middle of March. Notices will be published in the local newspapers prior to introducing the chlorine, and signs will be posted in the area being flushed.

You may experience some discoloration in the water for short periods of time. In most instances, letting your water run for a few minutes should clear the discoloration. Please check the water coming from your faucet before you begin to do a wash, shower or other chores that require clear water. We also suggest that customers keep a gallon or two of water stored in the refrigerator for drinking or food preparation should off-taste or discoloration develop.

Flushing of the distribution system is an important aspect of our ongoing maintenance program. We understand you may experience some inconvenience and thank you for your cooperation and patience during this important task.

Blizzard of 2005

The Water Department personnel would like to thank the people who took the time to clear around fire hydrants near their homes. Their action made it safer for them and their neighbors during the exceptionally large amount of snowfall we received.

Well Pump Station # 9

Construction began this fall on the Town Forest Well Pump Station #9, located North of the South Chatham wells, off Main Street, at the Harwich and Chatham town line. The general contractor, Dankris Builders Corporation, is on schedule and this well is anticipated to be on line by the end of August, 2005.

When completed, Well #9 will provide an additional 700 gallons per minute pumping capacity and give the Department greater ability to broadly distribute the aquifer's water level drawdown by rotating the operation of all the wells during the year.

Water Rates

The Town of Chatham Water and Sewer Commissioners (Selectmen) have approved a 25 percent increase on all quarterly charges (base and step rates) for the Water Department. They also increased the system development charges assessed on new connections by 50 percent.

These charges are being raised to cover the anticipated shortfall in revenue and the projected financing of current projects. The current projects include Town Forest Well Station # 9, water mains' and services' replacement projects, and replacing the water storage standpipe.

Commercial Dishwasher Spray Nozzles

The Chatham Water Department continues to make available low flow power spray nozzles for all commercial customers as a water conservation tool. These nozzles do not require professional installation. If you are interested in obtaining one for your business, please contact Colleen Furber at 508-945-5150.

Water Leak Detection

Water leaks can cause a dramatic rise in your water bill and waste considerable amounts of water. Common sources of leaks are toilets that continue to run, a constant drip in a sink, damage to an outdoor faucet or sprinkler system, or a loose or damaged hose washer.

Water meters installed by the Chatham Water Department have a small red triangle in the meter face. This red triangle is designed to detect small leaks. If it is moving when you have all the water shut off inside and outside your home, you may have a leak.

Toilet leaks cause more water waste than any other fixture in the home. Even the smallest toilet leak will waste 30 gallons of water per day. To help you check for toilet leaks the Chatham Water Department can supply you with dye tablets. You put a dye tablet in the toilet's upper tank and leave it there for 15 minutes. If you see the dye color in your bowl you have a leak, and it's probably time for a new flapper valve. We suggest that the dye test be performed every six months since small toilet leaks cannot be heard and are hard to visually detect.

Most faucet and bathtub leaks are plainly visible as drips coming from the faucet or tub spout. Occasionally, faucets and bathtubs may leak in other places such as the on/off handles or in the pipes. To repair a drip in a handle, close the shutoff valve for the faucet or handles and tighten or replace any damaged fittings or washers. The cost of leak repairs will be paid with the money you save on your water bill.

Irrigation system leaks can occur in several places. Indications of a leak include overgrown areas of turf and soggy areas around spray heads, valves, and piping. A leaking valve will often result in a very wet or flooded valve box. To detect a leak in your irrigation system, you must shut down all water use inside your home and be fairly certain that there are no leaks occurring indoors. Once you have done this, you can use your water meter to see if any water continues to flow into your irrigation system.

Remember, customers are responsible for any water passing through their meter, so check for leaks often.

Sewer Collection System Flushing

The Sewer Department will be performing its semi-annual "jetting" of the sewage collection system. This high-pressure flushing of the Town's gravity sewers removes grease buildup and prevents the mains from backing up and overflowing. The Sewer Department personnel, a septic pumping truck, and a police detail will be working on Main Street and some of the side streets in the downtown area for approximately two weeks. Please be careful when approaching these work crews with your vehicle and give them a "brake" for safety sake.

Open House

The Water and Sewer Departments will be hosting their annual open houses on Saturday, May 7, 2005, from 10:00 a.m. through 2:00 p.m. in celebration of "National Drinking Water Week". This is your opportunity to stop by and see two of your well pump stations and the wastewater treatment facility first hand. The water and wastewater systems are the largest capital investment that the residents of Chatham have made. These two open houses will be held at the Training Field Well Pump Stations #5 & #8, located at 125 Training Field Road and at the Waste Water Treatment Facility off Sam Ryder Road, behind the landfill and solid waste transfer station.

Irrigation Systems Testing Schedule

The Chatham Water Department will begin testing backflow prevention devices installed on irrigation systems beginning in May of 2005. It is not necessary for the homeowner to be present during the testing of the device since most devices are located on the outside of the house. If you wish to be present during the test, please contact the office as soon as possible to schedule an appointment. A copy of the test results will be left at each tested location. If you have any questions, please call Lynn Van Sant at 508-945-8837.

