



Watergram

Westbury Water District

Spring 2009

Water Utility Maintains Public Hydrants

It is the responsibility of the Westbury Water District to ensure that the public fire hydrants located throughout the utility's 5-square-mile service area are maintained in good working order and able to provide adequate pressure during an emergency situation. This includes routine maintenance, painting, testing and any necessary repairs or replacement of more than 785 hydrants.

With chlorine now being added to the drinking water, it has become necessary for the district to flush the fire hydrants and water mains more often to help maintain the balance of the chlorine residual in the distribution system, particularly during the warmer



Westbury Water District employees Todd Weiss (left) and Matt Dinuzzo flush a hydrant and take a chlorine sample to insure a balanced chlorine residual in the distribution system.

summer months. Despite that, consumers are still being encouraged to call the district office anytime of day or night if they notice someone tampering with or operating a hydrant. This request is made as part of the homeland security initiatives being taken locally, as we must continue to remain vigilant in the interest of public safety.

The public is also reminded to NEVER park in front of a hydrant, even briefly, and to always refrain from covering a hydrant in any way. Plantings and ornamental items should be kept

far away from hydrants and meter pit covers, to allow for easy access. Only water district personnel are authorized to paint a hydrant.

Considering Underground Sprinklers?

Consumers planning on installing underground sprinkling systems in the near future should be aware that specific rules and regulations are in place and an application is required to be submitted to the Westbury Water District for approval prior to the work beginning. The necessary paperwork, which clearly specifies each requirement, can be picked up at the district's administrative offices on Drexel Avenue.

Additionally, an approved backflow prevention device must be installed in a safe and accessible location on the incoming service line where it first enters the building. This is specifically required by the New York State Department of Health to ensure that the irrigation system is in full compliance for the protec-

tion of public health. Annual inspection of the device is required thereafter, with the paperwork submitted to the water district each year.

"Backflow devices protect the public drinking water against any contaminated water being drawn back into the system during a sudden drop in pressure, which could be caused by a hydrant being opened in the nearby vicinity," explained Westbury Water District Commissioner William C. Olson. "This can occur, for example, if fertilizers or other lawn chemicals are present in pooled water near a sprinkler head."

Information about backflow devices and other requirements for new automatic irrigation systems is also available on the utility's website.

www.westburywaterdistrict.com

Cost-Cutting Tips

As the economy continues to affect families throughout Long Island, many homeowners are seeking ways to cut costs. With more than 50 percent of the water provided to the public during the summer months attributed to outdoor use, a thorough check of your automatic underground sprinkling system may prove to reduce water consumption and lower the water bill.

“The water district recommends the entire irrigation system be given a thorough inspection by a professional at least once a year,” explained Westbury Water Commissioner Kenneth O. Jones. “It should be checked for leaks as well as efficiency, both of which will prevent water loss.”

Pipes that are cracked and leaking underground run continuously, causing the water meter to turn 24/7, even when the sprinkler system is not in operation. Not only does this cause thousands of gallons of our precious natural resource to be wasted unnecessarily but also results in major increases in water bills, which would be an unwelcome surprise for

unsuspecting homeowners.

Additionally, a properly designed and operated system can reduce water use by up to 10-15 percent. Here are some pointers:

- Heads should deliver large drops in a pattern of water close to the ground, making water less likely to be lost to wind and evaporation.
- Adjust or replace heads to avoid spraying the pavement and keep overlap from adjacent sprinkler heads to a minimum.
- Timer devices, which are required by the water district, should be set to provide the most effective schedule. Time of day, soil conditions, direction of sun and other such landscaping and environmental factors should all be considered. Regardless, be sure to follow Nassau County’s odd/even regulations that also prohibit sprinkling between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Also required by the water district, rain-sensing devices prevent the system from turning on when Mother Nature has already provided enough moisture.

WELL #10 GETS UPGRADE

The Westbury Water District recently completed a project to install a backup generator at well #10, which was put in place as a much needed alternate source of power, to ensure delivery of water to the tap in the event electricity is lost in the area.

Since the water utility relies on electricity to pump the drinking water from deep below the earth’s surface, it is imperative that its distribution system is properly equipped with backup generators. This way, if there is a blackout, the district can continue to provide water to consumers for purposes of drinking and firefighting.

In the case of the Northeast Blackout that occurred in August of 2003, the generators, which are situated at well sites throughout the district, became the sole source of electricity for the water



district. They were used to keep the water flowing, the administrative operations running and the treatment facilities and controls operational for the 25 hours it took for electricity to be restored.

In extreme circumstances, as part of the district’s disaster preparedness plan, consumers would be asked to curtail their water use, so fire protection is not compromised.

Future Planning

The next major capital expense slated for the district is the refurbishment and painting of the elevated water storage tank on Dryden Street. The job is estimated to cost approximately \$1.5 million and is slated for 2010. Built in the 1950s, the tank was last repainted in the early 1990s.

Efforts to Consolidate Fruitless

While water professionals and elected officials have analyzed and debated the subject of consolidating special districts throughout the past two years, taxes have increased, consumer spending is down and the economy has nosedived. Meanwhile, there is no solid evidence that consolidation would be beneficial in any way, but quite the contrary. It is the position of Westbury Water District officials that efforts by elected officials to save taxpayer money should now be focused elsewhere.

Unfortunately, the subject has more recently reached a state level where legislation could ultimately determine whether or not the concept comes to fruition. Two state lawmakers from Long Island have supported the district's position against consolidation of special districts and elimination of hometown rule – NY State Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel and NY State Senator Craig Johnson.

In an editorial published this past January, Schimel pointed out that “Governor David Paterson’s executive budget... seeks to consolidate local government services in the name of saving taxpayers money.”

She continued with, “it looks to me as if the savings are too minimal to justify the cost, which is a large loss in local control – a system that has delivered quality services in many communities for years.”

In April of 2008, Johnson’s response to the final report of the Commission on Local Government Efficiency and Competitiveness, pointed out, “there is almost no analysis of cost savings on any of the proposed consolidation initiatives.” He went on to say, “no consolidation should take place without the taxpayers being made aware of how much they will save versus what loss in quality of service they will experience.”

Professional Water Associations Beneficial

As part of their commitment to continuing education for those who serve the consumers of the Westbury Water District, the utility’s three elected commissioners have agreed to attend a series of workshops being offered locally by a professional water industry association of which they are active members.

The sessions, which will run throughout 2009, cover important topics such as water district management, code of ethics, financial administration, town law, Freedom of Information Law (FOIL), Open Meetings Law and other areas of interest to water commissioners serving in the Long Island marketplace.

The workshops are offered for a nominal cost by the Nassau-Suffolk Water Commissioners Association, a professional organization of water districts administered by locally elected water commissioners. The group’s mission is to make a cooperative effort to maintain the excellence of Long Island’s public water supply.

“We know first-hand about the importance of sharing information among our colleagues in the industry,” said Westbury Water Commissioner Vincent Abbatiello. “It’s one of many ways that we expand our knowledge and stay on top of the rules and regulations that govern our industry.”

The Westbury Water District’s commissioners are also active members of the Long Island Water Conference, playing host to some of its continuing education workshops. The utility is also a member of the Long Island Special Districts Association, a professional group that recently formed to lobby against consolidation efforts by county and state elected officials.

“These are just a couple of the ways we work to stay on top of issues that are important to the consumers we serve,” Commissioner Abbatiello stated, “so we can continue to provide an ample supply of top-notch drinking water 24/7.”

www.westburywaterdistrict.com

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District Reps Available

Community groups and service clubs from the Westbury area should be reminded that water district officials will gladly make themselves available to attend a meeting or workshop, if asked. Whether an organization is looking to learn more about their drinking water or has a specific water related topic they would like covered, they are welcome to call the district office to make a request for a representative to attend a meeting. Someone will be there to answer questions or act as a keynote speaker, depending on the need of the group.

Tours of the district office and facilities can also be arranged. Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts often take advantage of this offer, allowing the youngsters to earn credits toward their badges.

Sprinkling Regulations




The use of water for irrigation purposes on lawns, shrubs, trees, plants and vegetation of any type is regulated by Nassau County ordinances. **Absolutely no watering is allowed from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** Watering is permitted during all other hours under the following conditions:

1. Even-numbered properties and premises without numbers may be watered on even dates.
2. Residents with odd house numbers may water on odd dates.

These regulations apply to both automatic and time-controlled sprinkler systems as well as manually-operated hose sprinkling. Remember, the district does not wish to restrict the use of water, but we do want to stop the waste of this valuable resource.

Use Only What You Need!

 Clip and Save