

# Watergram



Westbury Water District

Fall 2011

## Storage Tank Rehab Under Way

The Westbury Water District has completed the "Request for Proposal" process and selected a qualified contractor to maintain, rehabilitate and paint the water purveyor's one-million-gallon elevated water storage tank on Dryden Street. The structure has been shut down and removed from the utility's public water distribution system; preliminary preparation and repair work has begun at the site.

The \$2.7 million project is part of the district's ongoing capital improvements program to keep the water utility's well sites and distribution system in good working order and the public drinking water in full compliance with government standards. The tank, which was constructed in the 1950s, was last painted in the early 1990s.

"Projects such as this are conducted under the oversight of the county health department as well as state and federal agencies that set today's stringent drinking water standards," explained Westbury Water District Commissioner and Chairman of the Board William C. Olson. "In the interest of public health and safety, rules and regulations



*Westbury Water District officials stand at the foot of the utility's water tower on Dryden Street, where they recently paid a visit to check on the progress of the development project to rehabilitate the structure. Pictured left to right are Supervisor of Water Plant Operations Paul Prignano, Water Commissioner William C. Olson, Superintendent John R. Ingram and Water Commissioner Vincent Abbatiello.*

will be followed and a series of approvals met before the tank can be put back into service.

"For these reasons, undertakings such as this are typically quite costly and require many months to plan and complete," he pointed out. "With this in mind, the board of water commissioners is careful to set funds aside in the district's operating budget each year.

"This project in particular will be amortized over a series of years, so we are pleased that no capital improvement bond will be needed to pay for it," Commissioner Olson added.

During the next several months, the tank will be draped and capsulated so environmental standards can be met throughout the sandblasting and painting phases. The project is expected to be completed by July 1, 2012, in time for the heat of the summer when the public demand for water peaks.

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# Importance of House Numbers



Homeowners are reminded to ensure that their house numbers are prominently displayed and easily read from the street so, in the event of an emergency, the property can be located quickly.

The number should be in contrast with the background color, be well lit after sundown and not blocked by overgrown landscaping or holiday decorations. If purchasing new numbers, keep in mind that digits are more easily read than words.

# Budget Stable With No Rate Increase

The Westbury Water District is pleased to have presented a 2012 budget that falls within the 2-percent cap recently imposed by New York State. Despite increases in necessary spending, district officials' commitment to fiscal conservancy enabled them to hold the budget increase to 1.3 percent.

"In our pledge to provide the public with an excellent product at the most affordable price, we have exercised careful budgeting practices to abide by the cap put in place by the state without increasing water rates in 2012," explained Water Commissioner Kenneth O. Jones. "With the economic hardships many families have faced in recent times, we have worked diligently to do more with less and remain sensitive to increasing consumer costs."

The district's rates for water have been the same since 2002. The utility established a step-rate system at that time to encourage consumers to use less water. Under the system, the rate increases per thousand gallons as more water is used, in the spirit of saving money and conserving water.

# WATER TRIVIA

## Why does water expand when it freezes?

When most substances change from a liquid to a solid, they shrink and become denser as their molecules become packed more closely together. Water starts out behaving this way as its temperature goes down, but amazingly it changes course at 39 degrees and begins to expand as it chills further. By the time it is frozen at 32 degrees, the water has expanded dramatically. In fact, 10 cups of liquid water put into the freezer will yield nearly 11 cups of ice! This is also why frozen pipes break and roadway cracks turn into potholes in the winter months.

Scientists say water's quirky behavior is caused by the shape of its molecules and how they bond to one another.



## Why do ice cubes float?

When water is cooling and hits 39 degrees, its volume begins to increase as the temperature continues to drop. By the time it becomes a solid state at 32 degrees, the frozen water is considerably less dense than the liquid water, and so it floats at the top.

For this reason, when ponds ice-up in the winter months, fish and other aquatic life are able to survive in the liquid water below.

## Why does the water run down a drain in a swirl?

When the drain is first opened, the water approaches the hole in what appears to be a smooth, uniform flow, with the water by the drain having the least movement.

As it exits into the drain, the remaining water with more momentum takes its place and the gravitational pull increases.

Gradually, due to the irregularities in the water movement as well as the air movement on the surface, the water begins to approach the drain more on one side. If an object with angular momentum moves closer to the center of its rotation, it speeds up. So, the water gradually picks up velocity and causes a whirling motion.



# No Interruption from Irene

While the Westbury Water District was without electric power for five long days as a result of Hurricane Irene, the utility continued to operate and provide consumers with an uninterrupted supply of potable water throughout the ordeal. That is because the district was able to switch over to its backup diesel-powered generators, which provided the necessary energy to keep the administration office running and the well sites pumping enough water to meet public demand.

“We have the generators in place precisely for emergencies such as this,” explained Water Commissioner Vincent Abbatiello. “This way, during a blackout situation we are able to keep the water flowing to our service area.”

Additionally, with a backup energy source deployed, the district’s team of water professionals worked around the clock to ensure that the well sites and distribution system were functioning smoothly.

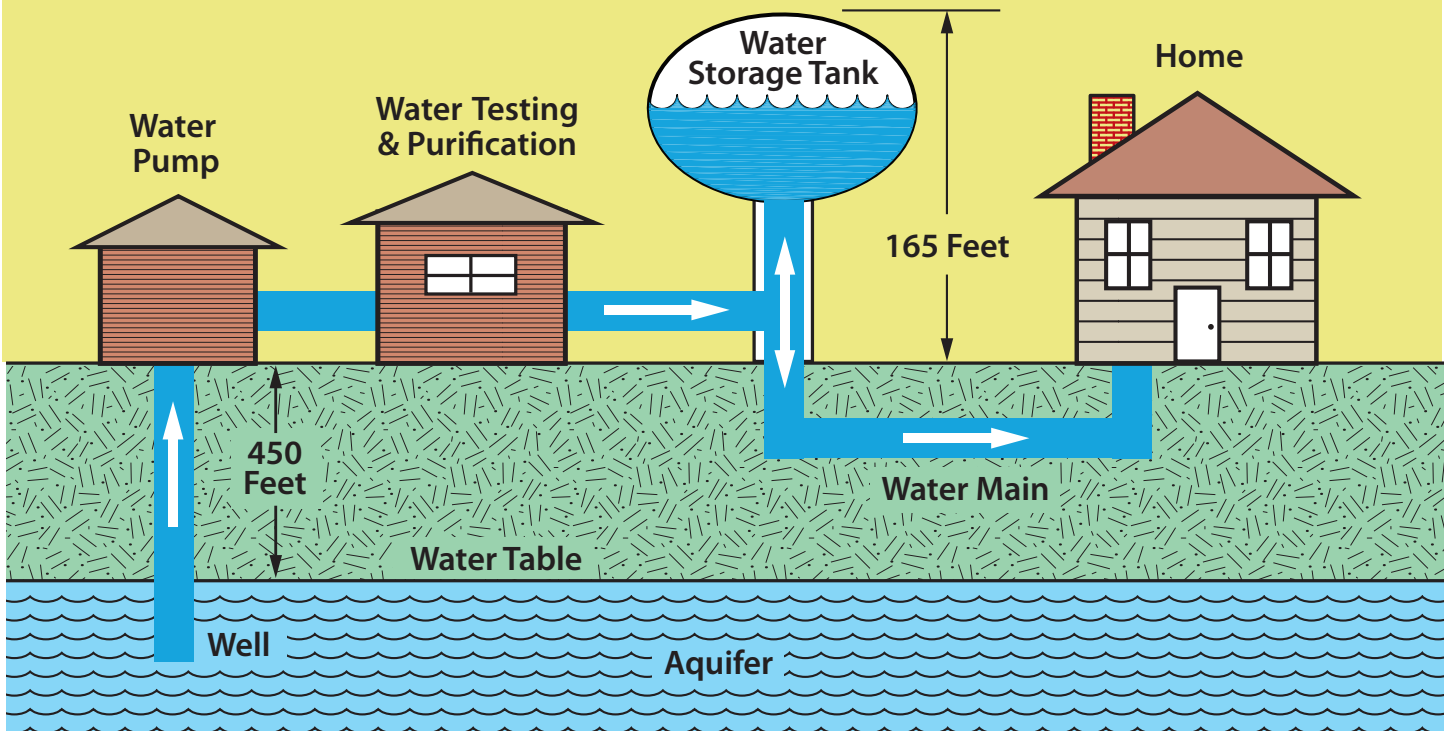
“Our field operators are to be commended for the tremendous job they did to keep the water flowing 24/7



during and after the storm,” added Commissioner Abbatiello. “Thanks to their hard work and commitment to good service, the community had an uninterrupted flow of water to their taps.”

## How Do We Get Our Drinking Water?

Your drinking water is safely contained deep below the earth’s surface in Long Island’s aquifer system. It is pumped approximately 450 feet upwards to ground level and another 165 feet above the earth into a water storage tank. From there it is released and delivered to the taps throughout the Westbury Water District by the power of gravity.



## Westbury Water District

160 Drexel Ave.  
Westbury, NY 11590-3037  
(516) 333-0427

## Board of Commissioners

William C. Olson, Chairman  
Kenneth O. Jones, Secretary  
Vincent Abbatiello, Treasurer

## Superintendent

John R. Ingram

[www.westburywaterdistrict.com](http://www.westburywaterdistrict.com)

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## WINTER TIPS

# Keep Equipment Clear

Consumers are reminded to keep the fire hydrant nearest their homes clear of snow throughout the winter season. The time it would take for an emergency responder to locate and clear the equipment of snow and ice during an emergency situation could mean the difference between life and death. So, before the snow freezes up, take a few minutes to shovel a 2-foot area around the fire hydrant that is closest to your property.

Additionally, homeowners are reminded not to pile snow on meter pit covers that are located on the lawn. The water district may need access to the area during the winter months to shut off the water in an emergency.



## *Locate & Mark Main Shutoff*

The water main is the master valve that shuts off the flow of water throughout the property. It is most likely located in the area where the water line comes into the house, usually in the vicinity of the water heater or washing machine.

If a pipe bursts, you could experience terrible flooding and property damage if you cannot locate the water main quickly in an emergency situation. So, find it now and mark it somehow with a tag or paint. Be sure everyone in the household knows its purpose and how to access it. Childcare providers and other individuals left in charge of the property should also be made aware of the location of the valve.