

NEWSLETTER

NH WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

NHWWA.org



Southern New Hampshire Regional Water Project Update

by Michael C. Unger P.E., NHDES

After several years of planning and design work and months of construction, the Southern New Hampshire Regional Water Project has reached a significant milestone: the Town of Salem will begin using project water on or around June 15.

The Southern New Hampshire Regional Water Project interconnects the water supply from Manchester Water Works through the Town of Derry to deliver up to 1 million gallons per day in Phase 1 to the Towns of Windham, Salem, and Plaistow and the Hampstead Area Water Company, Inc. (HAWC) which serves customers in the Towns of Hampstead and Atkinson. The water recipients are in need of additional water because of reduction in supply capacity due to contaminated local wells and the region's growing population.

Phase 1 construction includes approximately 46,000 linear feet (nearly 9 miles) of water main extensions, 3 new booster pumping stations, 1 booster pumping station upgrade, 3 new pressure reducing valve stations, 1 pressure reducing valve station upgrade, 2 new water storage tanks, and water treatment upgrades at 9 well treatment stations. In addition, the Town of Plaistow's existing fire suppression system will be converted to a potable water system.

The NH Drinking Water and

Groundwater Advisory Commission (Commission) has approved \$29.4 million in grant funds from the NH Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund (Trust Fund) for design and construction of the project. These funds have supported 13 construction contracts throughout the project area starting in September 2019.

The milestone noted above symbolizes the completion of the core elements needed to deliver water to Salem from Manchester Water Works. The remaining Phase 1 work is associated with converting HAWC's water treatment to chloramination from chlorination, extending regional water into Windham, and completing construction of Plaistow's water system infrastructure and conversion of the existing fire suppression system.

By the end of the summer, the Town of Derry will have completed construction of the pump station needed to deliver the full Phase I flow to the downstream recipients. Hampstead Area Water Company anticipates completing the work on their system this summer and starting to use project water in late summer or early fall 2020. Water is expected to be available to users in Windham in late 2020 and to the Town of Plaistow as early as spring 2021.

It is also important to recognize that this project is the State's largest regional water distribution system



20-inch ductile iron water main installation along Route 28 in

interconnection, a first of this size in NH. The project is at this milestone due to the dedication of and collaboration between all the project partners. NHDES wishes to thank the project partner communities and water systems, their consultants and contractors, the NHDOT, the NHPUC, the NH Attorney General's Office, Orr & Reno, the NH Drinking Water and Groundwater Advisory Commission, and the many other individuals and organizations that have contributed and are contributing to the ongoing success of the project.

PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS AND COVID 19

OPERATIONS ADJUSTMENTS, LESSONS LEARNED (so far), and OPERATIONS POST COVID

by Steve Del Deo

Like most businesses and industries, public water suppliers have had to make operational adjustments during the COVID 19 pandemic. Unlike many other businesses, public water suppliers are accustomed to reacting to emergencies on a regular basis and at a moment's notice. In fact, regardless of how much planning a water supplier does, there is always some unforeseen emergency like a water main break, a contamination issue, or equipment failure, to name a few. It's the nature of this 24/7/365 business. So, during this COVID emergency, like other emergencies, water suppliers have been able to "jump right in" with effective response. Still, there are aspects of this crisis that require new thinking and innovation. Take for example treatment plant staffing. Manchester Water Works, which normally operates with a weekday daytime staff of 11 people in the treatment facility, reduced staffing to 1 operator and 1 laboratory technician between mid-March and early May. A second operator would inspect stations – a task completed in 4 hours. These staffing adjustments were made to minimize operators' potential exposure to COVID. Marco Philippon, treatment plant manager for Concord Water Department, recently said in context to the crises that "it has made us consider how we plan and operate with minimal staffing and in all type of crises all the way to the worst-case scenario".

One practice common among water suppliers has been to limit each service vehicle to one person, again in an effort to minimize exposure. Protocols for outside contractors have been sharpened, for example for bulk chemical deliveries, water main repairs, and maintenance.

In some instances, sampling locations have needed to be changed. At

Manchester Water Works, employees' homes have been used in some cases.

Surely, case studies, in-depth articles, special reports, and maybe books will be written once all this is over. But for the remainder of this article we'll turn to what comes next. It's possible that COVID 19 may have a resurgence, or some other health emergency may surface. Public water suppliers will need to prepare now by revising protocols and emergency plans. Plans will need to address 6 key areas of operations as outlined below.

1. *Employee Safety* – including personal protection equipment, social distancing, training, and health monitoring.
2. *Customer Relations* – including effective communication, conservation, hardship payment options.
3. *Product and Materials Delivery and Contractors Entering Facilities.*
4. *Adequate Parts, Materials, and Equipment Inventory.*
5. *Energy and Fuel access, Delivery, and Storage.*
6. *Automation and SCADA Reliability and Capacity.*

The above areas will need to be spelled out in greater detail of course, and they are in fact system specific to some extent. For example, a municipal water system may have access to the municipal fuel depot for its fleet, whereas a smaller water system likely purchases fuel at the local gas station. Not suggesting here that a smaller water supplier should start storing fuel, but having a reliable source of fuel and one which is easily accessed is critical.

One area that all public water suppliers should truly concentrate on

in an ongoing manner is additional employee training, cross training, and job shadowing. This will help ensure that critical tasks are completed in a safe, timely, and competent way should there be an acute shortage of staffing. Health monitoring of employees is another important area. As Brian Goetz, Deputy Director of Public Works in Portsmouth stated, "not that it ever was, but from now on it's really not going to be OK to come to work sick anymore".

As public water suppliers consider the many issues and lessons learned so far during COVID 19, it will be most desirable and helpful to share various systems' protocols and responses to the crisis. To end on a positive note, often times out of hardship and crises we find new, creative and overall better ways to do the important work of providing our customers and consumers with safe drinking water and reliable service.



Epping Well and Pump technicians wear personal protective equipment while installing a turbine pump.



2020 Legislative Update

We were closely tracking House and Senate legislation through mid-March by attending hearings, which were abruptly cancelled due to the COVID pandemic. Both chambers adapted to the situation by implementing virtual meetings, but their procedures, pace and workload all changed.

Our focus was on House legislation to expand regulations for water supply replacement wells producing more than 40 gpm (HB1252), and regulations to evaluate impacts to adjacent private wells caused by new wells producing up to 40 gpm (HB1347). The DES essentially lacked regulatory authority in these areas, and was asking the legislature to authorize them to monitor and manage these sources. Both pieces received an “ought to pass” voice vote in the House on March 11, 2020. We expect this legislation will pass the Senate (given process uncertainties outlined below).

Bills concerning PFAS have great potential to impact the drinking water (and waste water) sector, mostly due to increased treatment, monitoring and reporting costs. This and other pieces of legislation are being combined in a Senate Omnibus bill for their vote on June 16, followed by a House vote on June 30. Critical steps in this legislation are outlined as follows:

- The Senate voted unanimously to pass two bills - the PFAS standards (SB287) and \$50 million for mitigation funding of up to 50% of eligible costs (SB496) – in the final days of the pre-COVID session.
- These Senate bills went to the House Resources, Recreation and Development Committee for vote, but public hearings were truncated by COVID. The fiscal notes on the Senate bills apparently raised some eyebrows in the House.
- House Chairs sent their top-priority bills back to the Senate to create several pieces of “omnibus” legislation that may contain 20 – 30 bills each. PFAS standards and funding were submitted in HB1264 (related to Seacoast Cancer Cluster) by the House Health and Human Services Committee. The Senate added Amendment 1261. The amended bill was passed by the Senate on June 16.

The deadlines for Committees of Conference have passed, and the House may not allow an extension. Thus, omnibus bills from the Senate may go to the House for up/down vote when (if) the House meets on June 30.

Our Association has decided to maintain a neutral position at this phase of the legislative process.

From the Executive Director

We are deeply grateful to all our contributors to this Newsletter, and to our many members who make the NHWWA such a highly-respected organization. We are currently crafting a strategic plan with input on workforce development and educational programs from two separate, hardworking and experienced teams. We are excited about the future of our Association and the sector that we are proud to serve. Please contact me at any time if you have questions, concerns or ideas that you would like to discuss (Boyd Smith, Executive Director at BSmith@NHWWA.org, 603-415-3959). Thanks!
Boyd

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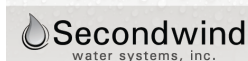
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Thank You Water Operators!

NHDES Press Release

New Hampshire drinking water operators are working behind the scenes to deliver safe, clean water to your home or business, so that you can wash your hands and help the world slow or stop the spread of COVID-19. Water operators make this possible.

New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services celebrated Drinking Water Week, May 3-9, by recognizing the essential workers who ensure we have clean drinking water. "New Hampshire's public water delivery system is managed by a dedicated

workforce whose commitment to safeguarding public health

Thanks to the hardworking individuals whose work to ensure clean water is #ThereWhenYouNeedIt.

is second to none. We salute you for keeping our communities supplied with clean water, a resource which is even more critical during the pandemic," said Jennifer Palmiotto, Executive Director of Granite State Rural Water Association.

"The water operator workforce is the utility's most valuable asset, delivering clean and reliable water to prevent public health threats," stated Erick Toledo, State Lead from RCAP Solutions. During this pandemic they have used their training and knowledge of their water systems and communities to adapt in creative ways. "Drinking water systems have demonstrated innovation and flexibility to maintain uninterrupted, safe water supplies. From splitting work shifts, to changing sampling locations, to following PPE and social distancing guidelines, operators, suppliers, contractors and regulators are working together to keep the clean water flowing," said Boyd Smith, Executive Director of NH Water Works Association. Additionally, operators across New Hampshire are actively sharing

resources and the best of what they have learned to support each other.

The 2,500 public water systems (PWSs) in New Hampshire serve approximately 54% of homes, in addition to nearly all schools, places of work and public places such as restaurants. Federal and state regulations require that PWSs remove or kill any contaminants, including viruses. As part of everyday procedures, operators employ a multi-barrier approach to prevent issues from developing and to treat them if they do occur. According to the CDC,

"There is no evidence showing anyone has gotten COVID-19 through drinking water, recreational water, or wastewater."

NHDES and its partner organizations – New Hampshire Water Works Association (NHWWA), RCAP Solutions and Granite State Rural Water Association (GSRWA), are working to support water systems and operators. Sarah Pillsbury, Administrator of the NHDES Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau stated that, "In addition to maintaining oversight to ensure water is tested and treated, NHDES is serving as a hub for water systems to get and share reliable, up-to-date information and support." NHWWA, RCAP and GSRWA also provide support to increase water and wastewater systems' technical, managerial and financial capacity and are working with NHDES and system operators to adapt to COVID-related challenges.

Water operators perform a vital service with their work. Clean water empowers us to help ourselves during this pandemic. Thanks to the hardworking individuals who work to ensure clean water is #ThereWhenYouNeedIt.



New Hampshire Water Works
Young Professionals Committee

Young Professionals Committee Happenings

Despite having to cancel events due to COVID-19, the NHWWA Young Professionals Committee has been actively planning ahead. Although the Fisher Cats outing has been rescheduled for the summer of 2021, the YPs are looking forward to participating in the Source to Sea River Clean Up again this September and the Manchester Water Works 5 Miler in October. They also hope to offer another Treat & Meet soon.

In the meantime, the YP's are expanding their student outreach with a Career Panel planned for the fall, and activities for students and young professionals at the NH Drinking Water Expo & Trade Show in October. The YP Committee will hold the trivia raffle again at the Trade Show. The winning prize is a \$50 VISA card!

Representatives from the YP Committee are serving on the NHWWA Education and Workforce Development Workgroups, providing valuable insight as the Association looks forward.

Keep an eye out for upcoming YP events in your emails, on Facebook and LinkedIn!

At right—YP Committee Members (left to right) Trish Kelliher, Andrew Madison, Sophie Ricard and Crystal Wilson, enjoy lunch at Frogg Brewing after the Source to Sea River Clean Up last fall. The group hopes to participate again this year.



NHWWA Calendar

When	What	Where
July 13, 15, 27, 29, 2020	Small System Roundtables	ZOOM Meetings
July 23, 2020	Technical Meeting—Arsenic & Manganese Treatment	ZOOM Webinar
July 29, 2020	Construction Field Day 2020	Merrimack Village District

Events and trainings will be posted on our website at www.nhwwa.org and email notices will go out via Constant Contact.

NH Drinking Water Expo & Trade Show



We continue to evaluate hosting our popular and fun Fall Expo and Trade Show in the context of the ongoing COVID pandemic. Stay current on Trade Show and other Association and drinking water industry news by signing up for emails at www.NHWWA.org. We will NEVER share your personal contact information!

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Member News

Chris Hodgson, DN Tanks former Vice President and Regional Manager has retired from DN Tanks effective December 31, 2019 following 39 years of service with the company. Prior to DN Tanks, Chris served for five years with US Pipe in upstate New York. Chris has held many positions during his tenure with DN Tanks including sales, marketing, and sales management roles. In addition to his career with DN Tanks, Chris has been an active member with numerous local water associations and AWWA Sections throughout his career. He was awarded the K. O. Hodgson Award (named for Chris' father) by NEWWA in 2008 for contributions to the water industry by a service provider. In 2018, Chris was awarded AWWA's John Lechner Award as national recognition for similar career service. Chris served as President of NEWWA from 2017 to 2018. Chris was recently elected to AWWA's Board of Directors to represent NEWWA for a three-year term. He will serve in that capacity in retirement. Chris and his wife Jane live in Hollis, NH and will now spend more time travelling to California to visit their grandchildren.



Chris Hodgson

Corey Meyers, P.E. joins DN Tanks as the New England Regional Manager. Corey's role will be sales and project development services for wire-wound



Corey Meyers, P.E.

prestressed concrete tanks throughout the six New England States. Corey comes to DN Tanks with ten years of water and wastewater experience with a national consulting engineering firm. Corey is a registered professional engineer in Massachusetts and Connecticut and is an active member of NEWWA and NEWEA. Corey and his wife Heather live in East Boston and are the proud parents of a new baby boy. You can reach Corey at corey.meyers@dentanks.com, www.dntanks.com.

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Construction Field Day- July 29, 2020

This year's Construction Field Day will explore Merrimack Village District's PFAS journey as we visit sites that have required modification or new construction. The first two stops will include a site visit at Wells 7 & 8 and a tour of the iron and manganese treatment plant where we'll see how PFAS treatment will be added to the process there. Next is the Turkey Hill booster pump station followed by a tour of the treatment plant for Wells 4/5. We will then gather at Watson Park for lunch and a final presentation. Construction Day will look a bit different than past years. Most notably, there will be no bus. We will miss the comradery that comes with the bus ride but we are enlisting safe practices to ensure all who attend stay healthy. We will be limiting the number of attendees and dividing into smaller groups. Each group will receive a schedule of rotating stops. Attendees will drive to each location and maintain social distancing while



GAC Vessels being set at the Well 4&5 WTP structure.

engineers and project managers present on the construction project. Register at <https://www.nhwwa.org/events/registration/>. Lunch will be provided. 3 TCHs.

Thank you to our contributors:

Steve Del Deo (article)
Michael Unger, NHDES (article)



NHWWA

NH Water Works Association

18 N. Main St., Suite 308
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 415-3959
info@nhwwa.org | www.nhwwa.org

NH Drinking Water Festival & Science Fair

Although this year's festival had to be cancelled due to COVID-19, we want to say **THANK YOU** to **New Hampshire Water Pollution Control Association** for their donation. We're looking forward to the 2021 festival on May 5 in Keene!

Welcome New Members

Phil Bilodeau, Retired
George Robins, PD Water Systems
Devon Smith, Underwood Engineers, Inc.

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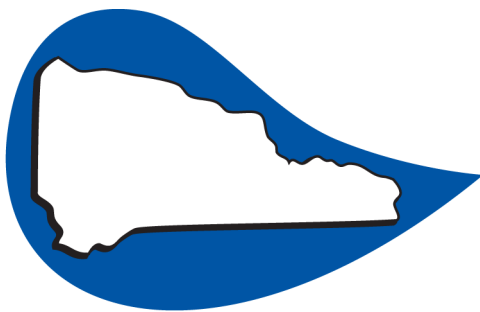


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