

## UPDATES FROM OUR GENERAL MANAGER



**Brian Tarbuck**  
General Manager

(Continued from page 1)

### DRINKING WATER

**Alderwood Road Mains, Augusta (1,450’):** This project will provide redundancy to a critically vulnerable portion of the water distribution system near the Turnpike Mall.

**Boucher Avenue Mains, Augusta (200’):** This section has failed multiple times and needs to be replaced.

**Old Winthrop Road Main, Manchester (1,200’+ services):** Complex, multi-year project to install a redundant main from Augusta to Manchester. The existing 24” water pipe, from 1905, runs cross country through back yards and swamps.

**Trans-Kennebec Pipeline Improvements:** To take full advantage of the new Riverside Drive wells east of the Kennebec, we need to replace old valves and improve metering to enable water to flow from east to west.

**Ward Street Mains, Augusta (410’):** This main has a high-leak history. Deferred from 2015, the project is now urgent.



Welcome to my inaugural column in **Currents!** This provides a regular opportunity to help you, our customers, understand how we deliver your water and take care of your wastewater.

I love my job and I take it very seriously, because the health of our community depends on our making sure of these two things:

1. That clean, safe drinking water always comes out when you turn on the faucet; and
2. That our wastewater and stormwater is handled in a way that protects our natural resources, especially the Kennebec River.

Over the past few years we have made two major investments to update and improve our infrastructure:

- Last August, our new wells at Sunrise Circle on the East side of the Kennebec River came on line.
- In 2015, we completed a four-year project to upgrade our Combined Sewer Overflows ahead of the schedule required by the Maine DEP. We are planning the next upgrade, which needs to be completed by 2021.

As the weather improves, we will be out in your neighborhoods repairing and upgrading our underground infrastructure (see below). We always try to minimize any inconvenience and interruptions, but things happen that are not in our control, such as water main breaks.

We do our very best to post our latest work schedules and emergency work in real time on our website: [GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org](http://GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org)

We are proud of our work to serve our communities, and we invite your feedback anytime: email me at [btarbuck@GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org](mailto:btarbuck@GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org) or call (207) 622-3701 (7 A.M.–4 P.M., Monday through Friday).

On behalf of all the employees at the Greater Augusta Utility District,  
***I wish you a fun, healthy summer of 2016!***

### WASTEWATER/STORMWATER

**Bond Brook Road, Augusta (Adjust nine manholes + replace 200’ of wastewater pipe):** This is required due to repaving of the road.

**Eastern Avenue, Augusta (Reline old mains and services):** This area has required many repairs and there has been at least one customer sewer back-up.

**Northern Avenue, Augusta (Lower and raise 23 manholes and 31 catch basins):** This is required due to repaving of the road.

**Patterson/Kittredge Streets from Pearl Street to South Belfast Avenue, Augusta (1,300’ of mains + combined sewer separation):** This is part of a six-year CSO mitigation plan to reduce the flow of untreated sewage into the Kennebec during heavy rains. We are coordinating with the City’s Hannaford TIF-funded work on the east side to reduce costs.

### SYSTEM-WIDE

**Seven-yard Dump Truck:** Replace an old dump truck no longer worth repairing.

**Building Repairs at 12 Williams Street:** Repair a leaky roof and replace the failed air conditioning system, possibly with more cost-efficient heat pumps.

## ASK RANDI



Randi Taylor, *Administrative Supervisor*, answers your questions about your water utility:

**Q: Can I stop getting paper bills in the mail, and set up automatic payments online?**

**A: Yes! It’s easy to “Go Paperless” and set up autopay.**

**Paying your bill online is quick and easy**, and saves the paper and cost of mailing a bill to you, and then a check to us.

To start, go to our **website**, **click on How to View/Pay My Bill** and register for an **online account**. You’ll need to provide your email address and the account number found on the upper right corner of your paper bill.

Then you can **set up autopay** of your bill each month. It’s free if you pay from your checking account, so that’s what we recommend. (Unfortunately, if you use a credit card, we must pass on a vendor fee of \$3.95 for each payment.)

**Contact Randi at (207) 622-3701 or [RTaylor@GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org](mailto:RTaylor@GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org).**

**While talking to Randi, we asked a little bit about herself and her job at GAUD!**

**How long have you worked at GAUD?**

“I started with the Augusta Water District in March, 1998; in 2008, it merged with the Augusta Sanitary District to become the Greater Augusta Utility District.”

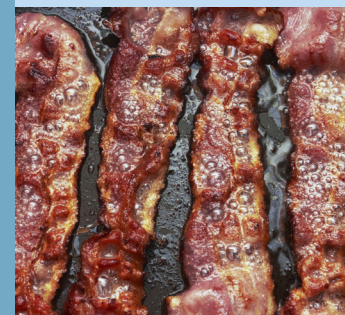
**What’s your hidden talent?**

“I teach yoga for our employee wellness program.”

**What’s the most common issue you hear about?**

“It’s ‘Why is my water bill so high all of a sudden? I don’t see any leaks.’ Ninety-nine percent of the time, it’s a leaking toilet—usually internal parts need to be adjusted or replaced. I tell them the best way to detect a leak is with dye tablets, which we give out free.”

**Thanks, Randi, for being part of the team!**



## WE’RE ON BOARD... TO SERVE YOU!



Ken Knight, *Chair, Board of Trustees*

Your Trustees have been working hard since late last year to develop a work plan and priorities for 2016—in addition to the infrastructure projects detailed on page 2—and are pleased to share them with you:

**Stormwater Rationalization**—We’ve formed a working committee to study our complicated stormwater issues—from collection and treatment, to equitably billing for it.

**Charter Review**—A committee of Trustees will review the charter that established the Greater Augusta Utility District in 2007, and report back to the Board on any updating needed.

**Management**—We make sure that District management and staff have the skill and training to operate in a safe, effective and efficient manner. We also provide financial oversight of District operations.

**External Communications**—Over the past 18 months, we’ve communicated more transparently and frequently about the inner workings of your utility through...

- a new customer-friendly web site;
- regular informational billing stuffers; and
- the Currents newsletter you are now reading.

Most of our monthly Trustee meetings, which have long been open to the public, are now broadcast live on CTV-7. A schedule and link to past televised Trustee meetings can be found at [GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org](http://GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org).

**All nine of us on the Board take our commitment to serve you seriously. We thank you for your support, and welcome your feedback—email me at [KKnight@greateraugustautilitydistrict.org](mailto:KKnight@greateraugustautilitydistrict.org).**

## GREASE MAY BE TASTY IN THE PAN... BUT IT’S NASTY DOWN THE DRAIN

### ALWAYS PUT FATS & OILS IN THE TRASH—NEVER DOWN THE DRAIN!

Oil and grease can create expensive clogs in your plumbing and your public wastewater system. That’s why we urge all customers: **never pour anything down the drain that contains fats, oils or grease!**

Instead, **pour the grease from your pans into an empty tin can. When it’s full, throw it away in the trash!** You can remove even more grease by wiping down your pans with paper towels and throwing them in the trash.

**Commercial customers: All food service establishments are required to submit a Grease Trap/Interceptor Application to the District.**

**For complete details on requirements, penalties and fees visit the Waste/Stormwater section of our website and click on Grease Trap Standards.**



TO YOUR  
HEALTH!



The Greater Augusta Utility District  
**2015 Drinking Water Quality Report**  
is now available on our website at:  
[GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org/Drinking-Water](http://GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org/Drinking-Water)

This annual report provides information about the sources and quality testing results of our drinking water. As in previous years, it shows all potential contaminants at well within state and federal guidelines for safety.

This includes lead, which we understand is an issue of great concern after the news about Flint, Michigan and elsewhere.

While the drinking water we supply is tested regularly and found safe, we do recommend that all customers have their tap water tested as well. Why? Because lead could be present in your own plumbing system and, if so, could get into the water your family drinks. Please contact a local laboratory for a testing kit, which is inexpensive and easy to use.


*The Greater Augusta Utility District is a standalone quasi-municipal entity. Its roots go back to 1903, when the Augusta Water District was formed to take over a private water company. Today, the District is a regional public utility that owns, operates and maintains the water, sewer and storm water infrastructure in Augusta; the sewer system in Hallowell; and regional wastewater collection and treatment for the communities of Monmouth, Winthrop and Manchester.*

#### TRUSTEE MEETINGS

The monthly meetings of your Board of Trustees are open to the public. For a complete schedule, visit our website and click on Trustee Meetings under the About Us menu. You'll also find a link to archived video of each meeting that has been televised since November, 2014.

Greater Augusta  
Utility District  
Water | Wastewater | Stormwater  
12 Williams St.  
Augusta, ME 04330



  
Greater Augusta  
Utility District  
Water | Wastewater | Stormwater  
[GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org](http://GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org)



## COMING DOWN THE PIPE: MAJOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS IN 2016



Construction season is beginning, and we'll be busy this summer all over the District repairing water mains, valves and wastewater/stormwater systems. Several projects were originally scheduled for 2015, but had to be delayed. All are subject to our rigorous cost-benefit analysis.

Inside are just the most extensive (and expensive) projects among the dozens planned for 2016. Visit the **Daily Work Schedule** on our website for updates on our construction work during the summer.  
*(Continued on page 2)*

# Currents

SPRING 2016

## WHAT IS "HARD WATER?"

**HINT: IT'S SOFT ENOUGH TO DRINK, PERFECTLY SAFE, AND MAY EVEN BE BETTER FOR YOUR HEALTH.**



As the primary drinking water supplier for thousands of homes and businesses in Augusta and Manchester, the Greater Augusta Utility District's number one priority is to provide safe, clean drinking water to all of our customers, all of the time. To reinforce this mission, two new wells were developed last year on the east side of the Kennebec River. Now we have water sources on both sides of the river, and a back-up supply just in case.

While groundwater is the safest source of clean drinking water, it is commonly known to be harder than surface water. This is NOT a health hazard; in fact, the National Research Council (National Academy of Sciences) states that hard water generally contributes a small amount toward the total calcium and magnesium needed in the human diet.

Hard water can be an inconvenience in household cleaning tasks (leaving clean dishes looking "spotty," for example). For information regarding the proper care and maintenance of any appliance or system using 'hard' hot water, please refer to your owner's manual or talk with a qualified professional. If you have an immediate need to mitigate the effects of hard water, stop by our office on Williams Street for a free residue-removal sample. (These products are also available at local hardware stores.)

## WHAT WE ARE DOING ABOUT IT

We are planning to gradually increase the dosage of phosphate that we currently use to reduce water hardness. This will require approval from the Maine Drinking Water Program (MDWP). Once this action is implemented, we will continually monitor and test our water to ensure that it doesn't have any negative side-effects on drinking water safety, which remains our first priority.

We encourage you to read more about our drinking water at our website: [GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org/drinking-water](http://GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org/drinking-water) or feel free to call with any specific concerns.