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Service Connection

THE DRINKING WATER PROGRAM NEWSLETTER
"Working Together for Safe Drinking Water"

Volume 18 Issue 4
Winter 2010-2011

Drinking Water Protection Is the Focus of an Interstate Effort on the Salmon Falls River

Andy Tolman, Assistant Director

More than 70 water supply managers, municipal staff, planning board and conservation commission members, federal/state agency personnel, and citizens gathered at Spring Hill Conference Center in South Berwick on October 27th to learn about the water quality of the Salmon Falls River watershed and to discover solutions for problems facing the rapidly developing region. The "Working Beyond Borders to Protect Drinking Water in the Salmon Falls Watershed" workshop featured presentations, small work groups and interactive group polling. The results of the workshop will be summarized in a report later this year; drinking water protection projects identified in the workshop will be implemented in 2011.

Topics of the workshop included identifying potential future water supplies in the watershed, land conservation strategies, sustaining partnerships to protect clean water, and challenges to protecting hometown water supplies. Funding for the workshop was provided by the NH Department of Environmental Services, the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the Trust for Public Land, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The Salmon Falls River watershed includes the New Hampshire communities of

Rochester, Milton, Wakefield, Rollinsford, Somersworth, Farmington, Middleton, and Brookfield, and the Maine communities of Acton, Lebanon, North Berwick, Sanford, South Berwick, Berwick, York, and Wells. Water quality protection in the headwaters of tributaries, such as the Salmon Falls River, is an important step towards improving water quality throughout the Great Bay Estuary.

The Salmon Falls River watershed is currently in relatively good environmental shape, but that is likely to change as forested land is converted to homes. A recently published report by the U.S. Forest Service entitled "Private Forests, Public Benefits" identified the Salmon Falls as the most threatened in the nation due to conversion of private forested lands to housing.

Forested lands, especially those around rivers, lakes, and streams, are the most efficient and cost effective means to filter drinking water, control polluted runoff, and lessen the impacts of flooding. Field research and past experience indicate that replacing forests with houses results in a decline in the surface water and groundwater quality and increases the cost of treating drinking water. The October workshop helped the participants understand the

implications of replacing forests with houses and presented tools to counteract the negative effects of development including low impact development, best management practices and tools for smart planning and growth that maintain water quality. Using large-scale maps of the watershed, participants worked in small groups to identify the highest priority areas for drink-



ing water protection actions and discussed options for achieving the necessary protections.

Paul Susca, Supervisor of the Drinking Water Source Protection Program at NH DES, said "I was struck by how such a large group of people from diverse backgrounds and from so many different cities and towns came together and recognized that we all have a stake in protecting this shared water resource. Now the challenge will be to maintain this shared sense of purpose so we can move ahead with protection strategies

Continued on page 7

Inside this Issue:

Director's Corner
page 2

*Ellsworth Receives
SRF Award*
page 3

*St. Francis
Groundwater System*
page 3

Sampling Reminders
page 4

Fluoridation News
page 4

*Water Operator Board
News*
page 5

Rules Update
page 5

2011 Grants
page 6

*Funding for Very
Small Water Systems*
page 6

'DWP Family'
page 6

Enforcement Corner
page 7

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Director's Corner

The Winds of Change are blowing in Augusta

I recently spoke with a friend who is responsible for the technology side of a small firm that trades currencies for clients across the world. We talked about his need to constantly be innovative to meet changing customer needs and to stay ahead of their competition. Without constantly looking for ways to be faster and more responsive to customers, they would lose market share and be out of business.

Many of you who own or operate a commercial business understand the need to be innovative to ensure survival in an increasingly competitive market.

For government agencies, despite the apparent lack of competition to survive, the push for innovation also exists. For many years now, the Drinking Water Program has adopted a "continuous improvement" philosophy and made many changes to improve the quality of the work we do.

As a state agency, our high level priorities are set by the Governor's Office and the Legislature. With the significant political changes taking place here in Augusta, we know priorities will be changing. Because of these pending changes, our continuing desire and need to be innovative will increase.

The federal EPA recently contacted us to discuss their expectations for how Maine should implement a particular rule. It seemed obvious from our correspondence

that EPA doesn't understand how one more administrative burden will impact our agency.

It made me wonder if we, as public servants, fully understand how one more regulation or water test impacts small business here in Maine. Conversely, do we understand what benefit there would be to small businesses if we were to find a way to lift some of the burden, even if it was very small?

It appears the next Administration and Legislature will be looking for any way, however small, to reduce the cost of doing business and living in Maine. Just as there is no single source causing all the challenges facing businesses in Maine, there is also no single solution. The nickels and dimes do add up, whether to the addition or the reduction of the burden.

Safe and reliable water is an economic benefit to all business in Maine. Therefore, we will stay true to our core mission of protecting and promoting safe drinking water. However, through working within our statutory constraints, the Maine DWP will consider ways to maintain the same level of public health protection, while saving our customers money.

Please contact us if you have any ideas to share.

Yours for Safe Drinking Water,

Roger



Service Connection

THE DRINKING WATER PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

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Erika J. Bonenfant, Editor
Drinking Water Program
Division of Environmental Health
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
Department of Health and Human Services
11 State House Station, 286 Water Street, 3rd Floor
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
TEL: (207) 287-5681 TTY: (800) 606-0215
FAX: (207) 287-4172
E-mail: erika.bonenfant@maine.gov
Web Address: <http://www.medwp.com>



Ellsworth Water Department Receives EPA 2010 SRF Award

At the annual State Revolving Loan Workshop held in Kansas City, Missouri on November 15, 2010, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced the recipient of the 2010 SRF Award to be the City of Ellsworth, Maine Water Department. The 2010 award recognizes those recipients whose SRF projects further the goal of clean and safe water through exceptional planning, management, and finance.

In 2010, the City of Ellsworth concluded a 3-year effort to acquire a land purchase/conservation easement on nearly 1,200 acres of land, with over 3 miles of shoreline on Branch Lake, to protect the public water supply source for the citizens of the City of Ellsworth. A \$1,515,000 DWSRF loan to the City of Ellsworth Water Department provided a significant portion of the acquisition cost. The collaborative effort with the City of Ellsworth included a number of organizations including: Land for Maine's Future, Trust for Public Lands, Maine Department of Conservation, Forest Society of Maine, and the Frenchman Bay Conservancy.

Land acquisition is a key component of the Safe Drinking Water Act's multiple barrier approach for provisions of safe and secure



Source: City of Ellsworth, Maine

Ellsworth Water Department Pump Station on Branch Lake

drinking water. Shoreline and direct watershed land use and development have a major impact on the quality of water available to a water system, and control of those land uses is an extremely cost-effective way of managing future water treatment cost. The Ellsworth project was nominated by DWP Program SRF Manager Normand Lamie and Assistant Director Andrews L. Tolman.

Congratulations to City of Ellsworth Chairman John Phillips and City Council, City of Ellsworth Water Supply Commission, City Manager Michelle H. Beal, and Water Superintendent Larry Wilson.

New Groundwater System for St. Francis Water District

Larry Girvan, Field Inspector & SRF Project Manager

The St. Francis Water system, which originally consisted of a small dam and reservoir on the Petite Brook, was constructed by the Bangor and Aroostook railway in the early 1900's, for the purpose of supplying water to railway steam engines. When the use of steam engines was discontinued, the water system was sold to a group of local residents for private use. In 1980, the Town purchased the water system and created a Water District.

The water system was upgraded with a slow

sand filter, 39,000 gallon storage tank and influent pump station in 1986. The current system consists of approximately 2 miles of transmission and distribution lines to serve



New Groundwater Plant

a population of approximately 80 full-time residents, as well as an elementary school.

The surface water system was difficult to manage, due to varying raw water quality and also proved labor intensive. The District had problems meeting enhanced Surface Water Treatment and Disinfection By-Product Rules. The District Board decided to pursue funding options to develop a groundwater source that would be simpler and less expensive to operate. The Maine Drinking Water Program, US Rural Development and the CDBG programs combined efforts and jointly provided a funding package of \$1,330,423 for the proposed new groundwater

system. The vast majority of the monies available to the district came in the form of grants and forgivable loans.

An engineering firm was hired, and, after extensive searches, a groundwater source was identified on the westerly side of town. Construction of the new system began in 2009.

The new system includes a 44 foot deep surficial well with an estimated safe yield of 32 gallons per minute, a new pump station that includes SCADA controlled treatment systems for chlorination and pH control, a stand-by generator, the purchase of 100 percent of the well head protection area and the installation of approximately 3,300 feet of transmission main. The project also included demolition of the old slow sand filter plant, service connection upgrades, and new service meters.

The 2010 system went on line in October and is capable of providing 46,000 gallons of water per day. The upgrades have resulted in a more manageable and dependable water supply.



Fluoridation News

The federal Department of Health and Human Services proposes changes to community fluoridation levels.

On January 7, 2011, the federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a joint statement regarding fluoride. HHS proposed that the recommended level of fluoride in drinking water can be set at the lowest end (0.7 mg/l) of the current optimal range (0.7 to 1.2 mg/l) to prevent tooth decay.

HHS' proposed recommendation of 0.7 mg/l is based on recent EPA and HHS scientific assessments to balance the benefits of preventing tooth decay while limiting any unwanted health effects.

Maine CDC will begin the rule-making process to formally incorporate this new dose level. We anticipate the rulemaking process will take approximately 3 to 4 months. In the meantime it is reasonable for all public water systems to adopt the new federal recommendation.

More information can be found at the Drinking Water Program website at www.medwp.com.



Important Sampling Reminders

Carlton Gardner, Compliance Team Leader

Sample Results Must be Submitted by a Certified Laboratory.

Remember that "All reports of laboratory analyses for compliance purposes must be submitted to the DWP by the certified laboratory analyzing the samples." Please include your PWSID# and the system's name on the Chain of Custody (sample collection form) and be sure to indicate to the lab that the sample is a compliance sample and the results must be sent to the DWP.

Collect Samples Early in the Compliance Period

State and Federal regulations require water samples to be collected during a specific time or compliance period. Regulations also require that compliance sample results be submitted to the DWP by the 10th day of the following month, (along with monthly operating reports). A compliance period can be monthly, quarterly, every 6 months, or annually. There are a number of systems that seem to wait until the last day of the month or the last day of the quarter to collect samples. Late samples become an issue if the samples are rejected because they are too old, there is a lab error, they get lost in the mail, or there is a positive sample that needs a confirmation test or rechecks. Remember that laboratories need time to analyze your sample. Some samples must be preserved and held before they are analyzed. Other samples, like some of the radiation samples, take 14 to 30 days to be analyzed. The point is: don't wait to collect your samples, collect samples as soon as you receive the bottles. Consult your Annual Required Testing Sheet for testing frequencies. If you know you need to collect a sample but don't have a bottle, call your compliance officer or, if you are not using the State Lab, call your lab for the bottles. Waiting can cause you to sample

late, or your results may arrive after the 10th day of the following month. Don't wait, sample early: it may save you from a reporting violation.

When do I need to collect samples?

Remember that when collecting water samples: a month is a month and a quarter is a calendar quarter. A system on monthly sampling must collect a sample every month they are in operation. Collecting a sample early, before the month starts, or a few days late, can result in a violation, if the sample was not collected in the correct compliance period.

If you have any doubts as to when, where, or why a sample needs to be collected, please call your compliance officer. If you're not sure who your compliance officer is, call 287-2070 and give the receptionist the name of your system, and you will be connected to your compliance officer.

Parent-Child Water Systems

In Maine, we have a number of water systems that we refer to as parent-child water systems. These typically consist of a main well and distribution system (the parent), and later, the water system adds another separate well and distribution system (the child). The names of the systems sometimes reflect the parent-child relationship with names like CJ's Campground Eastside and CJ's Campground Westside. If you operate a parent-child system, use a separate Chain of Custody for each system and clearly indicate the correct name and the PWSID # for each system. Do not leave it up to your lab to try to interpret your intentions. In the worst case scenario, multiple tests (or perhaps a positive sample) can be assigned to the wrong water system. If you are not sure what to do, talk with your lab and/or call your compliance officer.



Subsurface Wastewater News

Subsurface Wastewater Training Center

Gary M. Fullerton, President – Maine Association of Site Evaluators

The Maine Association of Site Evaluators (MASE) has some very exciting news! Together with the Maine Rural Water Association (MRWA) and the Division of Environmental Health (DHHS), we are revitalizing our training program with a brand new subsurface wastewater training center. This center is located in Richmond at the MRWA office. We feel this is a great opportunity to work together to provide educational workshops on subsurface wastewater disposal systems to various audiences for the purpose of protecting public health and the environment.

The first year of training brought 210 professionals through the program. This included a full day session of hands-on training. There were 5 systems partially installed that needed to be reviewed for construction and design errors. An HHE-200 septic system application was prepared for each system installed and attendees had to determine if the system on the application was installed properly, and if the system was designed according to the Maine Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rules. There were also stations showing how to correctly measure slope at the corners of the disposal field, how to determine seasonal high water table in a test pit, discussion on septic tanks and pumps, and sample piles of gravelly, coarse sand backfill and crushed stone. The Maine Aggregate Association played an integral part in connecting us with the companies who provided the fill and stone needed to construct the systems.

Water Operator Board News

Teresa Trott, Licensing Officer

Renewals. The 2010 renewals have been coming in at a regular clip. For those of you that have yet to renew, the grace period ends March 2, 2011. At that time, a late fee (\$50) may be assessed. Training is available. We have CD training discs and several sites have free online training. Call Terry (287-7485) or Jessica (287-5699) for assistance.

Training. Winter is a good time to stock up on TCHs, and training providers are offering great timely topics that increase the technical, managerial and financial capacity of your system. In-house relevant safety training may be used for renewal credits. The same topic can only be used once in a renewal period. There is no maximum on hours. Keep track of attendance and topics, send a copy in to Jessica by September 2011, and it will be recorded on your training for renewal.

Exams. The Board has been able to extend the availability of Direct Entry examinations for an additional year. This option has been widely used and helps operators enter the field with fewer exams and less cost. Direct Entry options continue to show significantly higher pass rates in the distribution series. However, on the treatment side, Direct Entry rates were lower than the sequential rates for Class II & III. Class IV treatment rates were not significantly different. There were 260 exams given in 2010, of which 108 successfully passed.

For Operator Licensing questions and information, contact Teresa Trott at 287-7485 or teresa.trott@maine.gov.

Rule-Making Update

Tera Pare, Rulemaking Coordinator

A public hearing took place on December 1, 2010, to discuss proposed rule changes for the following rules:

- The Rules for the Appointment and Administration of Local Plumbing Inspectors: (Chapter 240) Changes included incorporating a permit fee schedule, technical changes, clarification of LPI responsibilities, and updated references to State agencies;
- The Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rules: (Chapter 241) In addition to rearranging the text for clearer guidance, the Department added criteria for installing septic systems adjacent to regulated wetlands and water bodies, revised fees to comply with recently amended 30-A M.R.S.A. § 4211(5), updated design flows for septic systems, and corrected errors and inconsistencies; and
- The Rules for Conversion of Seasonal Dwelling Units Into Year-Round Residences in the Shoreland Zone: (Chapter 242) Changes were incorporated to make these rules consistent with the design and location criteria for subsurface wastewater disposal systems pursuant to the Maine Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rules, CMR-241, and thereby minimize conflicting regulations.



The public comment period ended December 13, 2010, and all three sets of Rules were filed for adoption in early January 2011.



It's Grant Season!

Andy Tolman, Assistant Director & Sara Lippert, Capacity Development & Security Coordinator



The DWP has re-organized and expanded its grant program to better support public water systems. For 2011, we are offering three categories of grants, all with a common application period. Applications for Wellhead Protection Grants, Source Water (watershed) Protection Grants, and Capacity Development Grants will all be accepted until April 29, 2011. All three grants will be ranked independently, and eligible systems may apply for more than one category of grant.

The **Wellhead Protection Grant Program** awards grants to community and non-profit, non-community public water systems for projects that will help to protect their groundwater source from contamination. Specifically, grants are awarded for projects that clearly reduce the likelihood of contamination occurring in the Source Water Protection (SWP) area by existing or future activities. Grants may be awarded for up to \$10,000 for exceptional projects. Most grants will be for \$5,000 or less.

Community public water systems and non-profit, non-community public water systems are eligible for **Capacity Development assistance**. Systems can receive grants for 50% of the project costs up to maximum reimbursement amount of \$15,000 for the preparation of documents that will assist them in the maintenance or enhancement of water quality by identifying possible improvements in systems' technical, financial and managerial operations (capacity development). Systems are reimbursed on a matching basis after the document is submitted to the DWP for review and approval. In the past, these grants have been awarded as received, year round.

Source Water Protection Grants are new this year. Community and non-profit non-community Surface Water systems are eligible for these grants. The grant award criteria parallel those of Wellhead Grants. We are evaluating applications for surface water systems separately as we expect the project type and scope to be different.

Funding Still Available: Very Small System Compliance Loan Program

Funding is still available for the Very Small System Compliance Loan Program. This loan program provides 100 percent principal forgiveness (up to \$50,000) for water treatment improvements required to achieve compliance with a current or future standard of the Safe Drinking Water Act excluding the Total Coliform Rule. Eligible water systems include all community systems (except those regulated by the Public Utilities Commission) with a population of 100 or less, and all not-for-profit, non-transient, non-community water systems. Examples include: mobile home parks, apartment buildings, nursing homes, and schools. Projects cannot be the result of a failure to maintain an existing treatment system. If you have a very small system with a population of under 100 and have a compliance issue with lead, copper, radon, arsenic, or anti-mony don't miss this opportunity for assistance to return to compliance.

Newest Additions to the 'DWP Family'



From left: Erika Bonenfant with daughter Grace, Denise Douin with daughter Kya, Jennifer Grant with daughter Libby, and former DWP'er Beth Pratte with daughter Minna.



For more information, contact Norm Lamie at (207) 287-2647 or e-mail norm.lamie@maine.gov.

Continued from Front page

such as low-impact development.”

Workshop organizer and facilitator, Dr. Christine Fuert, Director of the Center for Sustainable Communities at the University of New England and the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve, was impressed by the number of workshop participants and their enthusiasm. “I have been working with watershed groups for over 15 years and the turnout by municipalities, water districts and small community water systems was strong. I look forward to working with this inspiring group of people as we move to implement their ideas.”

Derek Sowers, Conservation Program Manager for the Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership, said “There are 49 public water systems within the Salmon Falls watershed that service municipalities like Berwick, Maine and Somersworth, NH as well as many schools, restaurants, and businesses for a cumulative population of about 28,000 people that rely on this region for clean

drinking water. This workshop made it clear that we have the tools we need to protect these water supplies, and that the challenge before us is to work together across political jurisdictions to make it happen.”

Rochester resident and conservation commissioner, Jeffery Winders believes the workshop was very worthwhile. “The best thing in my opinion was learning what other communities are doing in the watershed. I can bring their successful ideas back to Rochester.” Winders was especially interested in the work of the Acton/Wakefield Watersheds Alliance in the headwaters of the Salmon Falls River. “They are doing some great work up there and I would like some of their approaches extended downstream. We need a similar group of active people working further down the Salmon Falls River watershed.”

The workshop was organized by the Salmon Falls Watershed Collaborative, which is an action-oriented partnership among local, state and federal

partners to protect and sustain high quality drinking water in the Salmon Falls River watershed. Collaborative members include: Berwick Water Department, Granite State Rural Water Association, Maine CDC Drinking Water Program, Maine Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO), Maine Rural Water Assn., NH Department of Environmental Services, NH Source Water Protection Program, Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership, Salter Mitchell [EPA Contractor], Somersworth Planning Department, South Berwick Water District, Southeast Watershed Alliance, The National Source Water Collaborative, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Forest Service, and Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Organization of the Collaborative is made possible with funding from the NH Department of Environmental Services, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.



ENFORCEMENT CORNER

In an effort to streamline the enforcement process, ensure compliance with safe drinking water regulations and efficiently use the program resources, the Drinking Water Program is updating its administrative remedies. First, we are renaming the first violation letter a “Notice of Noncompliance,” which is defined in statute as identifying the violation, setting a date to reach/return to compliance and state the consequences if a public water system does not reach compliance by the deadline.

Second, the Drinking Water Program plans to assess administrative penalty assessments with its compliance orders. A comparison of the previous enforcement process and the new enforcement process is illustrated in the table below:

The DWP Administrative Enforcement Process – Then and Now					
	1st Step:	2nd Step:	3rd Step:	4th Step:	5th Step:
Pre-2011	Notice of Violation (NOV)	Notice of Non-compliance (NON)	Consent Order	Compliance Order	Penalty Assessment
Effective January 2011	NON*	Consent Order	Compliance Order with Penalty Assessment		

* The new NON will look very similar to the Notice of Violation.

Questions? For further information on the DWP’s administrative enforcement process, please contact Tera Pare or Dawn Abbott. The Rules Relating to Drinking Water at 10-144 CMR 231, Section (1-C) and Maine Statute at 22 M.R.S §§ 2616 - 2620-C also provide further details on the DWP’s authority and steps regarding enforcement.





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Maine CDC
286 Water Street, 3rd Floor
11 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011

Dawn Abbott	287-6471	Enforcement Specialist	dawn.abbott@maine.gov
Wendy Austin	287-5672	Receptionist	wendy.austin@maine.gov
Jessica Bishop	287-5699	Operator Certification/ Well Drillers Board Clerk	jessica.bishop@maine.gov
Erika Bonenfant	287-5681	Education & Outreach Coordinator	erika.bonenfant@maine.gov
David Braley	441-5324	Wellhead Protection Coordinator, SWP	david.braley@maine.gov
Haig Brochu	592-0954	Field Inspector	haig.brochu@maine.gov
Roger Crouse	287-5684	Drinking Water Program Director	roger.crouse@maine.gov
Jennifer Donnell	287-5295	Security and Fluoridation Specialist	jennifer.donnell@maine.gov
Denise Douin	592-2165	Field Inspector & SRF Project Manager	denise.douin@maine.gov
Greg DuMonthier	592-1674	Field Inspector	greg.dumonthier@maine.gov
Jeff Folger	592-0578	Field Inspector	jeff.folger@maine.gov
Robin Frost	287-8411	SDWIS Administrator	robin.frost@maine.gov
Carlton Gardner	287-8403	Compliance and Enforcement Team Leader	carlton.gardner@maine.gov
Larry Girvan	592-7386	Field Inspector & SRF Project Manager	larry.girvan@maine.gov
Jennifer Grant	287-3962	Compliance Officer	jennifer.grant@maine.gov
Mark Hyland	592-2084	State Site Evaluator	mark.hyland@maine.gov
James Jacobsen	287-5695	Project Manager/Webmaster	james.jacobsen@maine.gov
Eben Joslyn	557-2255	Field Inspector & SRF Project Manager	eben.joslyn@maine.gov
Norm Lamie	287-2647	Chief Engineer	norm.lamie@maine.gov
Brent Lawson	592-7376	State Plumbing Inspector	brent.lawson@maine.gov
Sara Lippert	287-5678	Capacity Development & Security Coordinator	sara.m.lippert@maine.gov
Carla McPherson	287-8412	Data Management	carla.mcpherson@maine.gov
Yvette Meunier	287-5545	Compliance Officer	yvette.meunier@maine.gov
Lindy Moceus	287-8402	Compliance Officer	lindy.moceus@maine.gov
Martha Nadeau	287-5683	Administrative Support Assistant	martha.nadeau@maine.gov
Danielle Obery	287-1979	Compliance Officer	danielle.obery@maine.gov
Tera Pare	287-5680	Enforcement & Rulemaking Coordinator	tera.pare@maine.gov
Dan Piasecki	592-4826	Field Inspector & SRF Project Manager	daniel.piasecki@maine.gov
Nathan Saunders	287-5685	Field Inspection Team Manager	nathan.saunders@maine.gov
Matthew Sica	287-1929	Laboratory Certification Officer	matthew.sica@maine.gov
Fran Simard	287-8074	Secretary	fran.simard@maine.gov
Amilyn Stillings	287-6472	Information Coordinator	amilyn.stillings@maine.gov
Daniel Thompson	287-2070	Receptionist	daniel.thompson@maine.gov
Andrews Tolman	287-6196	Assistant Director	andrews.tolman@maine.gov
Teresa Trott	287-7485	Operator Licensing/Environmental Review Coord	teresa.trott@maine.gov
Kate Tufts	215-0624	Field Inspector	kate.tufts@maine.gov
David Welch	287-3056	Data Management Specialist	david.welch@maine.gov
Scott Whitney	287-8487	Compliance Officer	scott.whitney@maine.gov
Jim Willis	287-5694	Office Clerk	james.willis@maine.gov

(207) 287-2070 • TTY: (800) 606-0215 • Fax: (207) 287-4172

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