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# Service Connection: The Maine Drinking Water Program Newsletter, Volume 17, Issue 2 (Summer 2009)

Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention

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Control and Prevention  
An Office of the  
Department of Health and Human Services

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# Service

# Connection

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

Volume 17 Issue 2  
Summer 2009

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## Double-Walled Home Heating Oil Tanks

Adapted from a Maine Department of Environmental Protection fact sheet

Replacing your old oil tank? Building a new house and going to heat with oil? You should be aware of a new law that may affect you.

As of July 1, 2009 all new and replacement home heating oil tanks within the wellhead protection zone of community drinking water wells must be double-walled or have secondary containment. Think this does not affect you? Read on. Community drinking water wells can be closer than you think.

### What is the wellhead protection zone of a community drinking water well?

The wellhead protection zone of a community drinking water well is the greater of the:

- area within 1,000 feet of the well; or
- source water protection area of the well mapped by the Department of Health and Human Services as described under Title 30-A § 2001 sub§ 20-A.

### How do I find out if my building is within the wellhead protection zone of a community drinking water well?

Call your local water district and the Maine Drinking Water Program at 287-2070. Once any nearby wellhead protection zones are identified, you will be able to contact the community water systems and discuss the locations of the wellhead protection zone.

### Do oil tanks have to be "listed?"

Yes. Any tank or secondary containment installed in the wellhead protection zone of a community drinking water well must be

"listed" (tested) by a nationally recognized, independent testing laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL).

### Can anybody install these tanks?

No. Home heating oil tanks installed in the wellhead protection zone of a community drinking water well must be installed by a journeyman or master oil burner technician, licensed by the Oil and Solid Fuel Board or - if the tank is an outside tank serving manufactured housing - by a mobile home mechanic licensed by the Oil and Solid Fuel Board.



### Why are double-walled and secondary containment home heating oil tanks necessary?

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) responds, on average, to more than one spill a day from home heating oil tanks, and that is just at *see Oil Tanks, page 5*

*Caring.. Responsive.. Well-Managed.. We are DHHS.*

## Service Connection

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...” so begins Dickens’ famed novel *A Tale of Two Cities*. Dickens portrays the stark contrast between wealthy aristocrats and oppressed poor of 19th century France. Although the times we live in are not directly comparable to 19th century Europe, we are in a time of contrasts.

At the most significant economic down turn in decades, our Drinking Water State Revolving Fund received a greater infusion of capital than we have ever seen. The addition of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act “stimulus” Funds brings us on track to invest around \$40 million into Maine’s drinking water infrastructure over the next 18 months. Contrast that with our typical annual investment of approximately \$10 to \$12 million and you can see we are in “the best of times” with our construction program.

With the continued implementation of revised surface water treatment rules and disinfection by-product rules, as well as the December 2009 start of the new ground water rule, tools for public health protection continue to increase. In contrast however, due to limited staff resources, we are constantly trying to identify tasks we will no longer do, or at least determine what an acceptable level of service is.

Advances in technology allow us to identify contaminants in our drinking water and environment at increasingly minute levels. However, in general our ability to determine the actual health risk to the public has not kept up with our ability to measure the presence of many contaminants. This places suppliers of drinking water in the precarious position of having the ability to gather data without the ability to provide clear answers to customers.

Although access to safe drinking water is essential for life and economic prosperity, we continue to find ourselves in the position of educating policy makers and the public of the importance of protecting our valuable drinking water resources.

Despite the contrasts before us (we will always have contrasts before us) there is no lack of exciting challenges. Many difficult choices await all of us, but through the challenges we can develop great solutions. As we consider the novel of life we each are writing, I hope you can see the “the best of times” around us and continue “working together for safe drinking water.”

Roger



## Service Connection

### THE DRINKING WATER PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

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## New Faces at the Drinking Water Program

### David Welch

David will help administer the SRF Program as a result of ARRA funding. David was hired through NEIWPCC as an Environmental Analyst I. He will also be assisting with DWP budgeting and financial tracking and assisting with developing data management extensions to SDWIS.



### Frank Sokol



Frank was placed into service on May 18 as an Environmental Educator via AmeriCorps and the Maine Conservation Corps. Frank will collect GPS Data for wells and treatment plants. He will also perform Source Water Assessments on wells that are part of the SDWIS Database. His service will continue until early November. Frank is currently residing in Camden.

## Positions Available on the Maine Public Drinking Water Commission

In August 2009 the Drinking Water Commission will have two vacancies. The first position represents water systems serving more than 10,000 people. The second position represents the drinking water public.

The Maine Public Drinking Water Commission was formed in 1993 by the Maine State Legislature. The Commission membership consists of the designee of the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services and eight other members appointed by the Governor. The eight members must represent the drinking water public or a public water system.

One of the primary duties of the Commission is to

evaluate the fee that is assessed upon all public water systems. This fee, the Alternative Funding Mechanism or Drinking Water Fee, covers the cost of five full-time staff positions at the Drinking Water Program. The Commission determines when fees need to be raised and if the method of assessing fees needs to be adjusted. The duties of the Commission also includes advising the Drinking Water Program on existing and projected workloads, resources and staffing.

If you are interested in filling this position, please contact Roger Crouse at 287-5684 or [roger.crouse@maine.gov](mailto:roger.crouse@maine.gov) for more information.

### Remember:

The Groundwater Rule becomes effective on December 1, 2009

Be prepared for source water sampling;  
you will need to have a raw water sampling point.

## Division of Environmental Health: Who We Are

Part 1 of a 4-Part Series

### Health Inspection Program

The Health Inspection Program (HIP) and the Maine Drinking Water Program are sister agencies located within the Division of Environmental Health.

We are all part of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention. HIP has the primary responsibility of regulating over 10,000 eating and lodging establishments in Maine. Many of the places regulated by HIP are also regulated by the Maine Drinking Water Program as Public Water Systems (PWS).

HIP's Health Inspectors work to protect public health by inspecting eating and lodging establishments to insure they are following safe food handling practices and sanitary conditions. The inspectors conduct regular inspections at restaurants, hotels, motels, large public gatherings (like our numerous State Fairs) as well as handling consumer complaints.

HIP program staff work closely with the State

Epidemiologists and the local Public Health District during potential food-borne disease outbreaks. HIP also works closely with the Maine Department of Agriculture and the USDA Food and Drug Administration.

As if restaurants and lodging were not enough, HIP also educates, inspects and licenses Tattoo and Body Piercing Parlors, Spa and Public Swimming Pools, Camps and Campgrounds, places that fill SCUBA air tanks, and any place that sells tobacco products (over the counter or by vending machines).

Most everyone that lives, works, or visits Maine has contact with a place or business licensed by the Health Inspection Program. The Health Inspection Program is one of Maine's valuable assets.



### Boil Order Procedures for Public Water Systems Customers

Included in this Service Connection is an insert for public water systems to give their eating and lodging customers during a Boil Water Order. The purpose of the insert is to insure that the same message is sent by the Public Water System, the Health Inspection Program (HIP) and the Maine Drinking Water Program (DWP) during a Boil Water Order.

The insert was a cooperative effort between the DWP and the HIP. Staff worked together, taking procedures from 2008 Conference for Food Protection - Emergency Guidance for Retail Food Establishments. Staff adjusted the structure and language of this technical code into an easier to read document.

The finished document is posted on both the DWP ([www.medwp.com](http://www.medwp.com)) and HIP's websites ([www.maine.gov/healthinspection](http://www.maine.gov/healthinspection)). If a PWS has a Boil Order in place, HIP inspectors try to visit each eating and lodging establishment located in the area. The inspectors work with open establishments to ensure they follow proper food handling procedures during the emergency.

It is important that inspectors and PWSs are giving consumers the same message. If you have questions about this document please call Lisa Brown, Program Manager of the Health Inspection Program (287-5671) or Carlton Gardner (287-8403).

## Failure to Monitor/Reporting Violations

Carlton Gardner, Compliance and Enforcement Team Leader



**Part 1:**  
Public Water  
Systems  
(PWS) with  
multiple  
wells  
generally

have sampling schedules for each source. The only exception are wells that are connected before entering the distribution system.

If you have multiple wells and you do not see all of them listed on your Annual Required Testing Schedule, please call your compliance officer to discuss this with them. Failure to verify your sampling schedule could result in a Failure to Monitor Violation for the source.

**Part 2:** *My laboratory didn't send me bottles or didn't send me replacement bottles. Why do I have a failure to monitor violation?*

Federal Regulations hold the PWS responsible for completing all tests. The PWS will receive a Failure to Monitor or Reporting violation whether or not the laboratory sends the sample or replacement bottles.

Owners and operators of public water systems should keep track of sampling

schedules. As a PWS, you should track:

- Did the water system receive the proper monthly, quarterly and annual test bottles?
- Were the tests sent to the lab?
- Did the PWS receive test results from the lab?
- Were the results reported to the Drinking Water Program?

If you've mailed a sample to your lab and you have not received results within a week or two, call your lab to ask about the status. Remember to sample as early as possible in the compliance period. This practice could help prevent a violation.

**Part 3:** The Rules Relating to Drinking Water Section 6, B.2 requires that all reports of laboratory analyses be submitted to the DWP by the certified Laboratory.

If your laboratory fails to submit required compliance samples by the 10th day of the following month, your water system could be issued a Failure to Monitor/Reporting Violation. This requirement is another good reason to sample as early in the compliance period as possible.

*Oil Tanks, continued from page 1*

single family residences! Such spills contaminate wells, pollute the air in your home, and often cause considerable damage to the house.

Corrosion is the single largest cause of leaks from home heating oil tanks. Double-walled tanks and secondary containment vessels will help minimize the number of spills by preventing corrosion and catching any oil leaking from the inner tank.

To help prevent these spills and to protect public drinking water supplies, Maine's legislature enacted 38 MRSA § 1391 et seq. "An Act to Prevent Contamination of Drinking Water Supplies". This law was signed into law on April 7, 2008.

### **Who do I call for more information?**

Contact Peter Moulton or David McCaskill at the DEP's Bureau of Remediation and Waste Management at 287-2651. Find a licensed oil technician at <http://pfr.informe.org/almonline/almsquery/welcome.aspx>

For help in locating public drinking water supplies, look at the website [http://www.maine.gov/dep/gis/datamaps/DWP\\_Wells](http://www.maine.gov/dep/gis/datamaps/DWP_Wells). For assistance using these web-based maps, call Beth Pratte at the Maine Drinking Water Program 287-2070 or Christian Halsted at Maine DEP 287-8754.

## Operator Licensing News and Updates

Teresa Trott, Licensing Officer

### Passing an exam

Study? Who has the extra time? Do I have to do more than take the review class? Practice does improve results on multiple choice tests.

You can prepare by reading the study material and practicing the questions without peeking at the answers. Getting a good night's sleep and exercising before the exam sometimes makes all the difference. Most of all, *study, study, study.*

If distractions at the exam site are a problem, you might consider bringing ear plugs; sorry Ipods are not allowed.

It is important to remember that most people do pass exams. When people do not pass, it is usually only by a few points.

The Board of Licensure participates in developing need-to-know criteria, exam questions and Maine exam question selection.

These exams are nationally accepted and validated. The Association of Boards Of Certification's website has information on study areas to prepare for exams: [www.abccert.org](http://www.abccert.org)



## Drinking Water Program Continues to Lead by Example in Emergency Response Planning

Marion Long, Gradient Planning

The Drinking Water Program is living and breathing continuous improvement as they work to strengthen their already strong series of emergency response plans based on the National Incident Management System. EPA security funding has facilitated updates to their Emergency Response Plan, Continuity of Operations Plan, and Pandemic Influenza Plan. The most recent updates reflect personnel changes, an identified need for a new procedure, as well as the findings from a tabletop exercise conducted jointly with the Maine CDC. An example of the latter includes the strengthening lines of communication.

Complementing the in-house

improvements to an emergency response program is the product of additional training sessions for water systems throughout the State. After receiving positive feedback from both the drinking water community and emergency management officials, the Drinking Water Program resumed offering their popular one-day training seminars this May.

In June, sessions covered "jumpstarting" emergency response plans. These events were geared towards water systems with "informal" emergency response plans that wanted a more formal, documented plan. The session included workshops,

graphics and templates with the goal of having a documented plan in place by day's end. Attendees can implement the plan with training, equipment, and long-term management for added effectiveness.

Training sessions are opportunities for water systems

to strengthen emergency response programs and associated training and implementation.

Continuous improvement with both the Drinking Water Program and the water systems will result in greater synergy and communication during emergencies - at the time it is needed most!



## 2009 Free WaterISAC Pro Trial

Through e-mail and a secure Internet portal, WaterISAC Pro provides drinking water and wastewater utilities with a wide range of security information and online tools to help support their infrastructure protection efforts.

Here is what WaterISAC Pro offers:

- An e-mail alert system providing notice to subscribers about natural disasters, terrorism threats and cyber security vulnerabilities;
- Online tools to network

### Shock Chlorination and Effects on Treatment

Please remember that if you have treatment, like ion exchange (water softener) or adsorptive material, check with the manufacturer before shocking the well and sending the highly chlorinated water through the treatment system. Many manufacturers have a limit to the amount of chlorine that can come in contact with the media. The manufacturer may recommend by-passing the treatment unit until the chlorine levels are down.

Consequences of sending highly chlorinated water through a treatment unit: The media could be ruined and would have to be replaced. In some cases this can cost several thousand dollars.

- directly with colleagues in the U.S., Australia and Canada to share knowledge on infrastructure protection;
- Online collaboration capabilities for joint projects with colleagues;
- A searchable online library of more than 2,000 documents on security and emergency preparedness, best practices, guidance and threats; and
- A searchable chemical/biological contaminant database created by subject-matter experts.

U.S. drinking water and wastewater utilities that are not currently subscribed to WaterISAC and that serve fewer than 50,000 people are eligible for the trial. The trial is for WaterISAC Pro and is available to

one person per utility, although utilities may purchase additional subscriptions anytime.

- Trial subscriptions begin upon signing up and end December 31, 2009.
- To subscribe: go to [www.waterisac.org](http://www.waterisac.org) and press SUBSCRIBE.

**Want more info?** At the address above, download a brochure and/or register for a free informational webinar for prospective and current subscribers, scheduled for most Thursdays at 1 p.m. ET. Check [www.waterisac.org/cs/webinars](http://www.waterisac.org/cs/webinars) for exact dates.

If you have additional questions, don't hesitate to call WaterISAC at 202-331-0479 or email [info@waterisac.org](mailto:info@waterisac.org).

## On-Site Preservation Methods for VOC and THM Samples

Carlton Gardner, Compliance and Enforcement Team Leader

If you are a chlorinated water system using the the Health and Environmental Testing Lab, on-site preservation methods for trihalomethane (THM) and volatile organic (VOC) samples are now the same.

The on-site preservation is now a 2 step process. Sample bottles now contain ascorbic acid (a white, dechlorinating powder) and small capped tubes contain 1:1 hydrochloric acid (HCl). The HCl must be added to the sample bottles as the final preservation step. When the samples reach the lab, they are analyzed and then checked

for chlorine residuals. If chlorine is detected, the samples are rejected. Please read the complete instructions in the sample box.

Chlorinated systems using private labs should check with your laboratory. THM and VOC samples from chlorinated systems must be dechlorinated. This is generally done as a 2 step process described above, or THM sample vials can contain just sodium thiosulfate.

If you or your lab has specific questions please call Carlton Gardner 287-8403 or Matt Sica, Laboratory Certification Officer, 287-1929.



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John E. Baldacci, Governor  
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Department of Health  
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