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# Service Connection: The Maine Drinking Water Program Newsletter, Volume 16, Issue 3 (Fall 2008)

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 16 Issue 3  
Fall 2008



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## New Regulations on Above Ground Oil Storage Tanks Protect Drinking Water

Andy Tolman, Maine CDC Drinking Water Program and  
George Seel, Maine Department of Environmental Protection

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is well aware of the risk associated with above ground oil storage tanks near drinking water supplies. Many millions of dollars have been spent cleaning up leaks from above ground oil storage tanks near water sources. In cases where the well was contaminated, even more money has been spent locating, installing, and connecting replacement wells. DEP responds to approximately 200 commercial above ground storage tank leaks each year.

In 2007, the DEP and Maine CDC Drinking Water Program (DWP) worked together to develop a bill that will help prevent oil products from polluting drinking water sources. The new regulations affect the location and operation of above ground storage of petroleum products, as well as facilities using hazardous materials in areas near both public drinking water sources and private wells.

Both the DEP and the DWP have some funding sources that may be available to assist with tank upgrades for these areas. Spending less than \$2,500 for a professionally-installed double wall tank to avoid a half million dollar clean up makes it a

good investment. The DWP has funded several wellhead protection grants to community public water systems to enable them to work with their neighbors (and, in some cases, their customers) to upgrade heating oil tanks in their wellhead protection areas.

The new law will help us reduce and manage the risks to human health by addressing activities within the wellhead protection area or 1,000 feet of a public drinking water well, or 300 feet of a private drinking water well.

- ◆ New development such as automobile graveyards and maintenance facilities, dry cleaners using hazardous solvents, metal plating/finishing operations, and commercial hazardous waste facilities are prohibited effective September 2008.
- ◆ New above ground storage tanks are prohibited effective September 2008.
- ◆ Home heating oil tanks are exempt from the law's siting restrictions however, any new heating oil tank within either the wellhead protection area or 1,000 feet of a community drinking water well is required to meet new construction and installation standards (double walled tank, installed by a certified professional) as of July 2009.

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

**Director’s Corner**

Greetings from Augusta. I hope that summer in Maine has treated you well. In addition to enjoying summer, our staff has been busy inspecting your systems, collecting water samples, providing technical assistance and determining water system compliance. As I have mentioned before, we are continually clarifying our priorities so we are focusing our efforts on those areas that will be the most protective of public health.

The Drinking Water Program currently has 33 positions which are funded from several sources. The Table below gives a breakdown of staff and funding sources.

Fund	Number of positions
General Fund	2
Drinking Water Fee (Alternative Funding Mechanism)	5
Other Fees (well drillers, water operators, lab certification)	2
Federal Funds	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>

All public water systems are assessed an annual “Drinking Water Fee.” This fee ranges from \$45 up to \$30,000. As of the middle of August we have received over \$382,000, which is approximately ninety percent of our anticipated revenue.

Funding five positions with the Drinking Water Fee enables the Drinking Water Program to access an equivalent amount of federal funding, thus allowing us to fill 10 positions for the cost of five. The other “state” funds are similarly used to leverage federal funds for funding staff positions.

Without the Drinking Water Fee, the Drinking Water Program could not successfully fulfill its federal and state mandates. When time is devoted to tracking overdue fees, redirecting finances, and mailing reminders, less is left for activities which protect public health. For those who have paid their bills, our sincerest appreciation. For those who still need to pay, please do so, that way we can get back to helping you and the people of Maine in protecting public health.

Yours for safe drinking water,

Roger



**Service Connection**

**THE DRINKING WATER PROGRAM NEWSLETTER**

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## Chlorine: Delivering Cholera-Free Water for 100 Years

Beth Pratte, Education and Outreach Coordinator

This year marks the 100th anniversary of large-scale chlorine disinfection in the United States. In 1908 the Jersey City, New Jersey Water Works and the Union Stockyards of Chicago began adding chlorine to their municipal water supplies. The result was dramatic; within 10 years more than 1,000 water systems across the country had begun using chlorine disinfection. Adoption of chlorination has essentially eliminated waterborne illness such as cholera and typhoid in America.

Physician John Snow first linked a London cholera outbreak to a water pump in 1854. After petitioning the local council to remove the pump, the discovery of a leaky, abandoned cesspool three feet from the dug well must have been an “Ah-ha” moment! Greek and Sanskrit writings from as early as 4,000 B.C. suggest filtering water through charcoal, exposing it to sunlight, boiling or straining to reduce turbidity. At the time, people recognized that clear water tasted better and was less likely to make a person sick. However, several thousand years passed before understanding the connection between illness and germs too small to see.

References:

100 Years of Chlorine Disinfection by Bret Icenogle, *AquaTalk*, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment  
*Here's to Your Health! Celebrating 100 Years of Safer U.S. Drinking Water*, American Chemistry Council

Today 9 out of 10 U.S. public water systems use chlorine in one way or another. In the last 100 years, chlorine disinfection of drinking water, along with advances in vaccinations, public sanitation and hygiene have raised the average U.S. life expectancy 60 % to nearly 78 years. So, if you are worried about having enough money for retirement, you can thank disinfected drinking water!

The struggle for safe drinking water isn't over. One-sixth of the world's population does not have access to a safe drinking water source. Around 1.2 billion people rely on untreated rivers, lakes and contaminated wells for their families. Many groups in the drinking water industry strive to provide water treatment technology worldwide.



Photo: National Geographic

Kudos to all the water industry and public health pioneers, and all those working for safe drinking water around the world today.

### Maine Public Drinking Water Commission Announces Staff Merit Award Winner

Congratulations to Denise Douin, 2008 Maine Public Drinking Water Commission (MPDWC) Staff Merit Award winner! This award, given annually by the MPDWC, recognizes an employee of the Drinking Water Program who has made a significant contribution in the past year to the goals and mission of the program. Nominations are solicited and received from the drinking water “community” in Maine, including the DWP staff, other Maine water industry associations, and public water systems.

Denise, one of the Program's Field Inspectors, is recognized for her ability to go above and beyond the call of duty and produce efficient quality results. Her work on the creation and implementation of electronic sanitary surveys is a benefit not only to the Maine Drinking Water Program but to other programs across the nation. Denise quietly does her work, never looking for recognition but always seeking to do the best job possible.



## The Good, the Bad and the Costly: Failing to Monitor or Report Samples Gets Expensive

Tera Pare, J.D., Enforcement and Rulemaking Coordinator



The most common violation committed by public water systems is failing to monitor and/or report according to required testing schedules. In 2007 alone, 860 public water systems failed to monitor or report results

properly. As a result, the Drinking Water Program, the consumers, and the public water systems are left wondering whether the drinking water is safe.

### Two Plans to Change the Trend

The Drinking Water Program (DWP) plans to encourage systems to test and report on schedule by making it more costly to miss a sample.

First, beginning in 2009, any public water system that fails to report their water quality results for any contaminant will first receive a warning: if the public water system fails to collect and report a sample on time again, a DWP representative will visit and inspect the system. This person will provide technical assistance, collect the missed sample and submit it to the public water system's certified laboratory for analysis. While this visit and service may appear convenient at first, **the DWP will charge \$100 per visit, plus the cost of analysis charged by the certified laboratory.** Failing to sample and report multiple sampling periods will get very expensive very quickly. Maine's Water For Human Consumption

Act allows the DWP to inspect, test or sample facilities and water to ensure compliance.

Also beginning in 2009, the DWP will publish a list of all public water systems that failed to monitor and/or report water quality results for the previous quarter. In order to assure an accurate list, the DWP staff will be working on quality assurance and control measures to assure that no incoming samples were missed. Because so many public water systems are small businesses that include restaurants, this new measure will make it even more important to sample within the required time frames.

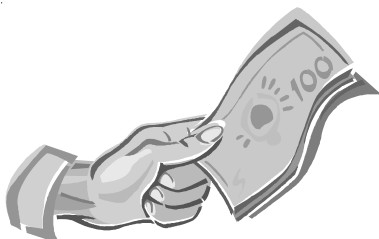
### Giving Credit Where Credit is Due

Public water systems that work diligently to comply with all safe drinking water rules and regulations deserve some of the spotlight. We hope to recognize all exemplary public water systems in future Service Connection Newsletters, as well as the DWP website. Complying with all of the various regulations is frankly a challenge, and you deserve some praise from us and your peers.



### The Goal

The ultimate goal is to protect public health and ensure that all contaminants are tested for in a correct and prompt manner. If missing a sample becomes more costly than collecting one, then hopefully the epidemic of monitoring and reporting violations will end. If you have any questions about your testing schedule and requirements, contact your compliance officer or call 287-2070.





## Coliform Positive Recheck Samples

Teresa Trott, Licensing Officer and  
Carlton Gardner, Compliance and Enforcement Team Leader

### Effective Immediately:

The Drinking Water Program changed recheck collection procedures after a positive Total Coliform Bacteria sample.

Designated Operators (DO) are now responsible for collecting recheck samples at:

- all Public Utilities Commission regulated water systems;
- all systems that hire a **contract water operator as their DO**; and
- other systems as determined by DWP staff.

The changes will reduce the DWP's carbon footprint and make water operators more responsible for oversight at public water systems. Rechecks for transient water systems will still be collected by DWP and Maine Rural Water Association (MRWA). For systems using the state lab, recheck bottles will be shipped directly to the person listed as the sampler for the water system. The system's DO will be notified of the initial positive result. DWP staff will continue to collect recheck samples at most water systems that have an E. Coli positive water sample.

All community and non-transient, non-community water systems are required to retain one or more water operator(s) licensed by the State of Maine.

These water operators are called Designated Operators. DO's are responsible for water quality and quantity of the water system. Many systems elect to hire a contract water operator as their DO instead of directly employing one. DO's may still delegate sampling to another person. Together, they should review sampling procedures and locations.

Sampling for bacteria is a measure of the suitability of water for drinking. When a sample has either a total coliform or E. Coli positive result, recheck samples are required as soon as possible (EPA requires collection within 24 hours of notification). Recheck samples are intended to check on the sampling technique used for the positive sample and should represent the water quality at that tap and other nearby taps. Were proper sampling techniques used? Were all treatment processes working properly? Were the bottles mishandled? Samplers and Designated Operators should carefully review procedures and the sampling location to eliminate accidental contamination. Always take recheck samples carefully.

Failure to collect recheck samples becomes a failure to monitor violation for the water system and could result in reprimands for the DO.

### Systems Closing With an Outstanding Positive Coliform Sample

Starting in 2008, any system that collects a routine Total Coliform (TC) sample that is positive, and then closes for the season (or more than 2 weeks), making it impossible to collect recheck samples, will be issued a Failure to Monitor Violation. Upon re-opening, the water system must post for the violation and collect the five-the-following-month routine samples during the opening month.

The practice of allowing systems closing with a TC positive routine sample to collect recheck samples upon re-opening has resulted in violations being issued several months late. EPA noted this in a recent Data Audit and has asked the Maine Drinking Water Program to improve this process.

This change will mainly affect seasonal transient water systems (campgrounds, youth camps, etc.) and some factories that shut down for a period of 2 or more weeks.



## Operator Licensing News and Updates

Teresa Trott, Licensing Officer



After a long wait, the Board now has a new computer program for operator licensing called Safe Water Operator Certification System or “SWOCS.” Over the past two years, many Board activities have been reviewed and improved in

anticipation of the use of this program. Running the new program will take some work, but the future is promising. We are working with the software provider to assure the program meets operator needs.

Operators will notice some changes to the licensing and renewal process.

- Certificate and license formats will change (the one you hang on the wall and the one that goes in your wallet.)
- Operator license numbers will be used more frequently. This number will now be issued with your first exam application rather than your first license. It will be used to track training and examinations and allow less use of social security numbers in the examination process.
- Training records will be provided at renewal time. Although this year’s renewal will likely not have a complete record, we hope to document all 2008 and 2009 training from provider attendance records. This will help the Board be greener by using less paper, requiring fewer copies and taking up less storage space.



### Exam and Training Notices

- ◆ Fall training sessions are starting up – please check the website for class updates.
- ◆ **Fall Exams**  
October 21<sup>st</sup> in Augusta  
October 23<sup>rd</sup> in Presque Isle
- ◆ **Exam fees \$70**  
**Renewal fees \$60**  
Due to the end of the Operator Expense Reimbursement Grant the exam fee waiver and renewal waivers are no longer in effect.
- ◆ Operator in Training licenses are available at all levels VSWS – Class IV.
- ◆ Exams may be taken in sequential form (each level individually 100 questions) or direct entry (100 questions for the level to be attained and review questions for the lower levels).
- ◆ For questions on Operator Licensing contact Carol Champagne at 287-5699 or Terry Trott at 287-7485.

## NSF Approval Required for Chemicals Used in Public Water Systems

Carlton Gardner, Compliance and Enforcement Team Leader



All public water systems are reminded that Maine has adopted National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) standard 60 for **all** chemicals added to drinking water at a public water system and NSF standard 61 for all materials, products and coatings that come in contact with drinking water.

These changes may be found in the State of Maine Rules Relating to Drinking Water, Section 3: Facilities Approval, F. Construction Standards.

NSF/ANSI Standard 60, states:

*By July 1, 2008, all chemicals added to drinking water shall be certified to meet NSF/ANSI Standard 60 - 2005: Drinking Water Treatment Chemicals – Health Effects. Certification shall be by an ANSI-Accredited, third-party testing and certification organization. Repackaged chemicals may be waived from this requirement until July 1, 2009 provided that the chemical when originally manufactured meets NSF/ANSI Standard 60-2005.*

To meet Standard 60, the chemical shipping container labels or material safety data sheets must include the chemical name, purity and concentrations, supplier name and address and labeling indicating compliance with NSF/ANSI Standard 60. The labels or material safety data sheets must be present at the point of delivery.

NSF/ANSI Standard 61, states:

*All materials, products and coatings that contact drinking water installed or applied after July 1, 2008 shall be certified to meet NSF/ANSI Standard 61-2007: Drinking Water System Components – Health Effects. Certification shall be by an ANSI-Accredited, third-party testing and certification organization.*

These changes will make it simple for operators to be sure they are providing safe and secure drinking water.

## Is Your Certified Laboratory Submitting Your Compliance Results?

Please remember that all water sample results must be submitted directly to the DWP by the certified laboratory.

Laboratory results submitted by the water system either on reporting forms or copies of water analyses reports are not accepted as proof of compliance testing. If the water test is required by state or federal regulations, State of Maine Rules Relating to Drinking Water Section 6(B) requires water sample results to be submitted by the certified lab.

The DWP is working with all in-state labs to give the labs the ability to transfer results electronically. Electronic reporting for some labs could be in place by early 2009.

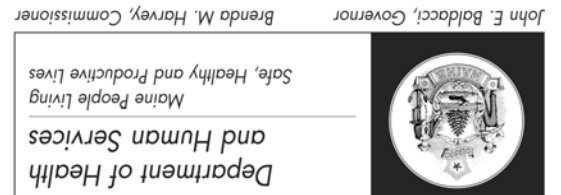




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