

The Water Connection

Spring 2005

The newsletter for Concord Water customers

Moratorium on Irrigation Systems Sought

To protect residents from spending thousands of dollars on new irrigation systems that they may not be able to use in the near future, the Public Works Commission will propose a moratorium on new or expanded in-ground irrigation systems at this year's Town Meeting.

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) recently revised the permitting guidelines and policies of the Water Management Act. Included in these guidelines are more stringent conditions that public water suppliers located in stressed basins must adhere to in order to reduce groundwater withdrawal during the summer months.

Concord is located in a medium-stressed basin; thus, these conditions are likely to be included when the Town's state permit is renewed. Many of these conditions specifically address "non-essential outdoor water use," i.e., lawn irrigation. Should stream flow measured in the Concord River fall below a predetermined level, the Town will be required to enforce mandatory restrictions on lawn watering and other nonessential outdoor water use.

During a typical summer, approximately 50 percent more water is used compared to winter. Much of

this increase is due to lawn irrigation. Given the regulatory climate, it would be unwise to allow the installation of more irrigation systems in town. The proposed moratorium will include new systems connected to private wells because DEP may include a water use ban for these systems as well.

The proposed moratorium, if authorized by Town Meeting, will contain language to end or modify the ban if state regulations or restrictions are changed or lifted.

Concord Public Works believes it is essential to conserve water and to always use it wisely. To this end, it will be offering expanded opportunities and programs to help property owners design their landscapes in more sustainable ways. Working with Concord-Carlisle Community Education, Concord Public Works is offering a "Sustainable Landscaping" workshop with landscape consultant Donald Bishop on May 4 and 11.

In addition, check local cable listings for showings of *Your Own Back Yard* to learn how use the principles of Xeriscaping™ to help you create beautiful, water-conserving landscapes. ♠

CPW Project Wins Award

On Tuesday, February 8, 2005, the American Consulting Engineers Council of Massachusetts recognized Concord Public Works Water/Sewer Division for its contributions to an award winning collaboration study conducted to determine whether ozone and ultraviolet light can effectively be used together to optimize treatment goals for unfiltered drinking water supplies.

The collaboration was lead by the town's consulting engineer, Black & Veatch, and included participation of several other utilities (Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, Southern Nevada Water Authority, Portland Water Bureau, Oregon) and leading university researchers (University of New Hampshire, University of Arizona, University of Massachusetts, Tufts University, Montana State University).

This project was groundbreaking in three ways: 1) the research was the first to look at disinfection effectiveness related to the sequential treatment of the surface water with ozone and UV; 2) it was the first to look at large-scale pilot testing ozone and UV treatment on an unfiltered surface water supply; and 3) it was the first to examine distribution system effects with full scale systems and with pipe loops.

The research firmly established that sequential ozone - ultraviolet light as one of the best treatment strategies yet devised for unfiltered water supply systems.

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Concord Partners with Neighbors in Pesticide Grant

Concord Public Works is a partner in a multi-town pesticide awareness project funded by a grant from the Toxics Use Reduction Institute at UMass Lowell.

Collaborating with Acton, Carlisle, Chelmsford, Littleton and Westford, the project's goal is to bridge pesticide and human health awareness with water resource protection. Studies have shown that children and pets are vulnerable to pesticides. In addition, pesticides can migrate in water resources and contaminate drinking water supplies.

The partners are working with local nurseries and other experts to provide free workshops to residents about organic lawn care. In Concord, Turf expert, Mary Owen, from the UMass Extension will also present a organic lawn care workshop, 7:30 - 9 p.m., on Monday, April 4, at 141 Keyes Road. Call 978-318-3259 to register.

Millbrook Farms and Mahoney's Garden Center have agreed to participate in this campaign and will

host workshops this spring. Check www.healthylawnsforhealthyfamilies.com for workshop schedule.

The grant will also be used to distribute printed materials such as brochures, posters, "Healthy Lawns for Healthy Families" lawn flags, turf management plans, and signs. In addition, the documentary *Our Children At Risk* will be shown on Concord Cable TV. Check local listings for show times.

The campaign seeks to build public awareness about pesticides and provide safer alternative methods for lawn care. It is anticipated that residents will limit their pesticide use when they better understand the environmental and human health impacts from toxic chemicals routinely applied to lawns. ♦



Healthy Lawns For Healthy Families

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These findings have potential application for protecting public health and maintaining affordable rates for Greater Boston area and worldwide.

Concord Public Works is proud to have attracted both the interest and

technical expertise to our system. Most importantly, however, the award recognition provides yet one more "validation" of our ongoing commitment to customer service and premium water quality. ♦

Upcoming Events

Organic Lawn Care, Monday, April 4, 7:30 - 9 p.m., 141 Keyes Road. Presented by Mary Owen, Turf Specialist, University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Call 978-318-3259 to register.

Organic Lawn Care workshops at Millbrook Farms and Mahoney's Garden Center. Visit www.healthylawnsforhealthyfamilies.com or call 978-318-3259 for an updated schedule.

Sustainable Landscapes, Wednesdays May 4 & 11, 7:30 p.m. - 9 p.m., Concord-Carlisle High School. Presented by Donald Bishop, Landscape Consultant and owner of Gardens Are... Call 978-318-3259 to register.

Money-Saving Tips From Concord Water

Rain Barrels for Sale This Spring

Tap into free water by collecting rainwater from your downspouts. Concord Public Works, partnering with the New England Rain Barrel Company, is offering 55-gallon rain barrels to Concord water customers at the discounted price of \$40.

Rain barrels allow you to collect water with no added chemicals to water your plants, flowers and gardens. In fact, most plants prefer soft, untreated rainwater to cold tap water treated for drinking.

Barrels must be ordered by May 13. Only one barrel per household can be purchased at the \$40 rate. Additional barrels can be purchased for \$62 each. Residents must pick up their rain barrels from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Wednesday, May 25, at Concord Public Works, 135 Keyes Road.

To order a rain barrel, call The New England Rain Barrel Company at 978-977-3135 or order online at www.nerainbarrel.com.



Take a Virtual Tour of the Water Saver Home

Learn more about what you can do in and around your home to use water more efficiently. This online tour includes many conservation techniques for the homeowner including how to:

- ♦ Read a water meter
- ♦ Install water-efficient fixtures
- ♦ Conserve water through creative landscape design
- ♦ Detect and repair leaks



View water saving tips room-by-room by taking the Virtual Home Tour: www.h2ouse.org/tour