



News & Notes

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MWRA Caucus Welcomes New Chair

The MWRA Legislative Caucus will begin the 2005-2006 Legislative Session with a new Chairman, as Representative Ronald Mariano (D-Quincy) officially assumes the important leadership position.

Chairman Mariano, who also heads the newly created Joint Committee on Financial Services, is an original founder of the Caucus, established in 1991, and has served as Vice-Chair since its inception. His legislative experience and commitment to advancing ratepayer issues is evidenced by the Caucus' enormous success over the years. Through the leadership of Chairman Mariano and former Chairman, Robert A. DeLeo (D-Winthrop), the MWRA Caucus has successfully advocated for over \$350 million in debt service assistance and has passed a host of bills directly benefiting both municipalities and ratepayers.

"The MWRA Caucus is one of the most important tools the Advisory Board has in advancing ratepayer initiatives," said Katherine Haynes Dunphy, Chair of the MWRA Advisory Board. "The Caucus provides a voice for ratepayers on Beacon Hill and I am pleased that Chairman Mariano has agreed to lead this effort."

A 14-year veteran of the House of Representatives, Chairman Mariano represents the 3rd Norfolk District, which includes parts of Quincy, Weymouth and Holbrook.

"I am proud of all the work our Caucus has achieved under the leadership of Bob DeLeo and look forward to continuing his efforts on behalf of the ratepayers as we find ways to save ratepayers money, while not jeopardizing the quality of service they receive," said Rep. Mariano.

Chairman Mariano replaces former Chair, Representative Robert DeLeo, who was recently appointed Chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means.

EPA/DEP Change Lead and Copper Regulations Midstream

The MWRA and the Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC) received informal notification this week that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has altered its interpretation of the Lead and Copper Rule. Specifically, EPA's revision now mandates lead education and lead service replacement in communities that do not *individually* have two consecutive rounds of sampling below lead and copper action levels.

This most recent interpretation by EPA, if implemented, means nine communities in the MWRA-service area will be forced to continue mandatory lead education and lead service replacements until each municipality experiences two rounds of testing below the action level.

Lead action levels became an area of concern following MWRA's September 2003 lead and copper sampling round, when the water system exceeded the lead action level. Mandatory lead education and lead service replacement requirements were consequently imposed on individual communities that had local sample results exceeding the lead action level. However, following the Authority's September 2004 water sampling, when the entire water system achieved two consecutive rounds below action level, MWRA believed mandatory lead requirements would be lifted for all communities. Although DEP initially agreed with MWRA's interpretation of the regulations, it requested guidance from the EPA, which relayed its new position this week. The Advisory Board will continue to follow this matter closely. Additional information regarding this topic can be obtained on our website.

Budget Hearings in the Works for both MWRA and the Advisory Board

Each spring both the Advisory Board and the MWRA are required, through their enabling legislation, to hold public hearings on the Current Expense Budget proposed for the upcoming fiscal year. The Advisory Board will hold its hearing as part of its upcoming monthly meeting on Thursday, March 24, 2005 at 11:00 am in Room 350 at the State House. The Authority has scheduled its hearing for Tuesday, April 5, 2005 at 6:30 pm at Boston City Hall. Copies of the proposed budget document will be posted on the Authority's website at www.mwra.com.

Submetering Draft Regulations Available

As reported in the January edition of *News & Notes*, a new law in Massachusetts, effective March 16, 2005, allows landlords to charge tenants for their water usage. The Department of Public Health (DPH) is preparing regulations to accompany this new law that will assist communities in its implementation and enforcement. A public hearing was held on March 2nd to discuss DPH's proposed draft regulations. Final regulations are expected to be in place by next month. Please contact the Advisory Board with any questions or to obtain a copy of the draft regulations.

Upcoming Meetings/Events

March 9--	MWRA Board of Directors Meeting	10:00 am in Charlestown
March 18--	Executive Committee Meeting	8:30 am at Advisory Board Office
March 24--	Advisory Board CEB public hearing	11:00 am in Boston
March 24--	Advisory Board Meeting	11:30 am in Boston
April 5--	MWRA CEB public hearing	6:30 pm at Boston City Hall

If you have any questions regarding topics raised in this newsletter or any other MWRA issue, please contact:

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