



# News & Notes

A publication of the **MWRA Advisory Board**  
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## MWRA Relieved of Landfill Requirement

In a decision that will save the Authority over \$800,000/year beginning in Fiscal Year 2007, U.S. District Court Judge Richard Stearns last month ordered that the MWRA be relieved of its obligation to reserve space at the East Carbon Development Corporation landfill in Utah. The federal mandate to utilize the Utah landfill has been in place since 1993, part of an overall requirement to maintain sufficient disposal locations for sludge produced at the Deer Island Wastewater Treatment Plant. Although the bulk of Deer Island's sludge production is converted to sludge pellets at the Authority's nearby pelletizing plant, backup capacity, in the event that pellets could not be produced or utilized, included reserving space in Utah. In addition to the Utah landfill, the Authority also maintains backup capacity at a landfill site in the Town of Walpole, as well as several other locations.

The Advisory Board has questioned the need for the Utah site for over a decade. Noting the proven success of the pelletizing plant in converting sludge into pellets for use in commercial markets, as well as the availability of alternative landfill sites including Walpole, the Advisory Board has encouraged the MWRA to revisit its sludge backup disposal plan every year since 1995 in its *Comments and Recommendations* on the Authority's Current Expense Budget (CEB).

## Advisory Board Community Meetings

The impact of water and sewer rate increases on communities over the next five years is the topic of discussion as Advisory Board staff continues to canvass the Greater Boston area, meeting with community leaders to discuss escalating rate assessments and ways to curb the impact of rising rates on homeowners. Advisory Board staff anticipate meeting with over two dozen communities by the end of the month. The goal is to generate awareness of the rate increases and mobilize communities to support strategies that will ultimately keep rates affordable.

## Blue Hills Covered Storage Project Given Green Light

Overtaking an earlier decision by Administrative Magistrate Mark Silverstein, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Robert Golledge last month authorized the MWRA to move forward with its plans to construct a covered drinking water storage facility in the Blue Hills Reservoir. Citing unique project circumstances and new legal requirements for the protection of public water supplies, Commissioner Golledge freed the MWRA of any future requirements for wetlands replication imposed by the previous ruling.

Work at the Blue Hills Reservoir has commenced and the Reservoir is currently being drained. MWRA staff anticipates the draining will be complete within the next three to four weeks. A local conservation group, Friends of the Blue Hills, has filed a Motion for Reconsideration asking Commissioner Golledge to reassess his opinion.

## New Water Treatment Plant Exceeds Expectations

Since going live in July of this year, the John J. Carroll Water Treatment Plant has lived up to its promise to provide improved water quality to MWRA users. Ozone treatment, replacing primary chlorine treatment, has operated well, providing a higher level of primary disinfection and has met or exceeded regulatory requirements. Disinfection byproduct levels have dropped nearly 10-fold to below 10 ppb (parts per billion) compared to pre-ozone treatment levels and are lower than the levels predicted during the treatment technology decision phase of the project.

Shortly before the debut of the Plant, the Wachusett Reservoir experienced a bloom of chrysothrix similar to the one experienced in July and August of 2004. Complaints about the taste and odor of the water increased just prior to the startup of the Plant but dropped off immediately once the Plant went online, demonstrating that ozone treatment seems to be effective in treating algae-related problems. Finally, alkalinity and pH levels, both paramount to lead and copper corrosion control, continue to meet targets.

### Upcoming Meetings/Events

- October 14- Advisory Board Executive Committee Meeting**  
8:30 am at Advisory Board Office, Boston
- October 20- Advisory Board Meeting**  
11:30 am in Canton
- October 25- Operations Committee Meeting**  
10:00 am at Newton City Hall, Room 202

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

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