



NEWS & NOTES

A PUBLICATION OF THE MWRA ADVISORY BOARD
DECEMBER 2009

MWRA WATER RANKED IN TOP TEN WATER UTILITIES IN NATIONAL TEST

Boston was ranked fifth in the top ten U.S. cities with the best tasting tap water in a national survey. The Environmental Working Group (EWG), a research and advocacy organization, released the results of a three-year investigation of municipal water supplies across the U.S. The survey rated 100 big city water utilities, looking at water quality tests performed by water utilities since 2004. EWG created an extensive database that contains info on the contaminants found in 48,000 communities in 45 states. The rankings were based on three factors: total number of chemicals detected since 2004, percentage of chemicals found of those treated, and the highest average level for each pollutant compared with national averages. The MWRA was the highest ranked unfiltered system in the nation. The MWRA also scored points for open and accessible information available to ratepayers. Boston and Providence, Rhode Island are the only New England cities that ranked in the top ten. The lowest rated city was Pensacola, Florida.

ADVISORY BOARD PRESENTS RECOMMENDATION TO MWRA BOARD

Advisory Board staff made a formal presentation to the MWRA Board of Directors at this month's meeting recommending a level-funded rate revenue requirement for the MWRA's FY11 Current Expense Budget. The Advisory Board urged the Authority to incorporate the \$0 rate revenue increase in the preliminary water and sewer assessments for communities distributed in February. The Board of Directors engaged with Advisory Board staff during the forty-five minute discussion. Board Member John Carroll made a motion to have staff come back in January with two scenarios to achieve a 0% wholesale rate increase; Board Members Barrera and Gove asked for a third scenario to get to a 2% increase. The motion passed unanimously. The MWRA's planning projections included a 6.41% rate revenue requirement for FY11.

CIP TRANSMITTED TO ADVISORY BOARD

The MWRA Board of Directors voted to transmit the proposed Fiscal Year 2011 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to the Advisory Board for its 60-day review and comment period. The proposed capital budget includes planned expenditures of \$229.1 million for fiscal year 2011 and projects expenditures of \$1,079.2 million for the FY09-13 capital spending cap timeframe. Ten projects represent nearly two-thirds of all capital spending for the five-year period and include maintenance projects for the Deer Island Wastewater Treatment Plant, three large Combined Sewer Overflow projects, rehabilitation of the Hultman Aqueduct, improvements to the Carroll Water Treatment Plant, water main improvements and increased water system redundancy and covered storage improvements to the water system. Since 1985, nearly 80% of the Authority's spending has been on court-mandated projects. Mandated projects now account for 36% of the projected FY09-13 spending, as asset protection initiatives represent an increasing share of the capital program. The Authority has also developed a list of "ready-to-go" capital projects and will seek to maximize funding under any federal stimulus program to ensure continued progress in implementing the capital program.

The staff of the Advisory Board wishes you a very happy and healthy holiday season!

We look forward to seeing you in 2010!

UPCOMING MEETINGS

JANUARY 13: MWRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS / 10 AM – CHARLESTOWN

JANUARY 15: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE / 8:30 AM – BOSTON

JANUARY 21: MWRA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING / 11:30AM – CHELSEA*

*Please note the January Advisory Board meeting will be held in the Muster Room in the MWRA Facility in Chelsea.

The MWRA Facility is located at
Two Griffin Way, Chelsea, MA 02150

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