

Congratulations, Phyllis!



We're doubly proud of our Water Quality Coordinator, **Phyllis Arnold Rand**, for two awards this year:

- In January, she was inducted into the Water Environment Federation's Quarter Century Operators' Club at the New England Water Environment Association's 2015 Annual Conference in Boston. The Club recognizes operators of wastewater treatment facilities for their service and dedication in a difficult and dangerous profession.
- Phyllis was also honored with a Special Citation for Exceptional Volunteer Service by the Red Cross of Southern Maine, which she serves as Government & Tribal Relations Liaison, at their Annual Board of Directors' Meeting in June.

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The Greater Augusta Utility District is a standalone quasi-municipal entity. Its roots go back to 1903, when the Augusta Water District was formed to take over a private water company. Today, the District is a regional public utility that owns, operates and maintains the water, sewer and storm water infrastructure in Augusta; the sewer system in Hallowell; and regional wastewater collection and treatment for the communities of Monmouth, Winthrop and Manchester.

TRUSTEE MEETINGS
The monthly meetings of your Board of Trustees are open to the public. For a complete schedule and to view past meetings, visit our website.

Greater Augusta
Utility District
Water | Wastewater | Stormwater
12 Williams St.
Augusta, ME 04330



Currents

Late Summer, 2015

Keeping Greater Augusta's Water and Environment Great: We're proud to have completed Phase III of our Capital Improvement Plan!

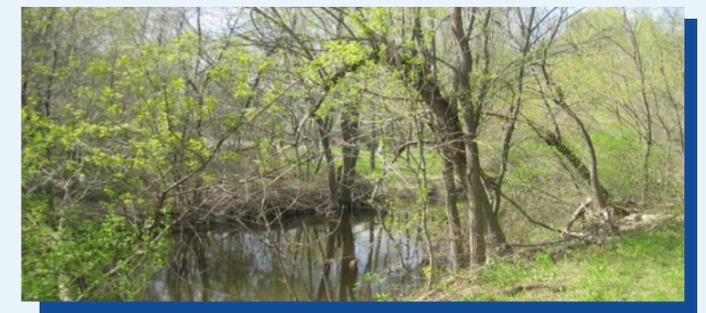
In 2014, your Greater Augusta Water District delivered an amazing amount of safe drinking water—668 million gallons, about 1.8 million per day—to 5,700 customers in five towns, through a distribution system with over 100 miles of water pipes, 485 hydrants, 7 pump stations, and 7 storage tanks. We also treated more than 1.5 billion gallons of wastewater.

To keep this much water flowing where it needs to go—day in and day out, through drought and torrential downpours, complying with a myriad of state and federal regulations—takes a tremendous effort on the part of our dedicated employees and contractors.

It also takes smart planning and budgeting for the long term. In fact, we've just completed Phase III of a long-term plan that the Board of Trustees initiated in the 1990s to preserve the environmental quality of the Kennebec River watershed. In particular, we sought to protect Bond Brook from "Combined Sewer Overflow" (CSO), which occurs when heavy rains cause untreated wastewater to be discharged with stormwater into rivers and streams.

Our "CSO3b" project, the third phase of a long-term plan to control CSO, required building a new one million gallon storage tank under Mill Park to capture CSO flow during peak storms. New piping and a new pumping station sends this captured water back to our wastewater treatment plant and eliminates sewage flow into Bond Brook (pictured). The new pumping station replaces two 45 year old, less efficient stations that were prone to flooding.

In addition to protecting the environment, the Capital Improvement Plan has brought the District about 90% of the way to compliance with the CSO regulatory requirements of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).



Phase III was started in 2008 and has cost approximately \$17.3 million.

One more Phase (IV) is in the works, to begin next year and run through 2021. This is the final stage of your current Board's long-term effort to address combined sewer overflow compliance.

Meanwhile, a separate \$3 million five-year plan has come to fruition. In 2010 we decided to ensure the future supply of safe drinking water to our customers by creating 100% redundancy of supply. That meant developing an alternative source of drinking water in case our primary supply were ever contaminated or exhausted.

To accomplish this, in July, 2015 we brought two new wells on Riverside Drive online that can supply up to two million gallons of water per day. Located on the east side of the Kennebec, the new wells ensure that we will still have safe drinking water even if something were to happen to our primary supply on the west side of the River (such as a broken pipe or major spill).

We thank you, our customers and partners, for your support, and welcome your active involvement in future planning to ensure continued delivery of our most precious resource.

We're excited about turning an offline water filtration plant into the nation's first waterworks training school!



and is no longer needed even as a back-up since the new wells came online in July (see cover story).

The MRWA is a Richmond-based nonprofit that assists Maine's many rural water and wastewater system operators through training, advocacy, advice and technical support. Kirsten Hebert, Executive Director, said they hope to secure a planning grant to put the details of the proposal together. Money to fund the renovation, provide equipment and classroom materials and hire instructors could potentially come from a combination of private donations, industry sponsors, grants and a loan taken out by the association.

If it all comes together, the new training center could open next year. It is expected to draw students from New England and beyond, perhaps nationwide.

"Being able to sit in class, then get up from your chair, walk out back and do hands-on training on what you were just talking about in class, that is truly unique," said Hebert, an Augusta resident who is also a trustee of GAUD.

Stay tuned for updates on this exciting project.

Plans are now underway for a possible conversion of the closed Carleton Pond water treatment plant into an innovative, hands-on water and wastewater treatment training center run by the Maine Rural Water Association (MRWA). It would be the only center of its kind in the country to train and certify new workers in water and wastewater treatment—an industry with an aging workforce and a lack of qualified replacement workers.

Ken Knight, chairman of GAUD's Board of Trustees, noted, "This proposal offers a wonderful opportunity to use the idle plant for a badly needed educational purpose, while sparing it from demolition."

Ratepayers would benefit from revenue the Maine Rural Water Association would provide to the District, and from savings on upkeep of the unused treatment plant—or the costs to demolish it.

GAUD built the East Winthrop plant, also called the Gerald F. Laurin Water Filtration Plant, in 1992 to treat water from nearby Carleton Pond for use in the public drinking water system. But when the former Kirschner hot dog plant, a major water user, closed, the District saw a major drop in water demand, and found cheaper ways to provide water. The plant had since served only as a back-up water source,

The pump room at the Greater Augusta Utility District's unused Gerard F. Laurin Water Treatment Plant in East Winthrop.



Our Key Projects in 2015

Here's what we're investing in now to ensure plenty of clean drinking water, reliable fire protection and a clean environment:

1. Two new wells on Riverside Drive that came online in late July now provide a strategically important drinking water supply on the east side of the Kennebec River.
2. A new 2.6 million gallon water tank made of low-maintenance concrete replaced four worn-out steel tanks.
3. The completion of the Long-Term Control Plan provides CSO compliance benchmarks for the DEP.
4. The Mt Vernon Avenue Project (with MaineDOT) will help meet CSO control plan goals and improve system reliability.
5. A new water main to Meadowlands development will provide improved fire-fighting flow to an area with a poor fire protection system.

TWO IMPORTANT WAYS TO KEEP OUR WASTEWATER MOVING

Help prevent costly damage to your wastewater system by putting all non-flushable items in the trash—never down the toilet or drain.

Across the country and right here in greater Augusta, the flushing of baby wipes has become a serious and costly problem. Baby wipes are not designed to break down in water, so they can clog public wastewater pumps and pipes. That can lead to sewer back-ups and damage to equipment costing hundreds of thousands of dollars—resulting in dramatic increases in wastewater rates for ratepayers.



In addition, clogs can cause sewer overflows which have negative impacts on the environment.

Baby wipes can also clog home drain pipes, causing messy toilet overflows and requiring expensive plumber visits to repair. Visit SaveYourPipes.org to learn more.

What to do with wipes? Trash 'em!

The only safe place to dispose of baby wipes is in the trash—get a small trash can with a lid to keep right by the toilet. If you have an infant using disposable diapers, a diaper pail is also a good place to put used wipes.

The one place not to put used wipes? In your toilet.

What about "flushable" wipes?

Research shows that even wipes that claim to be "flushable" don't break down quickly enough to avoid clogging sewers.

So do yourself and your community a favor: don't ever flush baby wipes! You'll both prevent costly repairs to your home plumbing, and help keep sewer rates down.



Visit SaveYourPipes.org to view TV spots featuring a retro game show, "What the Flush?!", and other materials designed to persuade people not to flush baby wipes.

Because oil & water don't mix... Grease Trap/Interceptor Standards

Oil or grease can create major, expensive clogs if discharged into our wastewater system. That's why GAUD has strict Grease Trap & Interceptor Standards and penalties for non-compliance.

All food service establishments are required to submit a Grease Trap/Interceptor Application to the District.

This includes (but is not limited to) bakeries, restaurants, motels, hotels, cafeterias, hospitals, schools, bars, fish markets and coffee shops—virtually any establishment required to have a State of Maine Department of Health and Human Services' food service license.

For complete details on our Grease Trap/Interceptor Standards, including application requirements, penalties and fees, go to the "[Grease Trap Standards](#)" page under the [Wastewater](#) menu on our website.

After the trip, empty your holding tank...for FREE!

Our Wastewater Treatment Plant at 33 Jackson Avenue has a FREE public dump station where you can discharge the wastewater from your camper, trailer, boat or RV. It's open from 7 am–3 pm Monday–Friday (closed weekends and holidays).



GAUD to Review Catch Basin Billing Structure

After years of questions from customers, we are reviewing our rates for individual catch basins. While this issue mostly relates to our commercial accounts, it may also have some effect on residential stormwater rates as well.

GAUD is one of very few districts in the country that still charge for individual catch basins. Most charge a stormwater fee based on how much impervious area is on a given parcel, regardless of the total area of the parcel.

As we research options for a more equitable way to charge for stormwater, we will keep you informed through our mailings, and hold input sessions in the spring. In the meantime, please visit the "[Stormwater/Catch Basins](#)" page on our website for more information.