



Greater Augusta  
Utility District

Water | Wastewater | Stormwater

[GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org](http://GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org)

# CURRENTS

## LATE FALL 2019

### PROGRESS ON THE MILLION-GALLON STORAGE TANK

By the time this newsletter is published, most of the tank will have disappeared under the earth. That's because construction is moving so swiftly on the new million-gallon storage tank near the boat landing.

When completed, the tank will help to prevent sewage from getting into the Kennebec River during major rainstorms. Despite the tank's extremely large capacity, it won't overwhelm the landscape: much of it will ultimately be underground and the highest point will be no more than 17 feet above ground.

The photographs below show three points during the construction this past year. The tank is expected to be complete by the middle of November 2019. Piping, pumping station and regulating structures come next; they should be complete, and the tank operational, by July 2020. After that, runoff from major storms can be directed to the tank and then passed along to GAUD's treatment plant.

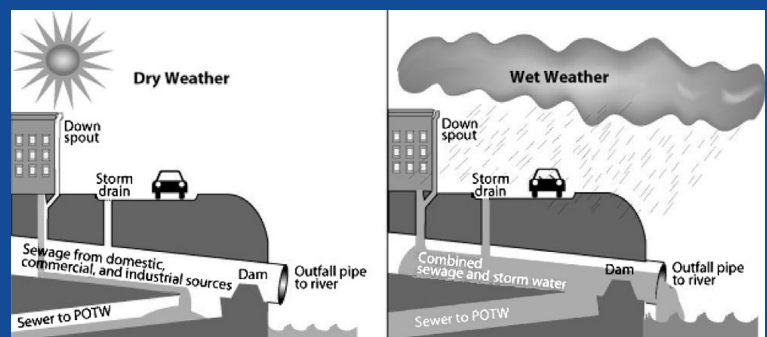


### UPDATE ON WASTEWATER & STORMWATER RATES

Beginning in July, 2019, the GAUD Trustees adjusted the District's rates, following a long, thoughtful process that involved extensive analysis by a Stormwater Workgroup and public hearings. The three rate adjustments were:

- Wastewater (sewer) rates were reduced by 25%.
- Stormwater ERU (Equivalent Residential Units) rates rose by \$4.26, from \$8.30 to \$12.56 per month.
- Stormwater catch basin fees decreased by 20%, from \$50.89 to \$40.59 per month.

The rise in stormwater ERU rates will fund new infrastructure to help us fulfill our obligations to protect the Kennebec River from pollutants. The rate change will also enable us to keep improving our geographic information system that tracks infrastructure throughout the District. We'll continue to monitor the new rates.





## IN SHAPE

It takes a lot to win SHAPE certification. (That stands for Safety & Health Award for Public Employers.) Issued by the Maine Department of Labor, SHAPE requires that employers address potential hazards in the workplace, implement a safety and health management system, lower their Lost Workday Injury and Illness Rate below the state average, and much more. Then comes the inspection!



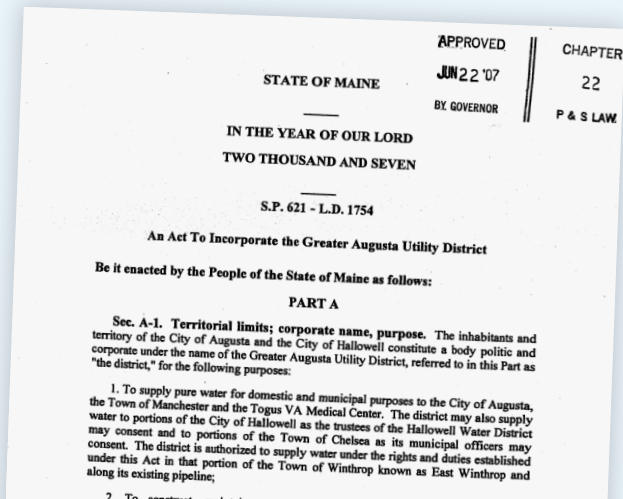
This past summer, GAUD was recertified for SHAPE. That's a testament to all of our staff, who take safety seriously 365 days a year. Congratulations!

## CHECKING IN ON THE CHARTER

The Maine Legislature formed the District through a legal document called a "charter." The GAUD Trustees Charter Committee, whose members are Cary Colwell, Kirsten Hebert and Pat Paradis, has made recommendations to the Trustees for changes to the Charter:

1. Clarify language describing how the City of Augusta and the District are each responsible for stormwater drainage in the city.
2. Allow Hallowell's non-voting Board member to have a vote when the designated voting Hallowell member is absent.
3. Determine a fee for property owners with land adjacent, but not connected, to sewer pipes.

These recommendations will be discussed at upcoming monthly GAUD Board Meetings (which are always open to the public) and then at municipal public meetings. If the recommendations are approved locally, then the changes must be ratified by the Maine State Legislature. We'll report on progress here and you can always learn more at the Board meetings, too.



## SUMMER INTERNS BUILD A BRIDGE TO GREAT CAREERS!

This past summer eight interns joined GAUD from UMaine (Orono and Farmington), Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Case Western Reserve, Tufts, Siena College and Virginia Tech. Most of the time they were inside, poring over computer screens and maps and helping to improve our operations and engineering.

But we also made sure they got outside. Anthony Pinnette designed an extension for a bridge at the Augusta Nature Education Center. One week, the interns left the office and took a field trip over to the Center so that they could...build that bridge!

This work was done as a trade for an easement over the ANC's land to install a ditch needed in case of a water tank overflow nearby. You can learn more about the ANC at [www.AugustaNatureCenter.org](http://www.AugustaNatureCenter.org).

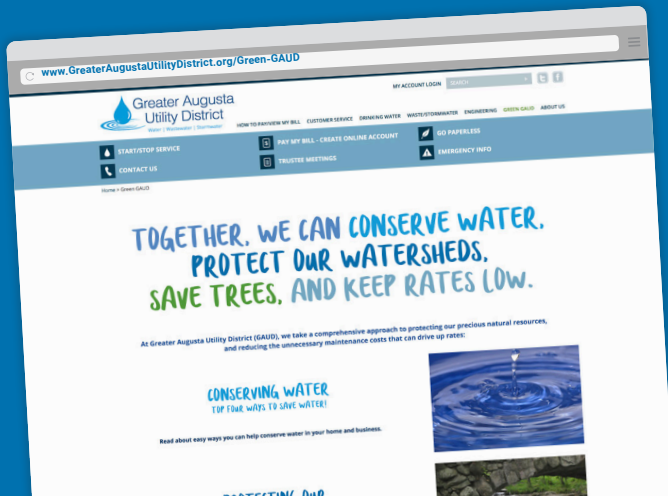
We are always grateful for the contributions our interns make. And we hope they'll come back to join us next year.





## GET GREEN WITH GAUD

We've gathered together in one space on our website the four key ways GAUD can grow greener...with your help! Visit [www.GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org/Green-GAUD](http://www.GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org/Green-GAUD) and learn about conserving water, protecting our environment, maintaining your drain and saving trees. (That last one is easy: just go paperless in your billing, and join the 1,267 others who received and pay their bills online!)



## WELCOME, STEVE TIRRELL!

In August we welcomed a new member to our team: Stephen Tirrell. Steve is technically our "Information Systems Support Specialist 2," but we tend to refer to him as "the IT guy." When Steve, a former Marine, isn't helping us avoid digital peril, he's cheering for his beloved University of Michigan Wolverines. We're glad for his enthusiasm and assistance.



## NEW CERTIFICATIONS

This summer two of our staff took a big step forward with new certifications in their professional development. Harland Cummings (right) passed his Grade II Wastewater Certification, and Ben Barry (left) passed his Maine Water Distribution Operator II exam. Congratulations to each of them!



## TREK ACROSS MAINE

Lee Cumber, GAUD'S meter shop foreman, got quite a workout this summer. He and his 14-year-old son, Brady, participated in the 35th annual Trek Across Maine, a 180-mile bicycle ride through the Kennebec Valley.

The Trek Across Maine raises money for the American Lung Association—this year the Trek raised more than \$1.3 million. Lee and Brady were riding in memory of Jay Lemelin, a mechanic at the District who succumbed to cancer in 2016.





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### TRUSTEE MEETINGS

The monthly meetings of your Board of Trustees are open to the public. For a complete schedule, visit our website and click on **Trustee Meetings** under the **About Us** menu. You'll also find a link to archived videos of all meetings since November, 2014.

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### WHO'S THAT ON THE PHONE?

When you call us at GAUD, who is that answering the telephone? It's our Customer Service Relations team: Julie Weston (at right), who's been with us for two years, and Rebecca Hughes (at left), who's been with us for 17 years.

They're the ones you talk to when you have a question about your bill, or if you're wondering about that GAUD truck at the end of the street, or if you have a suggestion. They've seen it all and heard it all, and they are consistently cheerful and helpful. Customer service is what we're all about, and it starts with Julie and Rebecca, the voices at the end of the phone.

*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, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure in Augusta; the wastewater system in Hallowell; and regional wastewater collection and treatment for the communities of Monmouth, Winthrop and Manchester.*