



Massachusetts Water Resources Authority

Presentation to the

Wastewater Advisory Committee

MWRA Outreach and Communications Strategy

Ria Convery

October 5, 2012



MWRA And The Media

- \$7.1 billion spent without a hint of scandal
- Good reputation among media outlets
- Strategy is to stay under the radar



Targeting Local Coverage

- 30 or 40 good stories in weekly papers and Patches
 - Annual Water Quality Report
 - MWRA School Contest Winners
 - Construction Updates



Targeting Local Coverage



Milton Water 'Excellent' According to MWRA Annual Report

The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority Annual Water Quality Report is now available.

By Adam Roberts Email the author June 14, 2012

Recommend 3 Tweet 2 Email Print Comment

The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority recently released its Annual Water Quality Report, which includes general information as well as town-specific test results.

A hard copy of the report is being sent to each household, but a PDF of the Milton report is available here.

Below is the MWRA release about the Annual Water Quality Report.



Upload Photos and Videos

The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority has begun mailing its Annual Water Quality Report to every household in its service area. The report provides an update to consumers on last year's water quality test results.

The hundreds of thousands of tests taken during the year confirm that the quality of MWRA's water is excellent. For 2011, MWRA met every federal and state drinking water standard.

"The report is essentially a nutrition label for your drinking water, and the news is good," said MWRA executive director Fred Laskey. He added that the agency hopes customers will take a moment to read the report and learn more about the water system.

The report also includes important information on how to reduce the risk of lead in drinking water. Although the water itself is lead-free, lead can get into tap water through home plumbing.



News & Views for Boston's North End & Waterfront Community

Greenway Conservancy Annual Meeting: Business Improvement District Appears Unlikely But Community Board Members Expected to Pay [Video]

North Bennet Street School Development Design on North & Richmond Streets Presented at Community Meeting [Video]

Dogs, Fish and Their Human Owners Braved the Weather for the Annual Blessing of the Animals

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

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ARTS & CULTURE, GOVERNMENT, SCHOOLS

Thu Jun 14, 2012

Three St. John School Students Win MWRA Poster and Writing Contests

by Matt Conti

News from the MWRA:

We are pleased to announce that three students of St. John School in the North End have won MWRA's annual poster and writing contests. Francesco Pistorino, grade K, won Third Place in the poster contest and Francesco Cirulli, also grade K, won Honorable Mention in the writing contest.

A ceremony honoring the winning students and their teachers was held at Deer Island on May 25. The ceremony was attended by representatives from Rep. Eugene L. O'Flaherty and Rep. Carlo P. Basile.

Each year, students from schools across MWRA's service area were challenged to create posters about water conservation at the Deer Island Water Treatment Plant or to write about the benefits of water conservation. MWRA received many entries.

The annual poster and writing contest is part of MWRA's School Education Program, which educates children about the health significance of water supply and wastewater treatment. To view all the winning posters, visit [www.mwra.com](#).





Building A Reserve Of Good Will...

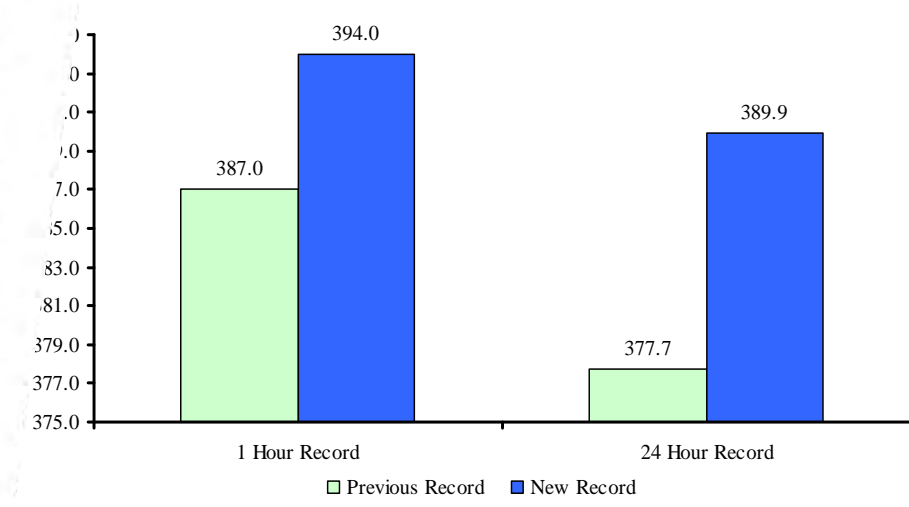
- More than just sending press releases
 - Making contacts for future stories
 - Providing quick responses that meet reporters' deadlines
- Third party sources can carry more weight
 - Our reputation improves when others talk about our successes



...For A Rainy Day



Nut Island Headworks Record Flows





...And A Rainier Day



Water emergency plan works, building confidence for future

A BREAK in a major water line Saturday had the potential to turn into a debacle for much of the Boston area. Yet by yesterday afternoon, the boil-water order was being obeyed, and authorities were close to restoring clean water to 2 million customers. The crisis was mitigated, if not averted. The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority's rapid response should inspire confidence for the future. The pipe itself was repaired in less than 48 hours, all the more impressive because the breach occurred on a weekend. The authority also quickly reactivated an aqueduct that hadn't been in service for decades, assuring sufficient water pressure for emergencies and tap water for homes, provided it was boiled. This wasn't just good luck. The rapid response, including efforts to inform the public of the emergency, was an outgrowth of a handful of post-9/11 emergency training sessions and tabletop exercises conducted by the water authority along with state and federal officials, as recently as last fall.

"We've trained this to death, and it paid off," said Fred Laskey, executive director of the water authority.

That said, the MWRA still owes the public

a thorough explanation and investigation into why this happened. The repair involved welding plate steel over the broken pipes. That sounds like a lot stronger way to make a connection than the original clamping mechanism, raising the question of why it wasn't done that way at the beginning. Unfortunately, it may be a long time before MWRA and state officials get to the bottom of the failure. A flaw in engineering or construction is a possible cause. Recent changes to the groundwater — the direct or indirect consequences of record spring storms — may also have played a role in the breach.

Key evidence, including a steel component of the failed coupling, washed away as nearly 8 million gallons of water an hour burst from the broken pipe Saturday into the Charles River, according to Laskey. So much sediment and debris resulted that about half the river was filled in near the vicinity of the breach.

"So much stuff washed away," says Laskey. "We may never know."

For its own good and for the public's, the authority must learn what it can from this incident. But citizens can take comfort in the agency's ability to keep a massive break in the drinking water system from spiraling into a much larger problem.

BOSTON & BEYOND. NOW.

METRODESK

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Text size - +

'Boil-water' order issued for nearly 2 million in Mass.

May 1, 2010 09:45 PM

E-mail | Link | Comments (165)



Graphic showing the location of the break.

larin Finucane, Beth Daley, and John M. Guilfoil, Globe Staff, and Sean Teehan and Caitlin Castello, Globe correspondents

A major pipe bringing water to the Boston area has sprung a "catastrophic" leak and is spilling eight million gallons of water per hour into the Charles River. Governor Deval Patrick declared a state of emergency and issued a "boil-water" order for Boston and dozens of other communities.

"The water is not suitable for drinking. ... All residents in impacted communities should boil drinking water before consuming it," he said at a news conference this afternoon.



Coverage When We Want It

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The Boston Globe City&Region

WEDNESDAY

New stage of harbor cleanup set to begin on 2-mile sewer overflow tunnel

By John C. Drake
GLOBE STAFF

Two decades ago, frustration with the frequently murky waters along the beaches of Dorchester and South Boston helped spur a court battle and a judge's order for the state to clean up Boston Harbor.

Now, after billions of dollars in sewer work have transformed the labyrinth of underground sewer tunnels at the harbor, work is beginning on a 2-mile sewer overflow tunnel that will virtually eliminate the release of sewage and storm water into the harbor and dramatically reduce beach closures.

"The folks that have been justifiably worried about going swimming anytime near when it rains in Boston will be able to feel much safer about having their children in the water when this project is finally implemented," said Peter Shelley, vice president of the Conservation Law Foundation and one of the lawyers who initially sued government agencies over the discharge of raw sewage into Boston Harbor in 1983. "This project is really being done for the people who will be the beneficiaries of Boston, and it's about time."

A massive boring machine arrived in the Boston Harbor from Japan last week, and officials will gather in South Boston this morning to mark the start of work on the project, set to cost about \$215 million and take four years to complete.

The tunnel will store storm water during a storm and send it to a new pumping station at Copley Terminal. The pumping station will then push storm water to the Deer Island sewer treatment plant.

Under normal conditions, rain and sewage are piped to Boston's water treatment plant. But during heavy storms, runoff can overwhelm the sewer system, forcing runoff and sewage into relief valves that empty into the harbor. High



Water Resources. Since the vast tunnel will be used to residents, work should be minimal. The authority has above-ground work season.

The M.L. Shanley lead contract Laskey said, Shanley based engineering and Cauton-based Corp. The work Laskey said.

The 330-ton rig for the project, will than 300 feet long the train as it bores diameter 30 to 50 Day Boulevard, 2.1 miles from the Carson Beach.

An average of 2.2 million gallons of raw sewage are pumped into the harbor at any given ground, said MW Convery.

"While the mac work, the support to work can be grudged."

While the MWI three deep-rock to tunnel of this size to through soft rock, will have to stabilize to prevent sinkholes.

Bruce Berman, group Save the North I called the North I payoff for the Boston Dorchester Bay Combined Sewer Overflow Tunnel, where it will sit until the storm ends, before being pumped out. "This will give us real-time management of a storm," said Fred Laskey, executive director of the Massachusetts

bacteria levels after storms have forced the closing of beaches in South Boston an average of 21 times a year. The new tunnel and pumping station will hold overflow from all but the largest storms.

"This is a really important project to fulfill the promise of truly clean water in Boston Harbor," Ian Bowles, secretary of energy and environmental affairs, said in a telephone interview. "It also has dramatic environmental benefits in terms of the mix of species you will find in the water."

When the new system is in place, engineers will open gates when heavy rainfall approaches that will direct the combined sewer flow to the new North Dorchester Bay Combined Sewer Overflow Tunnel, where it will sit until the storm ends, before being pumped out. "This will give us real-time management of a storm," said Fred Laskey, executive director of the Massachusetts

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The Boston Globe City&Region

WEDNESDAY

2.1 miles later, massive drill surfs

New tunnel to divert waste from beaches

By John C. Drake
GLOBE STAFF

With excited workers and officials looking on, the nose of a massive boring machine pierced through the concrete wall of a newly excavated shaft by the Baystate Exposition Center yesterday morning, setting its first rotation lights in motion a year after a 2.1-mile underwater sewer overflow tunnel was built to South Boston.

The investment grinding and the crushing of rock and concrete slabs on the shaft floor should have been made in the case of sewer breakage, which would have caused an unusually high number of days in which beaches were closed because of bacteria from sewer overflow. State officials are spending \$215 million to build this sewer and storm water storage tunnel and associated facilities to fix the problem.

Instead of the storm water and the combined sewer, which includes human waste, going into the beach, it will go into this tunnel," said Fred Laskey, executive director of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority. "It's perfectly suited to deal with the negative impacts we've seen this year."

The 18-foot-wide North Dorchester Bay Combined Sewer Overflow Tunnel will catch storm water from all but the most severe storms, combine it with sewer overflow, and pump it all toward Deer Island. The tunnel runs from Pleasant Bay to Copley Terminal, passing underneath the M Street, L Street, and Carson Beach.

"With the billions of dollars that have been spent on wastewater treatment in this country, it is simply unacceptable that we have so many beautiful days with closed beaches," said Robert Varney, regional administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency's New England office.

Varney worked with the MWRA in developing the tunnel plan. "This will go a long way to ensuring that citizens have access to clean beaches on an ongoing basis."

The Department of Conservation and Recreation closed South Boston beaches about 21 times a year, but officials say the closures have been more frequent this year because of high rain totals. Already this summer, portions of Carson Beach have been closed at least 20 days, and Copley Beach, a spokeswoman for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

"The tunnel will be used to divert waste from the beach every day after a major storm, even when it is raining. This should help reduce the number of days that the project is completed, officials and environmental advocates said.

"The beach closures we've had this summer when we've had these major storms really really disadvantage the residents, so people who live in the city have been representative opportunities than people who live in the suburbs is in the state," said Ian Bowles, secretary of the Massachusetts Department of Energy and Environmental Affairs. "This will really solve that problem."

HARBOR CLEANUP BREAKTHROUGH



Tunnel workers Steve Chigg (left) and Patric Rusk emerged from underground yesterday about their 18-foot boring machine. For almost a year, the machine had been digging a tunnel for the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority's sewer and storm runoff project.



Operating machine Dick Pentecost removes the 2-mile railway system that diverts workers and sludge back and forth through the tunnel.

The machine drilled about 100 feet a day, with a half of 100 feet, as it proceeded under north Day Boulevard and the tunnel. It is now behind the South Boston State Police

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The Boston Globe Main News

THURSDAY, JUNE 24, 2011

A CLEAN NEW ERA FOR BOSTON HARBOR Completion of sewer tank will minimize beach closures



Workers on Carson Beach no longer have to make their way around heavy accumulations of debris that washed ashore.



By Beth Daley
GLOBE STAFF

The opening of a massive sewer tunnel to divert waste from the beach every day after a major storm, even when it is raining. This should help reduce the number of days that the project is completed, officials and environmental advocates said.

"The beach closures we've had this summer when we've had these major storms really really disadvantage the residents, so people who live in the city have been representative opportunities than people who live in the suburbs is in the state," said Ian Bowles, secretary of the Massachusetts Department of Energy and Environmental Affairs. "This will really solve that problem."

The problem was twofold. During particularly heavy storms, raw human sewage and storm water leaked into the labyrinth of pipes under Boston. When the sewer system became overwhelmed — about 20 times a year — the bacteria-filled sewage poured into the harbor.

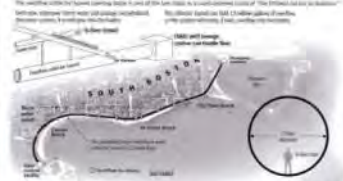
During more moderate rains, storm water runoff, carrying animal waste, sewage from illegal hookups, debris, and lawn fertilizer, also flowed into the harbor 100 times a year, on average.

"If bacteria counts were high enough during the summer, beaches also closed. During the winter, the volume was believed harmful to marine life."

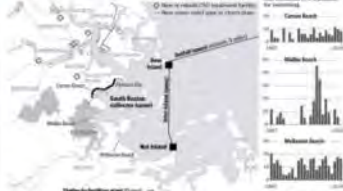
Now, MWRA officials say, the combination of sewer and storm water will flow into the harbor on average once every 21 years. Storm water alone will enter the South Boston area on average once every five years, they project.

The harbor cleanup is still not done, intensive work continues to clean the Charles, Mystic, and other rivers that flow into the harbor. But those projects will have a significant effect on reducing quality in South Boston and Dorchester. The MWRA agreed to build a treatment facility in South Boston that would include storm water. But it was a

The last big piece of the Boston Harbor cleanup



Workers on Carson Beach no longer have to make their way around heavy accumulations of debris that washed ashore.



point with agency officials, who argued that they were in the sewer — not storm water — business and that all the work would not prevent beach closures from being closed because of illegal sewage pipes or animal waste that could still flow into the harbor.

In 2000, South Boston residents helped file the first suit to clean the harbor in 1983. The Conservation Law Foundation sued first a federal suit and in 1985, a federal judge ordered a full cleanup to clean the harbor in 1983. The Conservation Law Foundation sued first a federal suit and in 1985, a federal judge ordered a full cleanup to clean the harbor in 1983. The Conservation Law Foundation sued first a federal suit and in 1985, a federal judge ordered a full cleanup to clean the harbor in 1983.

With rain in the forecast today, three beaches of the Harbor/Save the Bay, an advisory group that pushed for the first time in decades, people will be able to swim in the rain and know the water is safe.

"Stories about infrastructure are often the least sexy stories," said, "but at the end of the day, this project has a very real, positive, and dramatic effect on quality of life in Boston."

Beth Daley can be reached at bethdaley@globe.com



Making Information Available Is Key

Community Assessments (Rates)
Massachusetts Water Resources Authority

MWRA is a "wholesaler" to its member communities. MWRA's charges ("community assessments") typically represent about 45% of the amount that communities bill their customers. The proportion varies considerably among communities.

The Latest MWRA Community Assessments:
Final FY 2013 wholesale assessments to communities (PDF) Posted June 27, 2012
[Archive](#)

ABOUT THE FY 2013 ASSESSMENTS
The FY 2013 assessments include a 3% average combined water and sewer increase, consistent with a 3-year rates management strategy developed in FY 2011.

MWRA WATER AND SEWER RATE METHODOLOGY
How MWRA sets water and sewer assessments to for communities

Water Rates
In setting water rates, MWRA first identifies through its budgeting amount of revenue that must be raised to run the water system, calculated using a flat rate per million gallons - \$3,032.39 for FY. Metered water use by a community in the last full calendar year.

Sewer Rates
Sewer charges are computed on a proportional allocation basis utilizing each contributing population and census population for each community. The total amount of required revenue for the sewer system is allocated either to operating costs or capital costs. Operating costs are allocated to each community based on the average of the prior three calendar years' total flow, with adjustments for strength of flow.

Capital costs, including debt service, are allocated to each community based on a combination of (1) average of the prior three years' peak month wastewater flow and average concentrations of total suspended solids and biochemical oxygen demand; (2) the proportion of the population of the community that is served by the local sewer system; and (3) the proportion of the community's U.S. census population to the total census population in the sewer system.

Boston Harbor and Massachusetts Bay
MWRA Environmental Quality Department

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MWRA monitors the water quality of Boston Harbor and Massachusetts Bay pathogens, metals, organics, solids, pH, oil and grease and toxicity. See for the latest water quality information and permit-required reporting.

BOSTON HARBOR AND R
Nutrients, pathogens, dissolved oxygen clarity are measured in BOSTON HAR MYSTIC, and NEPONSET rivers.

Goals: Assess impacts of combined affected water bodies and track envi reduction efforts.

MASSACHUS
Massachusetts and Cape Cod b organic material, toxic contamin

Goals: Fulfill requirements of the assess the impacts of MWRA sewi discharges on Massachusetts and

BOSTON HA
Harbor beaches are tested daily posted when high bacteria coun available for download.

Goals: Provide safe and plear sources of bacterial pollution: Pleasure Bay, Short, Tenean,

REGULA
MWRA's regulators require in permit Threshold Exceedi Monitoring, Sewage Flow I users, System Maintenance

Goals: Comply with the C from discharge of treated

Transparency
Massachusetts Water Resources Authority

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Updated June 1, 2012



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SPOT POND COVERED STORAGE TANK


Info and Update
June 12, 2012

RENEWABLE ENERGY AT MWRA


Slide Show


- 10-Year Summary (PDF)**
- Presentation: Energy Efforts and Savings FY2002-2011 (PDF)**

Massachusetts Water Resources Authority

Charlestown Navy Yard, 100 First Avenue - Boston, Massachusetts 02129
(617) 242-6000


Congratulations to Jim Hunt, Former MWRA Board Member, on His New Position as Vice President of Northeast Utilities
Full story in The New York Times
October 3, 2012

News


Don't be Frightened or Mislead by Advertisers; Get the Real Facts about Your Drinking Water from Your Town or MWRA
October 3, 2012

Traffic Advisory: MWRA Work Will Require Detour at River Road in Weston

September 17, 2012


Governor Patrick Swears in Brian R. Swett to MWRA Board of Directors
September 10, 2012

Consumer Advisory: "Water Quality Awareness Program" Notices Not Issued by MWRA or Customer Communities

August 30, 2012

MWRA to Temporarily Lower Reservoir Levels in Framingham

August 29, 2012

From the Boston Globe

Marie Turner, 81, Championed Winthrop's interests for decades (PDF)
August 23, 2012


Now on Flickr: Photos of the MWRA Advisory Board's Annual Tour (08/16/12)
August 17, 2012

Charlestown Wind Progress Update

August 14, 2012


Wachusett Reservoir Earthen Dam Restoration Continues: Second Phase of Tree Removal to Begin at North Dike
August 1, 2012

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

No notices at this time.

MWRA 24-HOUR EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Water:	617-305-5950
Sewer:	617-305-5940
Security:	877-697-6972
TTY:	617-371-1903

NON-EMERGENCY CONTACTS

MWRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meeting Schedule, Notices/Agendas and Vote Extracts

About the Board of Directors

MWRA QUAB-CAM®

The Quabbin Reservoir



Click on the picture for a larger image in a new window.



Using Social Media - Twitter

Tweets

 **Ria Convery** @MWRA_update 22h
Congratulations to Jim Hunt. Read the NY Times story:
bit.ly/Wku6LZ
Expand

 **Waterworks Museum** @MetroWaterworks 12 Sep
Join us this Saturday for our first ever FREE Family Day at the Waterworks Museum conta.cc/RSmuj1 via #free
#WaterworksMuseum
Retweeted by Ria Convery
Expand

 **Ria Convery** @MWRA_update 11 Sep
MWRA's newest board member sworn in bit.ly/NmY4gU
Expand

 **Ria Convery** @MWRA_update 30 Aug
Consumer advisory: "Water Quality Awareness Program" notice was not issued by MWRA or customer communities - tinyurl.com/9fomuq8
Expand

 **Ria Convery** @MWRA_update 29 Aug
MWRA to temporarily lower Foss Reservoir levels this week: tinyurl.com/9tv2zgg #framingham
Expand

 **Waterworks Museum** @MetroWaterworks 3 Aug
Help spread the word about us! Bring a friend who has never been to the Waterworks Museum (official) this weekend!
Retweeted by Ria Convery
Expand

 **Ria Convery** @MWRA_update 25 Jul
Come have a drink with us! Visit MWRA's portable water fountain at these upcoming events: bit.ly/ODOKjL
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 **Ria Convery** @MWRA_update 18 Jul
MWRA's Deer Island Plant gets Platinum award: bit.ly/OGitbw
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Brian Swett Sworn in by...
9 photos
75 views

The Ward Fellowship Program...
17 photos
8 views

MWRA Advisory Board Field Trip
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93 views

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MWRA Advisory Board Field Trip
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How We Cleaned Up the "Dirtiest Harbor in America"
17 views
Boston Harbor was once known as "the dirtiest harbor in America." How we finally cleaned up the mess with the second-largest

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Shaft 5 Pipe Break that Caused Boil Water Order in Boston Area
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MWRA surveillance video of a pipe break that caused an emergency boil water order in 30 Metro Boston and MetroWest communities.

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Judge Richard G. Stearns Speaks at MWRA Event in South Boston
11 views
Federal District Court Judge Richard G. Stearns speaks at a ceremony to mark the opening of MWRA's CSO storage tunnel in

watsew1985 uploaded a video 11 months ago

MWRA's Charlestown Wind Turbine
1,787 views
A time-lapse film documenting the installation of MWRA's new 1.5 megawatt wind turbine at the DeLauri Sewer Pump Station in

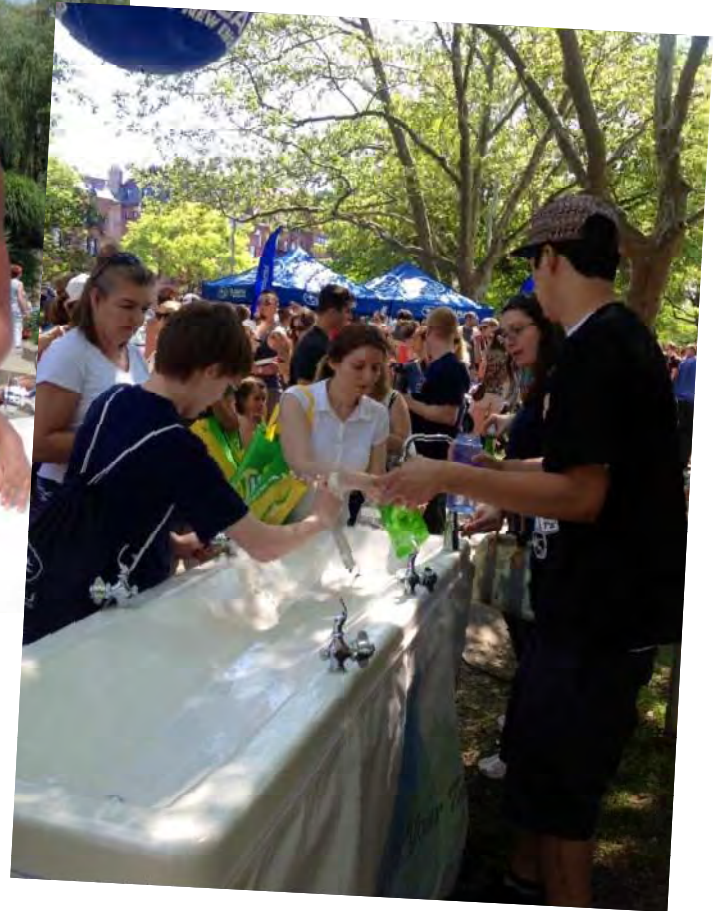
About MWRA
MWRA provides water and sewer services for over 2.5 million people in 61 Massachusetts communities.

by watsew1985

Latest Activity	Sep 19, 2012
Date Joined	Nov 8, 2011
Location	Boston, Massachusetts
Country	United States

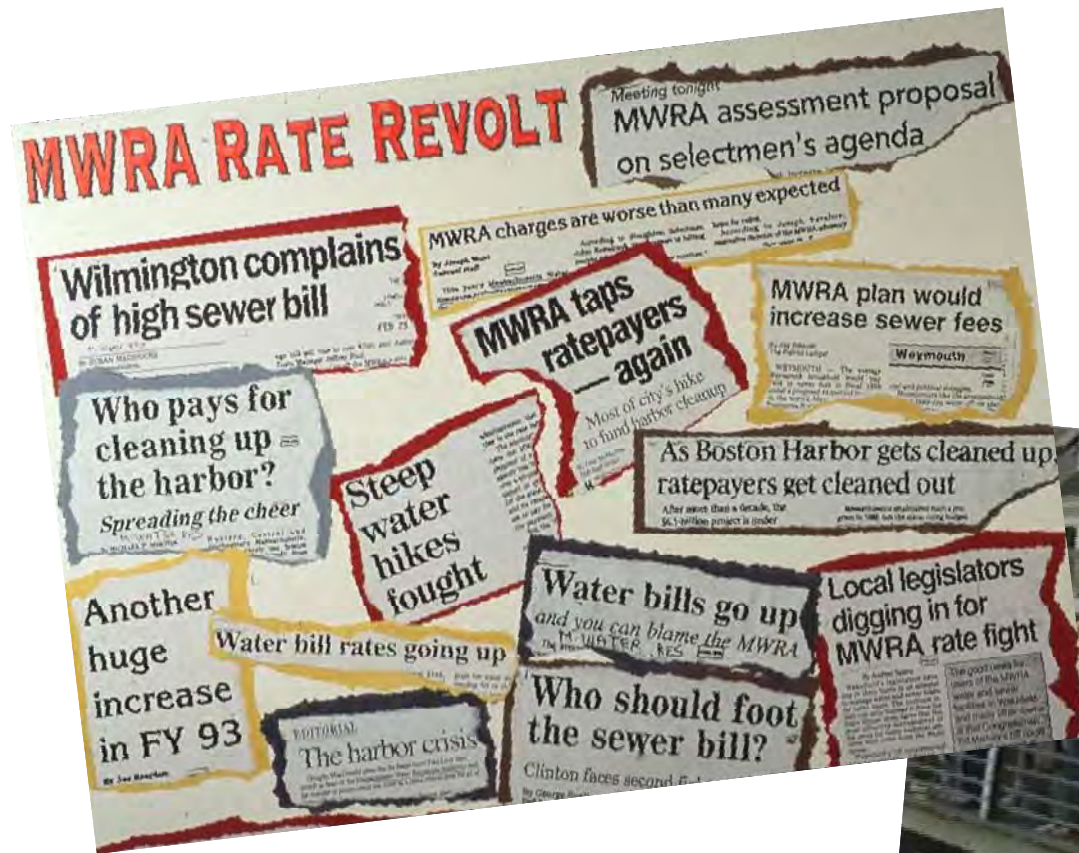


Using Sociable Media Is Even More Important





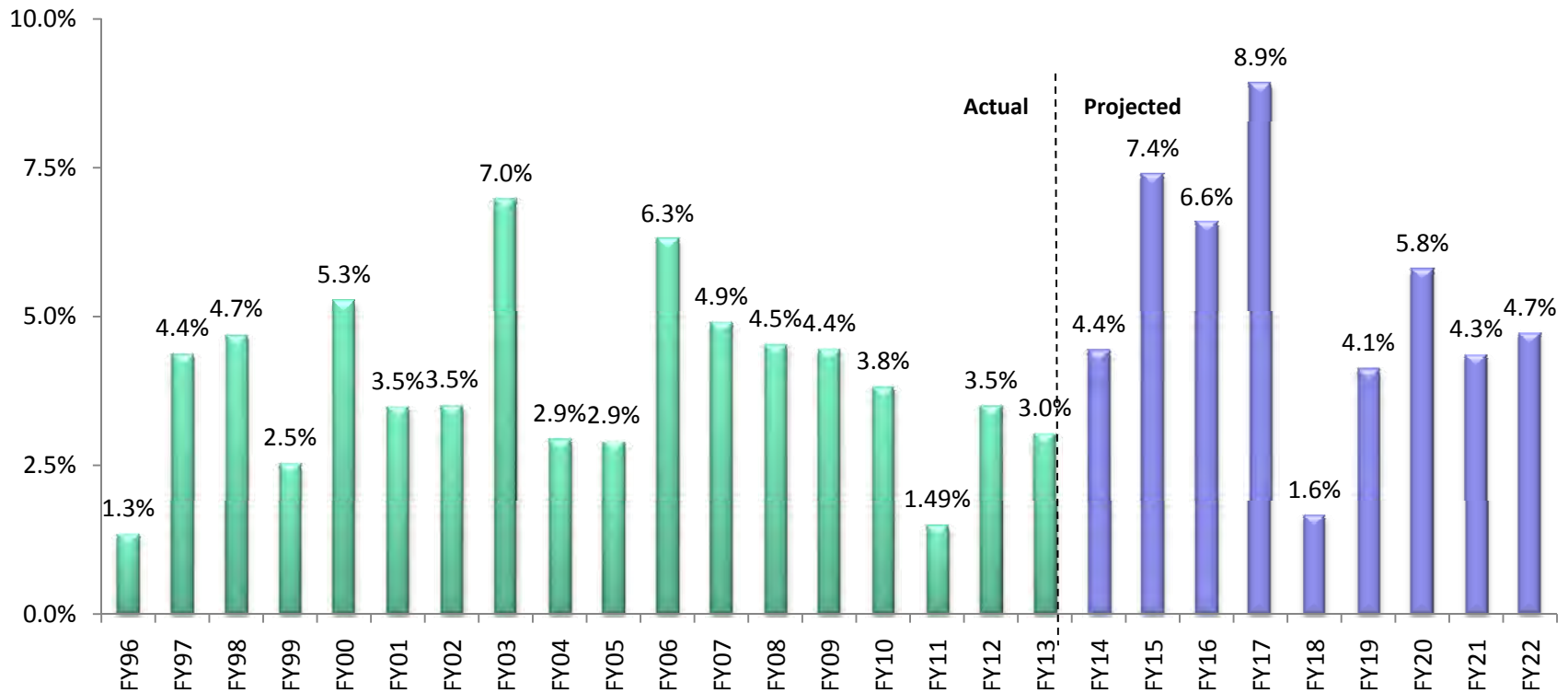
Rate Increases Make Headlines





Rate Projections

Historical and Projected Rate Revenue Changes





We're Starting To See More Negative Headlines



Aldermen want MWRA probe

By DAVID WELDON
MELROSE — Resident protesters apparently have not completely fallen on deaf ears, as two successive hikes in water and sewer rates. In only a month's time have convinced the Board of Aldermen that more needs to be known about the often-controversial process. Three weeks ago the board's Appropriations Committee recommended passage of a second wave of water and sewer rates. The first round, a month earlier, set new higher rates that were supposed to

Cool shades



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MWRA approves \$636M budget requiring 3 percent rate hike

By Andy Metzger / State House News Service
Saturday, June 30, 2012 - Added 3 months ago

E-mail Print (0) Comments Text size Share

The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority Board of Directors approved a \$635.9 million fiscal year 2013 budget on Wednesday, meaning an average increase of 3 percent in the water and sewer rates paid by participating cities and towns.

The 3 percent rate increase follows a 3.49 percent increase last year. The MWRA had originally proposed a 3.9 percent average increase in February but the MWRA Advisory Board convinced the authority to bring the increase down to 3 percent. The Advisory Board features representatives from participating municipalities.



MILTON, Milton: Rein in the MWRA

Posted Jul 12, 2012 @ 08:48 AM
Last update Jul 12, 2012 @ 08:59 AM
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Business News
The Digital Skeptic: Ingrid and Friends May Take Digital Bullet
10 Best Cars For Football Tailgating
How to Do a Video Interview Right and Get the Job

The MWRA recently approved a \$3.8 million wage and salary increase for its employees in fiscal 2013 at the very same time the MWRA voted to impose an extortion-like 7.5 percent increase on Milton's water/sewer bills. That will tax the average resident in Milton another \$150 a year on their water bills. This raises the question: Are we paying for water or wages?

Suggested Stories
DAWN PADOVANI, Corvair: 'Pathetic' response to Corvair violations
WILLIAM CROSBIE
PAUL YOVING Milton