

# THE BETHPAGE WATER DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

# WATER CONNECTION

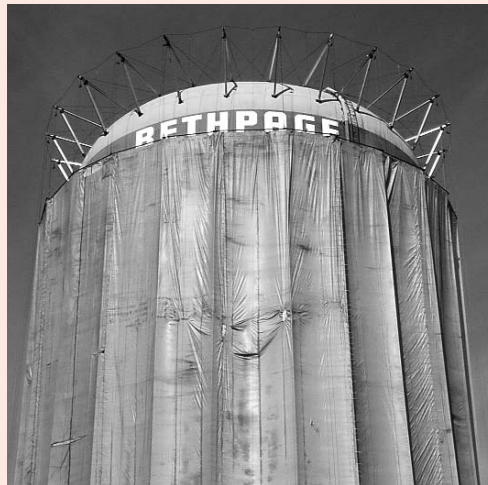
SPRING 2008

## Tower Refurbishment Underway

The Bethpage Water District's 140 foot water storage tower at Plant 1 on Adams Avenue is currently offline and undergoing an extensive \$1.5 million repainting and restoration project. The work, which is being funded through the water utility's operational budget, is being performed within strict health department and environmental standards. It is expected to be completed well before the start of the summer months, when consumer demand for water is typically at its highest.

Last renovated in 1996, the 1.25 million-gallon capacity tank is one of two that stores the drinking water for the district's 33,000 consumers. First it is pumped from deep wells, positioned an average of 640 feet below the earth's surface where the Nassau-Suffolk region's aquifers are situated. The aquifers contain trillions of gallons of drinking water that was naturally filtered as it trickled downward through various layers of sand over hundreds of years. Upon demand, the water is delivered from the storage towers to the homes and businesses in the district's service area by way of gravity.

"The work on the tank will be extensive, entailing a complete overhaul of exterior structural components as well as the interior and exterior surfaces," explained Bethpage Water Commissioner John R. Sullivan, who has been monitoring the project as it moves forward. "Plans call for



*Bethpage Water Commissioner John R. Sullivan reviews the progress of the water utility's storage tower rehabilitation project (pictured above).*

making the necessary structural repairs, enhancing the tank's safety features and removing the existing paint. Then, matching the same color used in the past, a new coat of paint will be applied to the exterior surface and a more modern non-corrosive

environmentally safe paint will coat the interior."

The paint removal is being done in accordance with stringent Environmental Protection Agency guidelines, which require that the tank be contained by a covering or draping throughout the sandblasting process. This will prevent debris from falling beyond Bethpage Water District property.

"In the past, a necessary maintenance project such as this would have been a fraction of the price that it is today," Sullivan pointed out. "With public health and safety concerns at the forefront, environmental standards have become more rigorous, adding considerably to job costs."

Once completed, the tank will be refilled and required, as a public health precaution, to pass a series of routine tests before the Nassau County Health Department gives the district the go-ahead to reintroduce it to the distribution system.

*Another* major capital improvement project underway is the development of a new treatment plant at the Bethpage Water District's Plainview Road well site.

*See page 8 for details.*



FROM THE

# Superintendent's Desk

by Andy Musgrave



## Emergency Notification System in Place

The Bethpage Water District recently entered an agreement that enables it to access a reverse-911 system to forward a pre-recorded message to the public in the event of a water-related emergency. The service provider, Swift 911, was retained through a cooperative inter-municipal effort spearheaded by the Nassau County Office of Emergency Management, which enables public water suppliers to access the service at a considerable savings over contracting directly with the firm.

By targeting specific areas on a map, the modern mass-communication system is currently able to forward a customized voice message to published and unpublished residential telephone phone numbers within the region. The district pays a nominal monthly

subscription fee and is charged for each use thereafter.

Each customer can list three additional contact phone numbers or email addresses to be entered into the notification data base. These can include land lines, cell phones or email addresses; voice or text messaging can be specified. A form is available on the water district's website by logging onto [www.bethpagewater.org](http://www.bethpagewater.org) and clicking on the "911" icon. Enter your information, click the "add" button, then "submit" the completed form to the district for processing. Forms are also available at the Bethpage Water District's administrative office on Adams Avenue.

Contact information will be accessed only during emergency situations and will remain strictly confidential. By selecting the most reliable way to be reached, consumers can help the district meet its goal of notifying residents as quickly as possible in the event of a water emergency.

# Consolidation Comes With Price

"While Bethpage Water District officials support reducing taxes for Nassau County residents, there is a consensus among public water professionals that consolidating water dis-

tricts is not the solution," explained Commissioner Gary S. Bretton. "With water taxes making up a mere 2 percent of the residential tax bill, we simply don't see how such a move would

result in any kind of relief."

The following is a good example of the "price consumers would pay" if the county takes over the public water system.

### Hometown Commissioner Run

- Hands-on management of hometown public water system since 1923
- Close working relationship with community & area water suppliers
- Employees live in the district & drink the same water provided to consumers
- Staff has family roots and intimate knowledge of Bethpage community
- Service crews provide quick response to consumer inquiries
- Commissioners are easily accessible & held accountable for decisions
- Revenue remains in the district & is returned in the form of superior service, reliable distribution system & quality product
- Budget prioritized to meet specific needs of Bethpage Water System & all funds spent on issues relevant to Bethpage
- County and town resources available, if needed

### Nassau County Run

- No experience managing public water system
- Consumers will lose ability to elect area residents to manage district budget
- Water rates & taxes will be set by county officials
- Consumers will lose voice in how water taxes and usage fees are disbursed
- Monies collected in Bethpage likely to be disbursed to outside areas
- Lacks intimate knowledge of Bethpage community
- Individuals living outside the area will make decisions affecting Bethpage's drinking water
- Hometown service philosophy will likely be dissolved & response times will deteriorate
- Bethpage will not be the only priority with a countywide system

BETHPAGE WATER DISTRICT

# County Chlorination Directive Questioned

Although there were NO drinking water violations in Bethpage, in November of 2007, the Health Department of Nassau County ordered the Bethpage Water District to begin adding chlorine to the drinking water it provides to consumers with the start of the New Year.

Bethpage Water's distribution system is 100 percent free of bacteriological contaminants and continually meets stringent health department guidelines. As a result, the water utility has received a chlorine waiver from the county for more than 30 years, consumers have enjoyed drinking water that is chlorine free and the district has repeatedly been recognized as home to one of the best tasting tap waters in New York State.

In recent years, federal and state governments have required public

water systems to complete vulnerability assessments and emergency response plans. Additionally, the Department of Homeland Security established guidelines regarding public water supply preparedness. Citing these new requirements, the county recently made modifications to the conditions for receiving a chlorination exemption. Now, only systems serving a population of fewer than 3,301 are eligible for the waiver; Bethpage Water pumps in excess of 1 billion gallons a year to more than 33,000 people.

"Since the district meets all the New York State Health Department criteria needed to receive a chlorine waiver, Bethpage Water officials are in negotiation with the state and county regarding this directive," explained Chairman of the Board William Ellinger. "While we appreciate the county's homeland

security concerns, it is the understanding of the water commissioners that the district is still entitled to a chlorination waiver. For this reason, we are raising questions about the mandate, with the best interest of the residents we serve in mind."

For more information about this subject or to show your support for the commissioners' decision against chlorinating in the Bethpage Water District, please call the Nassau County Department of Health at (516) 227-9692 or write to them at 106 Charles Lindbergh Blvd., Uniondale, New York 11553.

In the interim, the Nassau County Health Department has granted the Bethpage Water District a temporary chlorine waiver until a final decision is made regarding whether or not the district will in fact begin adding chlorine to the drinking water.

## Annual Water Commissioner Election

On Monday, May 5, those who are served by the Bethpage Water District and registered to vote will be able to elect an individual to serve a three-year term on the Bethpage Water District Board of Commissioners. Voting will take place at Bethpage Fire District Headquarters on Broadway in Bethpage from 6 to 9 p.m.

The Bethpage Water board is comprised of three elected members, each of whom resides in the district's service area and commits to fulfilling a three-year term. Each year, on the first Monday in May, one commissioner seat is up for election.

The board works together to oversee the water district's annual operating budget, which includes making the financial and business decisions necessary to manage the public utility in the best interest of the community. The funds are used mainly to maintain and improve the water district's infra-



structure and distribution system. Additionally, they cover electric fees, staffing, administrative, insurance premiums and legal costs.

"The bottom line is that, all the money collected by the Bethpage Water District is returned to our consumers in the form of good service and a quality product," explained Water Commissioner

and Chairman William Ellinger.

"All who are registered to vote are encouraged to exercise their American right to vote by electing the individual who they believe will best represent the community's

interests regarding public drinking water," Ellinger added. "The public is reminded that, if Nassau County's elected officials succeed with their attempt to consolidate area water suppliers, the annual election for water commissioner will likely become a thing of the past."

### Reminder

#### Bethpage Water District Commissioner Election

Monday, May 5, 2008, 6 to 9 p.m.

Bethpage Fire District Headquarters  
Broadway, Bethpage, NY

BETHPAGE WATER DISTRICT

# Filtration Plant in Development



The resin treatment plant being developed at the Bethpage Water District's Plainview Road well site is expected to be operational before the summer season heats up.

The Bethpage Water District, in a cooperative municipal effort by four area public water suppliers, previously completed a pilot testing program to assess and address one of the newest water quality concerns in this marketplace — perchlorate.

As a result, in its commitment to providing consumers with drinking water that meets strict government standards, the water utility is currently installing a modern resin filtration treatment plant at its Plainview Road facility. In the simplest terms, as the water passes through the resin material, perchlorate will be removed before the drinking water enters the distribution system.

“Although there have been no violations in Bethpage, the district is beginning to detect very low concentrations of the contaminant, which can be present in fertilizer, rocket fuel and fireworks,” explained Bethpage Water Commissioner John Sullivan. “It is for this reason that we have taken the initiative and made the decision to stay ahead of the curve on this issue, which is affecting many water suppliers throughout Long Island.”

As the U.S. EPA reviews the public health effects of perchlorate in drinking water, the NY State Department of Health has set an interim permissible level of 18 parts-per-billion for the chemical. This means that a public water supply well would have to be taken out of service if concentrations exceeded that level.

## Watering Regulations Mandatory

The use of water for irrigation purposes for lawns, shrubs, trees, plants and vegetation of any type is regulated by hours set forth by the County of Nassau (Ordinance # 248-A-1987 adopted June 8, 1987).

### All water sprinkling is prohibited from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

- 1 Even numbered addresses** and those **without addresses** may be watered on even-numbered days during the permitted hours.
- 2 Addresses with odd numbers** may be watered on odd-numbered days during hours permitted.

These rules apply to automatic and time-controlled sprinkler systems as well as manually operated hose sprinkling. Although we do not like to restrict the use of water, we do want to stop the waste of this valuable natural resource. Use only what you need. Water conservation is a must.

#### Other water-saving reminders:

- Do not use a hose for flushing driveways, sidewalks and streets.
- Use a nozzle that is normally self-closing on all hoses used for other purposes.
- Do not water in the rain.

Produced by Ryan & Ryan PR, Inc., Farmingdale, NY 11735

## THE BETHPAGE WATER DISTRICT NEWSLETTER WATER CONNECTION

### Bethpage Water District

25 Adams Avenue  
Bethpage, NY 11714  
(516) 931-0093  
(516) 931-0068 – fax  
[www.bethpagewater.org](http://www.bethpagewater.org)

### BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

William J. Ellinger, *Chairman*  
John R. Sullivan  
Gary S. Bretton

### Superintendent

Andrew Musgrave

PRE-SORTED  
STANDARD  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit #50  
Bethpage, NY