

WEST NECK

Newsletter #14

Board Members

Lisa Shaw, Ann Dunbar,
Lori Beard Raymond,
Andreas Hommert



WATER DISTRICT

July 2010

General Questions

Judy Meringer and Barbara Bloom
at 749-0291

Emergencies

John Hallman, Plant Operator
749-0195

Summer 2010 Newsletter

Rules and Regulations

The Board has just completed a review of the Rules and regulations that govern the operation of the West Neck Water District. Corrections and additions have been made and the final version is available from Judy at Town Hall as well as on the Town web site (see below.). Many of the changes are minor or simple clarification but it is important that all customers be aware of the content and so to avoid problems that occur when they are violated.

Spring Rains

Although service was not affected, West Neck Water was impacted by the floods that wreaked havoc with parts of Shelter Island. The pit in the District's main treatment building was flooded and there was damage to the two pumps, which will have to be replaced. The sump pump that had been installed was clogged with sand. It could not function properly and, as a result, the pit was filled with water. The water table is quite high at this time of year and Mr. Hallman is dealing with it as best he can. Fortunately, the situation has not affected the wells which supply most of your water.

Recent Shut-off

The District had its own "Gulf crisis" the early Friday prior to the start of the Memorial Day weekend. When John Hallman arrived at the pump house at 6:30 that morning, he learned there was no pressure on one of the primary pumps resulting in no water delivery. The discovery had been made even earlier by Board members Lori Raymond and Lisa Shaw, both at home. Soon after, many customers also found they had no water.

It was not possible to quickly identify the cause of the problem but Hallman and the District plumber, Will Anderson, went to work immediately and water service was soon restored. As required, the Suffolk County Health Dept. was notified and they informed Mr. Hallman late Friday afternoon that water samples would have to be taken to ensure there was no contamination. Until those tests were complete, a "boil water" notice had to be delivered to all customers. Had we had e-mail addresses for everyone, this could have been done Friday evening. Not having those, Board members canvassed the District door to door on Saturday morning.

Because New York State required its own tests, there was no final judgment on the safety of the water until a second set of samples had been evaluated. Completed by mid-day on Sunday, customers were notified that the water was safe to drink.



Shut-off Follow-up

As noted above, this situation underscored the importance of the District having telephone numbers and e-mail (if available) for all customers, including tenants in rental properties. Had those been available, notices could have been sent Friday night and undue concern on the part of some customers could have been avoided. Because it was not possible to contact everyone on Friday, customers continued to drink the water during the evening and into the next morning. This was especially worrisome for families with young children and elderly persons. That it was, in the end, a false alarm does not alter the importance of being able to reach all customers quickly.

Because Board members did go door-to-door, the District now has names and phones that it did not have before. But tenants move and other changes may occur; only you know when this happens so we cannot stress too strongly the importance of keeping District records current. Please be sure we have your phone numbers and e-mail addresses.

Pumps and Other Attachments

In going door-to-door, Board members learned that some customers have added pumps, holding tanks and other attachments to their service. We have no objection to that but it is critical that Mr. Hallman know and inspect what has been installed. In one case over the Memorial Day weekend, a pump which did not have a low pressure cut-off switch, evidently burned out when the water pressure dropped in the middle of the night. The situation could have been avoided had Mr. Hallman been involved in the installation.

New Board Member

We are pleased to inform you that Andreas Hommert has joined the Board as its fifth member. The Hommert family rented for a number of years before purchasing their home on West Neck Road. They now live full-time on Shelter Island and Mr. Hommert looks forward to working on behalf of all District customers.

Into the 21st Century!

The West Neck Water District is joining the Shelter Island Town web site. When complete, we will post the Rules and Regulations on it, the Application for Service and the winter and summer Newsletters.

Large Type Billing

Large type bills are now available to all customers upon request. If you would like to receive your bills in large type, just telephone Barbara at 749-0291 or stop by her desk at Town Hall. She will be sure that all subsequent billings come to you in large type format.

Board Meetings

Remember that the Board meets quarterly on the last Saturday of the month following end of the previous quarter. Up-coming meetings are July 31 and October 30 at Town Hall. Customers are welcome to attend the first half hour at 9:00 am if they have questions or concerns.