



Sewer Works

Newsletter of the Hull Sewer Department Spring 2024

Operations Message

Hull is not unlike many communities with older sewer systems. We continually hear from counterparts in other regions of the country that they also experience similar issues of pipe collapses, backups, sanitary sewer overflows and other unexpected occurrences that change our focus to deal with the emergency. While we understand many of these emergencies are unavoidable, we are using different approaches than used in the past to minimize them from happening. We are currently underway with an extensive sewer cleaning and inspection program covering over 90,000 feet (about 40%) of sewer in our system. In advance of this work, acoustic technology is being done to identify and target sewers that need cleaning rather than cleaning every sewer prior to inspection. This will save considerable time and money that can be better used where pipe rehabilitation is indicated based on the inspections. More importantly, it is expected that we will identify any problems before they turn into blockage or an emergency repair.



Acoustic monitoring from manhole
to assess if sewer needs cleaning

As part of the recently approved Asset Management Grant from MassDEP, we will extend the sewer inspection program in the older portions of our system to provide better mapping and information of these sewers and services. Some of this work may require cooperation from property owners to access the sewers from inside their house. This will provide the benefit to understand where those services are located and indicate the condition of the service. Typically, there are more service connections than the mainline in any system and may be the source of excess infiltration and inflow into our system. So, it becomes a benefit for both the Town and the property owner to locate and identify these conditions.

By being creative, finding available sources of funding, and using newer technologies to inspect and map our system, we expect to gain better knowledge and information on the system with a proactive approach.

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There is a seat open on the Sewer Commission. The primary functions of the Commission are rate setting and policy development and review. The only requirements to be on the Commission are to have an interest in our operations, be open-minded and fair, and available for quarterly meetings. Letters of interest should be sent to the Town Clerk, Lori West at lwest@town.hull.ma.us. Members of the Sewer Commission are appointed by the Select Board. Please call the Sewer Department if you have any questions or would like more information.



Garden Hoses

Check your garden hoses for leaks at its connection to the spigot. If it leaks while you run your hose, replace the nylon or rubber hose washer and ensure a tight connection to the spigot using pipe tape and a wrench.

Outdoor Leaks

If you have an in-ground irrigation system, check it each spring before use to make sure it wasn't damaged by frost or freezing. An irrigation system that has a leak 1/32nd of an inch in diameter (about the thickness of a dime) can waste about 6,300 gallons of water per month. Call a professional who will not only help you detect and correct leaks in the system, but also maximize its efficiency.

Projects:

1. **Influent Process and Control Building Upgrades Project:** Our largest project is well underway. In early April, some electrical equipment was installed in the new electrical room on the second floor of the plant. Unfortunately, due to extended lead time, the main electrical motor control panel and switch gear is now scheduled for a June delivery. The Influent Project is funded by FEMA, MassDEP, and the bonding approved at the June 2020 Town Meeting. Project completion is expected in late 2024.

Electrical panels were delivered and installed in the new electrical room by removing corner windows in the control building.



2. **Ocean Outfall Rehabilitation Project:** The outfall diffusers have been extended and the pipeline has been cleaned of debris. An inspection of the outfall is being scheduled before the project can be closed out. This project was funded by an ARPA grant.
3. **Pump Station 9 Replacement Project:** A Notice to Proceed (NTP) was issued to D & C Construction in February 2024. Equipment submittals and work plans for early work activities and long lead time items are in process. The project is planned to start in the summer of 2024 with the completion date expected in 2025. This project is partially funded by a \$2M Federal Stimulus Grant and a portion of the Suez/United Water legal settlement funds.
4. **Sewer Asset Management Program:** The Town of Hull has been approved for a \$250,000 grant through MassDEP to help inventory, map, and assess the condition of sewer laterals and mains throughout Hull. We are working with MassDEP on the administrative grant process and hope to start this program in the summer of 2024.
5. **Coastal Resiliency Berm Project:** This project will create a combination of vegetated earthen berms and gravity walls around the wastewater facility to provide a flood barrier protecting the plant. FEMA funding approval is pending for this project with the expectation of grant approval this year.

Water Use and Your Sewer Bill

Your sewer bill is based on your water usage. Water is provided by the Town of Hingham through Weir River Water System (WRWS). WRWS conducts quarterly water readings and then bills owners for their water usage. After their billing, they send the water readings to the Hull Sewer Department. This scheduling is why sewer bills are sent out up to 3 months after the water reading the sewer bill is based on.

When you do receive your bill from Weir River Water, look it over carefully. Is your reading an estimated or actual read? Does your water usage appear high? Do you have a reading at all? If you have any questions about the water bill, call WRWS at 877-253-6665. Find out if you have a problem with your water meter, a water leak, or other issues before the reading is sent to the Sewer Department for your sewer billing. It is harder to correct an issue with your water reading after it has been processed by both utilities.

How Do You Use Your Water??

HOUSEHOLD WATER USE

