



# Sewer Works

Newsletter of the Hull Sewer Department  
Winter 2021

## Operations Message

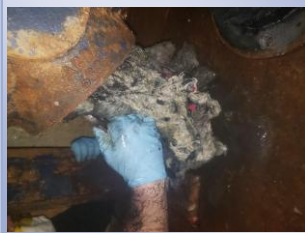
COVID19 still preoccupies most of our days, and we all have adjusted to our new routines and approaches to our lives. This issue of our Newsletter is focused on this new reality. We continue to see increased use of wipes and other debris thrown down toilets that either clog individual services lines, grinder pumps in those who have them, clogged sewers, or clogged pumps at any of our remote pump stations or any number of pumps at the treatment facility. This is an added burden on our operations staff and contractors who must either manually clean the pumps or use heavy equipment and sometimes excavation to clear any blockages. This is not a new problem with us; rather it is a world-wide issue, now compounded by more people staying at home.

Disposable wipes may say they are "flushable"-and they will flush down the toilet. Once in the house plumbing, they can get bound up and clog your pipes creating a potential blockage or sewage backup into your home: we have seen this happen many times! The homeowner is then responsible for any expenses to clear the blockage. If the wipes get into the street sewer, there they can accumulate with other debris in the system and create a blockage that can then backup the sewer which could affect many homes. Large trucks using high pressure water and vacuum hoses are used to clear those blockages at our expense and which can result in higher sewer user fees. Lastly, if the wipes make their way through the sewer system, many times they get stuck in any number of pumps in the collection or treatment system. Operations staff typically manually pulls apart and cleans debris from these pumps sometimes two to three times a day. This is not a pleasant job and takes three people to perform such service-not a good use of our time but essential in order to keep the operation working.

So, I ask, if you use wipes, please discard them in the trash, not the toilet. Think about the person who needs to clean the pump when it gets clogged. We all do our part by staying apart-now do your part by not disposing of wipes down the toilet

**John J. Struzziery, P.E.,**  
**Director of Wastewater**  
**Operations**

Manually cleaning a clogged pump



### Hull Sewer Department COVID-19 Protocol:

The Sewer Department is open during normal business hours during the COVID-19 pandemic however please note that our office and treatment facility currently remains CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC. To contact the Sewer Department please use:

Office Phone: 781-925-1207  
Email: [sewer@town.hull.ma.us](mailto:sewer@town.hull.ma.us)

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### Salute to Lou Collins:

Recently, Lou Collins retired from the Permanent Sewer Commission after serving 20 years in the volunteer position. In recent years, Lou served as Vice Chair of the Commission. Lou brought a different perspective in that he not only worked as an operator of a wastewater treatment facility, he also worked at the Hull facility in the past. He served the Commission and the Town well and we thank him for his years of service and dedication to this position!

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Check the status of construction projects and updates on our web page  
<https://www.town.hull.ma.us/sewer-department>



Weekly project updates on the ongoing construction projects are on our Facebook page-check us out and Like us.

### Grants Update:

- CZM Coastal Resiliency Design: This project is focused on protective measures to protect the treatment facility from increased flooding associated with predicted climate change and sea level. The plan includes a vegetative earthen berm around the perimeter of our property along with other types of flood barriers that can be used during major events to keep any flood water from impacting the site. As the design unfolds, permitting and public outreach efforts are planned
- FEMA: A grant in the amount of \$414,000 has been received to design and construct a major electrical retrofit of the essential electrical components to the second floor of the control building to maintain treatment system functionality during a major storm event. Design will be starting shortly with construction expected in late this year/next year.

**Projects Update:** Our focus for the next few years is primarily in making upgrades at the wastewater treatment facility based on the planning that has been done over the past four years. Many projects are now in motion in various stages of planning, design and construction. Since work is primarily within the treatment facility fenced area, most of what we are doing may go unnoticed, unlike the sewer and road work that was very prominent to most everyone.

- Headworks and pump station concrete repairs project is substantially complete and will be done by the end of February.
- Pump Station 5 (Draper Avenue) pump replacement and improvements of our effluent pump system at the treatment facility are underway and expected to be complete by April.
- HVAC: Project is expected to be bid in the Spring and constructed late this year into next and will provide a new mechanical room on the second floor of the Control Building in addition to HVAC replacements throughout the building.
- Plant Upgrade: project is in early design and should be ready for construction late this year or early next. Work will consist of replacing the influent pumps, the grit handling system, secondary clarifiers and improvements in the Control Building.
- Electrical Retrofit project will relocate essential electrical components to the second floor of the Control Building and power critical equipment in the event of a major event to provide treatment functionality.
- Sewer collection improvements are being planned and some work may be done later this year.
- Effluent pump room improvements will replace valves that are presently inoperable



The Effluent Pump Room valves are severely corroded and in need of replacement



**How we determine your sewer bill:** Sewer bills are issued quarterly (4 times a year- Feb., May, Aug. & Nov.) and are based on the amount of water you use. The water usage is provided to the Sewer Department by the Weir River Water System/Suez on a quarterly basis and is based off your water meter reading of actual water used, recorded or in rare cases estimated by the water company. Water is measured in units of CCF (centum) (hundred cubic feet). One CCF is approximately 750 gallons of water. In addition to the usage portion of the bill, there is a Base Fee of \$15 per month.

**Wasting water not only increases your water bill, but also increases your sewer bill.** It is very important that you periodically check for leaks in your water system. Toilets are usually the biggest source of water use and a quick way to check for a toilet leak is to lift and remove the top of the tank, place a few drops of non staining food coloring in the tank to give it a good color, let sit for 30 minutes – do not flush-. If the color shows up in the bowl, it means you have a leak which can normally be repaired by cleaning or replacing the flush valve of flapper at the bottom of the tank.