

## WATER

**You Can Rely on Us!** 2014 Marks the 110th Year Norwich Public Utilities has been providing reliable utility services to Norwich. Throughout the year in each issue of Community Matters we will be showcasing the various services that we provide to our community

Norwich residents are fortunate to enjoy an abundant municipal water supply. We have two primary sources of water -- The Charles W. Solomon Water Treatment Plant which draws water from the Deep River Reservoir located in Colchester, and the second source is the Stony Brook Reservoir and Treatment facility located in Montville. There is also a well located in the Yantic area of Norwich to serve as a back up supply in case of unexpected events, such as a water main break.

Getting the water from the reservoirs to the faucet is no small task. More than 1.6 billion gallons of water is consumed by NPU water customers each year. **That is approximately 4.5 million gallons of water per day, transported through a 190-mile network of water mains!**

It takes a lot of work to get 4.5 million gallons of water treated and delivered to Norwich homes and businesses each and every day. Although our reservoirs are protected (meaning we continually monitor these water supplies, and adjacent lands to prevent contamination), raw water is far from safe to drink. The contaminants found in natural water can include microbes (viruses and bacteria), inorganic materials (salts and metals), pesticides and herbicides, and organic chemicals (from storm



*Aerial photo of the Deep River Reservoir*

water runoff). Our job is to treat and test the water, ensuring that what you get from your tap meets or exceeds all state and federal standards.

Each year, hundreds of water samples are gathered from a variety of sources to test for the presence of any harmful substances. The results of these tests are provided in the annual water quality report, which is made available by June of the following year. This report can be downloaded from NPU's website.

A staff of 10 technicians and mechanics ensure that the water sources remain protected, the treatment facilities operate efficiently and effectively, and that all state and federal standards with regard to water quality are consistently met.

Maintaining a municipal water system is a constant process. The raw water supply, continually subject to environmental changes, must be consistently monitored. Equipment must be regularly maintained and improved to ensure the water is treated properly and is delivered to our customers at the turn of a faucet handle. Diligent testing must be done to ensure that every drop of water is healthy and safe. Continuous strategic planning is also necessary to keep our water supplies abundant and protected for generations to come.

Water is one of our most valuable natural resources and we take our stewardship of this resource very seriously. We are proud to deliver clean, healthy water to the Norwich Community each and every day.

### History of the Water Department

The history of Norwich's municipal water system dates back to the mid-1860s. In 1867, the City began surveying property that would become the City's first public reservoir. Prior to this, citizens relied on wells, small aqueducts, springs and rooftop cisterns for drinking water. What was lacking was a municipal water source with enough water pressure for fire fighting. The Fairview Reservoir, as it would become named, began as a watershed (an area of land where all of the water that is under it or drains off of it goes

*See History, continued on page 2*

All electric bills on or after February 1, 2014 will reflect a change in the wholesale cost of electricity. The Purchased Power Adjustment (PPA) will increase by approximately 6.1%. For the average residential customer using 750 kWh per month, this is an increase of about \$7.33 per month.

History, cont'd from pg. 1

into the same place) located on property between Scotland Road and Canterbury Turnpike. Between 300-400 men, with about 80 teams of horses cleared the reservoir bed of brush, stumps, soil, roots, and



Postcard showcasing the Fairview Reservoir, circa 1900

other natural materials. Ultimately over 20,000 stumps and more than 300,000 cart loads of material were removed from the location. The construction was completed in October 1868 and the reservoir was full by mid-January 1870.

By the end of the nineteenth century it was obvious that the Fairview Reservoir was insufficient. The Water Commission began searching for additional water supplies that would be capable of meeting the needs of the City residents. At first this included looking at ways to increase the water refill rate of the Fairview Reservoir, by enlarging the area or piping water from Meadowbrook (Bog Meadow) to Fairview. It was ultimately decided that the best course of action was to build new reservoirs rather than expanding the existing sources.

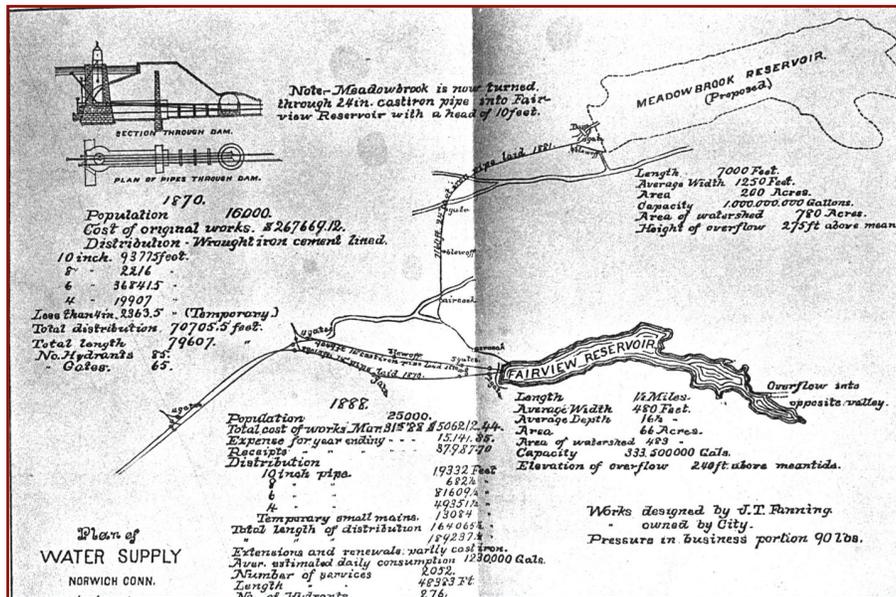
In 1911-1912, the Stony Brook Reservoir was constructed in Montville. This increased the City's water supply yield by about 505 million gallons. By 1930 it was necessary to expand the water supply again, resulting in the construction of the Deep River Reservoir and an additional 1.4 million gallons of water.

The three reservoirs were used at various times of the year, depending on the season and the amount of water held at each reservoir. Ultimately the Fairview Reservoir was removed from the water distribution system, as it failed to refill at a rate necessary to meet the community's needs.

Although it is no longer used as an active municipal water supply, Fairview Reservoir is off-limits for public use or recreational purposes. It remains a protected water source in the event that water is required for emergency purposes. Bog Meadow Reservoir is also maintained as an emergency water supply, however a decades-old agreement remains in place allowing members of the Norwich Fish and Game club the rights to use that property.

Today, the Deep River and Stony Brook Reservoirs remain the main sources of water supply for the Norwich community, as well as some areas in surrounding towns. The actions taken 100 years ago have had a lasting impact on Norwich, allowing us to have an abundance of clean, healthy water for drinking, cooking, bathing, fire fighting, and whatever else we need it for.

Prior to 1954, the City's municipal water system was governed by a Water Commission. In 1954, the water department merged with the Norwich Gas and Electric department, forming the City of Norwich Department of Public Utilities. Since then, the Board of Public Utilities Commissioners have been responsible for municipal oversight of the water division.



Plan of Water Supply, circa 1888

We are thankful that those in charge of the water division a century ago had the forethought to plan for the needs of the community for decades to come. Norwich continues to benefit from their actions every day. We take pride in maintaining these valuable resources for the generations to come.

Interested in converting your home to natural gas? Help us plan where to expand gas service in Norwich.

Visit [www.energizenorwich.com](http://www.energizenorwich.com) for more information.

By now we hope you have heard of *Energize Norwich* -- NPU's gas expansion program. For the last several years NPU has been actively expanding natural gas service to homeowners throughout Norwich. We are continuing this project in 2014.

Although the construction season is over, it's not too late to let us know you want natural gas at your home! Early in 2014 is when we start planning projects for this year's construction season, and we want to hear from all homeowners who want natural gas brought to their property. The more interest we get from an area, the more likely we are to bring natural gas to that neighborhood.

Already have natural gas on your street? Call us to see if we can easily install a gas service to your home in 2014.

Don't wait until the planning is complete! Call Katie at 860-823-4514 and tell her you want natural gas at your home.

## Protect Yourself From Scams

Norwich Public Utilities, and utility companies in general, are constantly being 'used' by thieves as a means to set up scams as a way to steal from people. We regularly receive calls from customers who are upset because they were called by someone claiming to be a NPU employee and were told that their account was overdue. The customer is told they need to provide a credit card over the phone, or provide another means of payment to avoid their service being terminated. **THIS IS A SCAM!**

To avoid being a victim of a scam, know what is real and what is not:

1. Know your utility account standing. If you know your account is in good standing, you will know that any claims otherwise are false.
2. Neither NPU staff, nor any collection agency contracted by us, will ever call customers asking for payment over the phone. While we do accept payment over the phone, this is done when the customer generates the call to us. We have ways to verify the customer's identity. Occasionally NPU will place automated (recorded) calls to customers as a courtesy reminder.



**Don't take our word on it! Here's what some of our customers have to say:**

**"We are pleased that we made the decision and look forward to the saving in our heating bills." - Mr. & Mrs. D. Leone**

**"We love natural gas. It's clean and quiet and we don't have to worry about it." - Mr. F. Falcone**

**"It's the best thing we ever did." - Mr. P. Blanchard**

**"My wife and I moved to Norwich from another town where we had natural gas.... Our experience with natural gas has been excellent. We are looking forward to having natural gas come to our neighborhood." - Mr. & Mrs. Van Haelen**

3. Set up a unique password for your account. This will protect you in the event you receive a call. Ask for the password - if the caller cannot provide it you know you are not speaking to a legitimate NPU representative. Having a password will also help NPU verify identity on your account if you contact us.
4. Ask for the name of who you are speaking with. Our representatives will always provide their name. If you are doubtful that the call is legitimate, tell the person you are going to hang up and will call them right back. Call NPU at 860-887-2555 and ask to speak to that person. Chances are if the caller is a fraud, they will hang up once you start asking questions.
5. If someone claiming to be a utility employee tries to enter your home, **always ask for identification first.** All NPU employees, as well as contractors working for NPU, carry identification badges. You can always call us at 860-887-2555 to verify their identity and the reason for being at your home. Also, look for a NPU vehicle nearby.

Let common sense prevail - when in doubt, call us at 860-887-2555. Someone is always available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to take your call. If you think you have been a victim of a scam, report it immediately to the Norwich Police Department.

# Communitycalendar

NORWICH PUBLIC UTILITIES

January 2014

## Ongoing - 1st Friday of each month

Downtown Norwich comes alive with arts and entertainment every first Friday of the month! View original art at several galleries and enjoy a musical or theater production in our theaters. Call 860-887-2789 for more information.

## Theaters and Museums

**The Leffingwell House Museum** - One of the finest restored examples of New England Colonial architecture, the Leffingwell Museum was the home of revolutionary patriot, merchant, and industrialist Christopher Leffingwell. Visitors to this living museum catch a glimpse of early 18th century life. The house is filled with a fascinating assortment of pieces from each generation. Located at 348 Washington Street. Visit [leffingwellhousemuseum.org](http://leffingwellhousemuseum.org) for days and hours of operation.

**The J. F. Slater Memorial Museum**, also known as Slater Memorial Museum, is a historic building and an art museum located on the Norwich Free Academy campus, 305 Broadway. Museum information can be found on the NFA website, [norwichfreeacademy.com](http://norwichfreeacademy.com).

**The Norwich Arts Center Gallery**, 60 Broadway, Norwich. Gallery hours: Wednesday - Saturday 12-4 PM. For more information and to view the event calendar visit [norwicharts.org](http://norwicharts.org) or call 860-887-2789.

**The Spirit of Broadway Theater** - Visit [www.spiritofbroadway.org](http://www.spiritofbroadway.org) for more information and to see the entire 2014 production schedule.

**Norwich Community Cinema** - Enjoy community cinema at it's best. The Norwich Community Cinema (NCC) hosts a different thought provoking, entertaining and informative film at the Donald Oat Theater, 60 Broadway. Call 860-887-2789 or visit [www.norwichcinema.org](http://www.norwichcinema.org) for more information.

## Snow Removal From Gas Meters

Norwich Public Utilities reminds customers to be aware of some important safety tips regarding their natural gas meters. It is important to keep the area around the meter free from snow. Fire departments and other emergency response agency personnel must have access to gas meters in case of an emergency shut-off situation. NPU Meter Readers also need access to the meters if customers want to avoid an estimated bill.

When removing snow around gas meters:

- 1) Make sure you know the exact location of your meter before you begin to remove snow.
- 2) Maintain a safe distance between gas meters and shovels, snow blowers, and other equipment while shoveling.
- 3) NEVER push snow against gas meters, gas piping, or appliance vents (make sure all vents are free of snow or other obstructions).
- 4) NEVER pile snow on top of gas meters, gas piping, or appliance vents.

All natural gas customers should be aware that gas meters that are buried in deep snow or damaged by snow removal equipment could begin to leak. Gas meter leaks are a potentially hazardous situation.

Customers are encouraged to report any problems with their meters to NPU's gas emergency line at **860-887-7207**. If there is a natural gas odor present, exit the premises and call 911 right away (natural gas has a rotten egg-like odor).



This bulletin is printed on paper with 50% post-consumer fiber, and it costs about 10 cents to print. Proudly printed in Norwich.

## Here to Serve You

Visit our web site for more information:  
[www.norwichpublicutilities.com](http://www.norwichpublicutilities.com)

Please call, fax or email us your questions, comments and suggestions.  
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TEL: 860-887-2555 Fax: 860-823-4172 Email: [communitymatters@npumail.com](mailto:communitymatters@npumail.com)