

water rings

July - September 2011

Volume 6, No. 3

Fire Hydrant Safety

The North Wales Water Authority is responsible for almost 2,300 fire hydrants located throughout our service area. These hydrants are located alongside major roadways, on streets in neighborhoods and some are even located in public parking lots.

No one other than an employee of the North Wales Water Authority is authorized to service one of our hydrants. If you see suspicious activity occurring at one of our hydrants, please call our office immediately at 215-699-4836. If you call when our office is closed, please leave a message with our answering service.

Our aggressive maintenance program makes it unnecessary for businesses or homeowner groups to hire someone to maintain hydrants on their property or in their community. In rare cases a hydrant in a private community may be privately owned and in that case would need to be serviced by an independent hydrant contractor. Please call us if you have any question about hydrant ownership in your area.

Painting is an important part of our annual hydrant maintenance. The bodies of our hydrants are painted silver and the caps and bonnets are painted different colors to indicate the gallon per minute flow of water that will flow from that particular hydrant. This is critical information for firefighters responding to a fire call. For this reason, no one other than an NWWA employee is authorized to paint one of our hydrants.

NWWA employees are easy to identify. In almost all cases, employees travel in a clearly marked Authority vehicle. The majority of our trucks are white and have either the Water Wizard or a NWWA logo on them.

All our inspection, metering and service crew employees would be in uniform and would be wearing a shirt with the NWWA logo on it. If there's ever a question, ask to see their employee ID. All employees carry Authority-issued photo ID cards

Sump Pumps & Downspouts

Did you know that your sump pump or downspout should not be connected to the sanitary sewer? You might think that adding "clean" water to the sanitary system is a help, but this inflow actually creates problems.

Inflow creates an extra water burden on the sanitary sewer system and when the system is overloaded (as happens during heavy rainfall), it can back up into our streets, buildings and potentially your basement. Inflow also creates

higher sewer bills because we are all paying for the unnecessary pumping and treatment of clean water.

Please check to make sure that your sump pump and downspouts are properly connected. If you need to make adjustments, remember to never direct water onto a street, alley, right of way, easement or neighboring property. Contact your municipality for specific direction.

Payment Arrangements

We never want one of our customers to have their water shut off. If your family is experiencing difficult financial times we want to assist you if we can. We will be happy to discuss a payment

schedule that makes sense for you. Please contact us at 215-699-4836 or by email at wizard@nwwater.com for more information.



NWWA

North Wales Water Authority

PO Box 1339
200 West Walnut Street
North Wales, PA 19454-0339
215-699-4836
www.nwwater.com

This Issue

Hydrant Safety 1
Sump Pump Connections
Payment Arrangements

Know Your Water - 2
Distribution
Q & A - Marcellus Shale



Water Rings is printed on 100% recycled paper using soy-based ink.

Know Your Water - Source to Tap

In the two previous issues of Water Rings we discussed the sources of water in the NWWA system and our treatment processes. You can find those issues online at www.nwwater.com/go/water_rings or call our office to have them mailed to you.

In this issue you'll learn about our distribution system and how water gets from our treatment plant to your home.

Distribution

The water distribution system is the essential link between the water supply source and the consumer. It is not just the main that runs down your street - the water distribution system is a large network of storage tanks, valves, pumps, and pipes that transport finished water from Forest Park Water to our consumers.

The North Wales Water Authority service area covers approximately 50 square miles and includes 11 municipalities. Almost 400 miles of water mains deliver approximately 3.5 billion gallons of water per year to almost 25,000 residential and commercial customers. The water mains vary in size from 4 inches to 36 inches in diameter. There are 8 storage tanks, 11 transfer stations, 8,254 valves, and 2,270 fire hydrants that complete our distribution network.

Employee knowledge of the distribution system and expertise in maintenance and repair helps ensure we deliver safe, high-quality water to our customers. Each of our 20 distribution system employees is a certified Water Operator.

Water Pressure

NWWA's distribution system is a gravity system. This means that the Authority pumps water from individual sources into the distribution system to maintain adequate levels in our storage tanks. The water pressure experienced at any one location within our system is solely determined by the geographic location of that specific area.

The Authority does not "boost" the pressure in any area of the system by pumps, nor does it "reduce" the pressure in any area of the system by valving. Water pressure is strictly a function of how many feet, measured in vertical distance, a property is located relative to the storage facility serving it. The majority of low pressure problems are actually created within the individual home or business. Visit our website at www.nwwater.com/go/pressure for more information.



Q: *I've heard a lot about Marcellus Shale drilling. Is there a chance our drinking water could be affected?*

A: Although the Marcellus Shale formation is relatively far away from the Authority's service area and supplies, the need to remain vigilant and protect our water resources is of utmost importance. Radiological contamination is of concern, as are the thousands of other potential toxins and carcinogens that wastewater from the drilling process may contain.

Our Forest Park Water Treatment Plant is part of the Point Pleasant Diversion Project which utilizes water from the Delaware River. Water from the Delaware is pumped from Point Pleasant to the Bradshaw Reservoir, in Plumstead Township. Water is then released from the Bradshaw into the North Branch of the Neshaminy Creek and flows through Lake Galina, at Peace Valley Park. Intakes for the treatment plant are located a mile or so below the lake. Water quality on the North Branch is exceptional, but could possibly be impacted by any releases that occur on the Delaware River or throughout the watershed.

Our goal is that water quality in the Delaware River and the North Branch of the Neshaminy Creek is never compromised by gas drilling, waste water discharges or anything else. The overall environmental health of the watershed and the river, in particular, is a major concern and an ongoing challenge. This is why the Authority supports organizations such as the North Branch Watershed Association, Water Resources Association of the Delaware River and the Delaware Riverkeeper Network. We continually work and stay involved with the regulatory agencies such as the Delaware River Basin Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. Drinking water is always less complicated and less costly to treat if the source water is of high quality.

**Water Rings is published Quarterly to Serve Our Customers in:
North Wales Borough and Doylestown, Horsham, Lower Gwynedd,
Montgomery, New Britain, Upper Dublin, Upper Gwynedd,
Warminster, Warrington and Whitpain Townships.**