

Watts & Drops

Newsletter of the Littleton Electric Light and Water Departments

August 2020

Significant Drought Limits Watering

In early August, state officials declared Massachusetts in the grips of a Level 2 significant drought after three months of limited rainfall and hotter-than-normal temperatures in July and August.

LELWD is asking customers to conserve whenever using water indoors and out. LELWD has instituted a water restriction on outdoor watering. Only hand watering is permitted outdoors between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m.

Air Purifier Installed at LELWD Building

LELWD's offices reopened in July with an air purifier installed in the HVAC system. Designed to solve sick building syndrome, the purifier is effective in eliminating up to 99 percent of viruses, bacteria and mold in the air, according to the manufacturer.

LELWD installed the system in response to the coronavirus pandemic. It is a part of its overall strategy, including masks, gloves and hand sanitizer, to enable employees to safely return to work. LELWD employees are practicing social distancing and customers are encouraged to call 978-540-2222 or visit lelwd.com for information, assistance and payment options.

Tell Us About Your Future Car

LELWD is surveying customers about their plans for future car purchases. As LELWD seeks to meet customer needs, the survey will assist in understanding customer plans and preferences in purchasing vehicles. The survey, at lelwd.com/survey, takes less than two minutes to complete and qualifies the customer for a chance to win a \$50 Amazon gift card.

Sewer Working Group Assessing Environmental & Economic Needs

The Sewer Working Group is assessing areas of Littleton that could benefit from a sewer system. The study will look, in part, at areas with groundwater pollution from septic systems and limited economic development due to lack of sewer.

It will also include reviewing sewer technology options, future needs, treatment plant siting, possible regional solutions, and a financial analysis.

The 12-member Sewer Working Group, appointed by the Board of Water Commissioners, includes officials from interested town departments and residents. The sewer group has used data from the Planning Board, Conservation Commission and Board of Health.

Working with engineering firm CDM Smith,

the group plans to make a recommendation to Fall Town Meeting. The 2019 Fall Town Meeting transferred the sewer project from the Select Board to the Board of Water Commissioners.

Early findings by the sewer group:

- The sewer discharge site behind the high school is large enough to support an estimated 270,000 gallon per day system.
- The Littleton Common and Great Road in the Beaver Brook watershed would benefit both economically and environmentally from a sewer.

The Sewer Working Group's progress is the subject of an August 13th video edition of Watts & Drops on LCTV. The program is available on-demand at lelwd.com/sewer-department.

Water Treatment Plant Project Gearing Up

The Littleton Planning Board recently approved LELWD's plan to construct a water treatment plant on Whitcomb Avenue behind the VFW Post. LELWD expects to go out to bid on the construction this fall with a groundbreaking next spring.

Meanwhile, Littleton's home-rule petition enabling LELWD to use the vacant lot for a water treatment facility passed the House of Representatives in late July and awaits final action by the Senate before going to the governor for his signature. The legislation resolves LELWD's right to use its land for water system purposes.

While the water treatment plant was initially designed to remove iron and manganese, the discovery of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the



water supply last summer gives this project a greater urgency. PFAS are a family of chemical compounds known for their resistance to breaking down in the environment.

The plan calls for raw water from the Spectacle Pond and Whitcomb Ave. wells to be treated at the new plant prior to distribution. Currently, LELWD water meets state standards, but doing so has reduced the available water supply.



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Crews Start Installing New Electric Meters

LELWD has started installing new electric meters for all customers, replacing the outdated automated meter reading system.

Meter replacements require a quick power outage, and staff will attempt to notify people at the location prior to making the switch. To receive advanced notice of when LELWD will be in a neighborhood, customers are advised to sign up for community notifications by texting "LELWD" to 99411 or by following the link at lelwd.com.

The installation of new electric meters is separate from the ongoing replacement of water meters. New water meters require an appointment and access to the home by a water department technician.

Customers will be able to identify LELWD staff from their identification badges and LELWD vehicles. The meter switches will be conducted primarily by John Lanciani and Chris Adley, pictured here.

LELWD will practice social distancing and will not have to enter the building to switch electric meters.

The new meters will automatically alert LELWD of outages, enabling staff to quickly determine the



location and scope of power losses. The new system will collect readings of electric meters and water meters, for those receiving town water. This will save the cost of fuel and employee time spent driving through town to collect monthly readings.

There is no fee to the customer for the meter replacement. About 400 meters, or 5 percent of the total, have already been replaced. The installations are expected to be completed by the end of next year.

Customers with questions should visit lelwd.com/ami for further information or call 978-540-2222.



www.LELWD.com

Office Hours:
Mon. - Thurs. 6:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Closed Fridays

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