



HICKSVILLE WATER DISTRICT WATERGRAM

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Hicksville Water District
4 Dean Street
Hicksville, NY 11801
516.931.0184
516.931.6506
www.hicksvillewater.org

Board Meetings
Second and Fourth Tuesday of the month at 5 p.m. at the District office, unless otherwise announced.

Business Hours
8 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays

Superintendent
William E. Schuckmann

Account Clerk
Doreen Brunning

Commissioners
Karl M. Schweitzer, **Chairman**
Nicholas J. Brigandi, **Treasurer**
Warren Uss, **Secretary**

24 Hour Emergency Number
(516) 931-0184

Member
American Water Works Association
Long Island Water Conference
Nassau-Suffolk Water Commissioners Association

Proudly serving the Hicksville area since 1921.

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Protecting Your Water Supply From Financial Turmoil

As has been reported in the international, national and local media, the world is facing the most severe financial crisis since the 1930s.

So we are happy to bring you good news. The HWD is operating at peak efficiency to bring you the best water possible, with no tax increase, no new cost to consumers, and at prices 2% below the average national cost.

Commissioner Karl Schweitzer confirms, "The HWD has long been financially stable, and in fact, there have been no tax increases in four years for your water. Compare that to the increases in just about everything else in the marketplace."

Local management can take a great deal of credit for this continuing success, especially our resident staff's knowledge, concern and commitment.

But there is even better news. The HWD is making significant capital improvements that are beneficial to you, the community, the District and wise, conservative investors.

Schweitzer explains, "To enact the upgrades and public safety measures needed for your water supply, we are using local financial professionals to issue municipal bonds to generate funds. These are considered to be among the safest investments available because they are district-backed, insured and rated to attract understandably cautious investors." These municipal bonds are also "non-callable" so investors receive their full value upon maturity.

Best of all, this bond issue means that taxpayers will not pay a penny of new tax for the necessary improvements to our water system. Truly, it is a "win-win-win" situation for all parties!



Fall 2008

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Warren Uss Newly Elected Water Commissioner

Mr. Uss succeeds Commissioner Richard Humann who retired after 24 years of service. Uss joins fellow commissioners, Karl Schweitzer and Nicholas Brigandi for a three-year term.

Mr. Uss, a lifelong and third generation Hicksville resident, is fully committed to his town. Mr. Uss has served as a trustee as well as president of the Hicksville Exempt Benevolent Association. For over 35 years, Mr. Uss has been an active member of the Hicksville Fire Department and currently serves the Department as a fire-alarm dispatcher. He has served on countless committees and was the captain of Emergency Company #5. Mr. Uss has also spent his days as a licensed, registered representative of the New York Stock Exchange with a concentration in tax-free municipal bonds and fixed income securities.

In addition to his time with the NYSE, newly appointed Commissioner Uss owned and operated a home improvement business for fifteen years.

HWD 2009 Budget: No New Taxes, No Rate Increase

The Hicksville Water District (HWD) proudly announced that its new budget has no tax increases for residents nor will there be a rate increase.

This achievement further demonstrates the immediate benefits of local control and how HWD has historically and successfully managed and implemented its budgets.

For the 4th consecutive year, HWD contained costs and conserved tax dollars in the budget. The announcement is a welcomed change of pace for taxpayers in a year of financial uncertainties, rising costs on basic commodities and the struggles that Nassau County is having in trying to balance its budget.

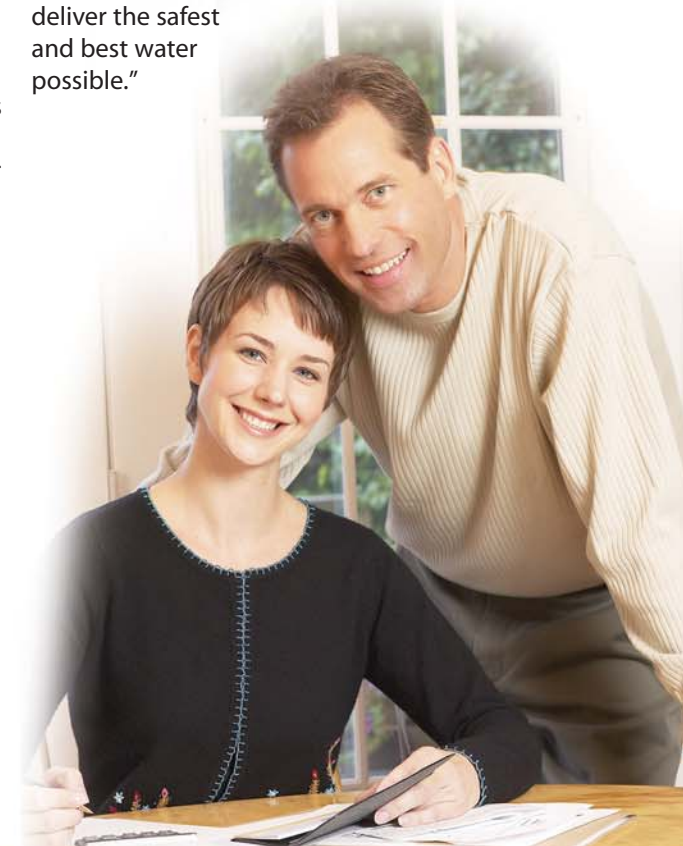
Residents can rest assured that all current projects to improve efficiency and maintain high water quality standards will remain in place, without compromise and without increased costs.

Unfounded claims have been made that big government control will improve service and cut costs. There are major flaws in those assertions, and the new budget proves that local control means a high level of care, accountability and efficiency.

Some little-known facts are that HWD water rates are about 2% below the national average

(source: American Water Works Association) and that the consumers' water tax is less than 1.7% of their total tax bill.

Commissioner Karl Schweitzer notes, "It is our fiscal responsibility to work within our budgets. As public servants and residents of Hicksville, it is our duty to protect our local taxpayers and deliver the safest and best water possible."

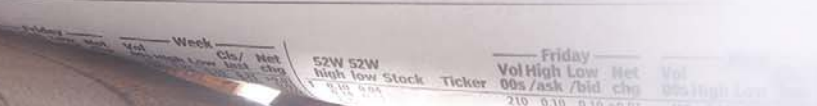


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INVESTING





Superintendent
William E. Schuckmann

From the Desk of Superintendent Bill Schuckmann

Season's Greetings! I hope you and your loved ones are healthy and happy this Holiday Season.

This *Water Gram* has important and timely news that may affect you, so please take a few minutes to read through this issue. There are updates on how the District is working for you, as well as our plans for the future.

Public safety is our #1 priority, so I would like to bring an important civic responsibility to your attention: Backflow Devices.

Backflow devices are required by New York State law to protect the public drinking water supply. If you have an underground sprinkler system, backflow prevention devices are mandatory.

In the case of a sudden drop in water pressure, usually from a water main break or use of a nearby fire hydrant, water from your property can be drawn backward into the public system, causing fertilizers and other types of dangerous substances to be pulled along with it. A backflow prevention device prevents this.

Annual testing must be performed by a state-certified tester upon installation and annually thereafter. Each year, the results of the test must be filed with the District and the Nassau County Department of Health. Commercial accounts are notified in January and residential accounts are notified in April of each year to have their devices tested. They are required to comply and submit the necessary paperwork within two months.

For customers who fail to comply within the time period allowed, the District will hire a backflow tester to do the inspection and back-charge the customer's account for the service. Those who fail to make their backflow devices accessible for an inspection risk having their water service interrupted.

If you are not sure whether or not you have a backflow device in place, or need the name of a state-certified backflow tester, please contact the Hicksville Water District at (516) 931-0184.

We welcome all comments and suggestions from our customers, so please do not hesitate to call us with your thoughts! After all, we, the local officers and staff of the HWD, are working for YOU!

Sincerely,

Bill Schuckmann
Superintendent

Winterization Tips

- If water pipes are located in an unheated area of your house, cover the pipes with insulation to prevent freezing.
- Disconnect all outdoor hoses, turn off the water leading outdoors and open each outdoor faucet.
- Winterize irrigation systems by turning off the system and draining.
- Keep any fire hydrant on your property clear of snow.
- Know where your shut-off valve is located in case of an emergency.



HWD Introduces New Emergency Notification System



HWD is installing a new Emergency Warning System, powered by SwiftReach, that will automatically alert customers by telephone in the event of a water emergency. This public service emergency messaging is free for all customers and is also being implemented in neighboring districts on Long Island.

Commissioner Warren Uss explains, "This unique notification system works the opposite of the traditional 9-1-1 system. Our system calls you at a number you supply us and a pre-recorded message is delivered within minutes!"

If you have an unlisted phone number, you will not be notified of emergencies, so we urge you to call us and provide your phone number. All personal information will be kept 100% confidential and will not be shared with anyone.

You can also choose to be contacted by text message or email.

The SwiftReach alert system is another cost-effective service we provide FREE as a public safety and security measure. Completed installation of the service will be announced, so please visit our website (www.hicksvillewater.org) or look for updates in your billing statement.



Update: Settlement Final in MTBE Litigation

The HWD reached a settlement in a major case involving America's leading oil companies.

Litigation centered on environmental contamination from the gasoline additive Methyl Tertiary Butyl Ether (MTBE). The settlement stems from a lawsuit filed by the Hicksville Water District, which was consolidated into a nationwide federal suit. After review of the settlement, the court finalized its decision in the District's favor.

MTBE is a gasoline additive that reduces automobile emissions, thus improving air quality. It can also find its way into groundwater supplies and give drinking water an unpleasant taste and odor. The health effects of MTBE are uncertain, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency currently classifies MTBE as a possible human carcinogen.

Fortunately, the HWD has monitored the water and there are neither problems nor traces of MTBE since it was detected in isolated areas at very low levels several years ago.

Defendants BP Amoco, Atlantic Richfield, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, Shell, Marathon, Valero, CITGO, Sunoco, Hess, Flint Hills, El Paso Merchant Energy and Tesoro have agreed to make a cash payment of \$235,000 to the Hicksville Water District.

These companies make up about 70% of the country's oil refiners. Absent from the settlement is defendant ExxonMobil. ExxonMobil has refused to settle and now faces the first of numerous trials over MTBE.

The settlement also requires the settling defendants to pay their share of treatment costs for HWD wells if they become contaminated by MTBE in the next 30 years.

"Back in 2004, the District decided to enter into this class action lawsuit to better position itself in the event that there was a need to seek treatment alternatives for MTBE," says Commissioner Nicholas Brigandi. "As far as the District is concerned, we have not experienced problems such as odor or unpleasant taste that are associated with the presence of MTBE, and we assure all our customers that we've taken all possible safeguards to protect our water."

The SwiftReach emergency alert system is another cost-effective service we provide FREE as a public safety and security measure.