



In a continuing effort to provide information to our users, here is the latest newsletter. Please let us know what we can do to improve it.

AGM

The Mill Bay Waterworks District Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held from 2:00 – 6:30pm on April 12th at Brentwood College. We are looking forward to seeing all of our valued customers attend. The accomplishments made this past year and plans for the upcoming year will be highlighted.

The AGM will include a question-and-answer period for customers to engage.

MBWD asks that all questions be addressed to the Chair and be related to the general affairs of MBWD. This is a period for people to ask questions not make speeches. Enquiries specific to individual landowners may be addressed separately to the District Manager or, if necessary, to the Board of Trustees through delegation at a Regular Monthly Board Meeting. Contact the office to make delegation arrangements. A location map for the meeting will be posted on our MBWD website and sent with the March tax assessment. That said, I am always open to a phone call or coffee.

Customer questions and concerns may be addressed at any time with MBWD staff personnel by contacting the District office.

ADMINISTRATION

We are continuing the exercise for conversion of our customer information to cloud storage from paper-based folios.

We are in the process of hiring a junior water operator to aid our operations and succession planning.

Our staff invited WorkSafe B.C. to conduct a safety audit on all aspects of our system practices, policies, and procedures as part of our ongoing efforts to ensure governance compliance. The audit was conducted on January 31st and MBWD has received a passing grade in every regard.

MBWD staff is in the process of conducting the Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) exercise as per the Risk Management Guideline for the B.C. Public Sector. This exercise is being facilitated by Western Water Associates Ltd.

MBWD administration staff would like to notify our customers that due to the unforeseen weather conditions we were unable to complete meter reads for this billing cycle. We have estimated the billings for this cycle based on consumption of last year at this time. We will be reading the meters in April and will adjust if needed. We invite you to check your meters if you are concerned about your consumption.

PROJECTS

Residential Smart Meters

MBWD has successfully completed a pilot project, introducing 10 Smart Meters throughout Mill Bay, together with automatic billing software and staff training. The cellular conductivity, our biggest concern, has proven excellent. As a result, we are moving forward with full implementation, on a scheduled basis.

Benefits to MBWD customers

- Ability for customers to self-monitor usage real time via. the mobile app. or web browser providing instant leak detection, and enhanced protection from overbilling and property damage

Benefits to Mill Bay Waterworks District (MBWD)

- Safety of personnel improvement from elimination of walking house to house for meter reading
- Environmental stewardship improvement from less energy / chemicals used and less water loss
- Reduction in administrative function with automated billing processing
- Automated leak detection eliminates admin functions for leak forgiveness processing and ability to warn customers of unnecessary charges and possible property damage
- Enhanced water license usage reporting to the Province

Smart Hydrant Caps

MBWD has ordered 3 Smart Fire Hydrant Caps. The Smart Caps will have the ability to detect and pinpoint leaks in our asbestos concrete sections of pipe and will provide instantaneous notification if and when any hydrant is accessed with out MBWD knowledge. This initiative is part of our ongoing effort to monitor our facility infrastructure.

Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA)

MBWD installed our SCADA system several years ago to allow the District to monitor and control our source wells with a computerized system. Of the twelve wells that could have been connected, only nine were completed, and of the nine, we found only one well maintained a proper reporting function.

Our Operations Manager who was new to MBWD this past year, identified this concern and has been working with a dedicated vendor to expedite the completion of work required to bring the system online and into proper working order.

In the future, All MBWD current and future source water wells will be connected to SCADA and maintained in proper working order.

Well Monitoring Plan (WMP), and Source Water Protection Plan (SWPP)

Licensing for the five new wells in the Mill Bay area is nearing completion. The five new wells on the original application were,

- One for the Limona Stonebridge development,
- Two for the Mill Springs Village development,
- One for Mill Bay Waterworks District, and
- One for the Malahat Properties Development

The Malahat Properties Development well has been removed at this time because of its potential negative impacts on private well owners in the area. MBWD will only seek a license for the remaining 4 wells.

MBWD Operation Plan is completed and incorporated into the WMP by Western Water Associated Ltd. (WWAL), the stakeholder review is complete, and the draft application has been sent to the Ministry of Water Lands Resources Stewardship (WLRS) for approval.

The next step in the process for development is for the developers to complete the necessary engineering as per MBWD specifications and the application process for District connection.

Developments

1. The Limona Lodgepole Road development has been approved for twelve lots to be developed on the West side of Lodgepole road.
2. Limona Stonebridge Phase (1A) is expected to proceed later this year
3. Mill Springs Village (phase 16&17) is expected to proceed later this year
4. MBWD is continuing to work with the Malahat Properties Ltd. (MPL) to determine if available water source may be obtained to support the project.
5. The Purdy Group Marina Project has had no activity toward water application toward MBWD
6. Ocean Terrace Project has had no activity toward water application toward MBWD

MBWD Select Committee for enhanced Fire Protection

MBWD has initiated a Select Committee led by Trustee Dan Flynn to determine the possibility of increasing our District fire protection by introducing an additional water supply from Shawnigan Creek. The committee members are Chairperson Dan Flynn, MBWD Operations Manager, Keith Halper, Mill Bay Fire Department Chief, and McElhanney Engineering.

The select committee's mission is to increase the Mill Bay Fire Department's available water supply to protect the community from wildfire by providing continuous water input to our reservoirs for the sole purpose of firefighting capability and evacuation if necessary.

Dan has asked me to notify our Mill Bay residents that starting in March of 2025, the CVRD will be restarting a grant program for resident funding for a firesmart assessment and home improvement program. All homeowners in Mill Bay may apply for reimbursement after improvements have been made to their homes following the review and application process.

Information may be found at, <https://emcowichan.ca/programs-resources/fire-smart/home-owner/>

Operations

As recently reported by our hydrologist Western Water Associates Ltd (WWAL), our engineering team, and our MBWD Operations Manager, our water system including the health of our aquifers and mechanical

fitness of our facilities is in a stable state and fully capable of supplying safe and sustainable service to the community.

- There have been no major line breaks or service disruptions since the last report
- Installation of MBWD security cameras has been completed
- Shawnigan Creek Pump house safety and mechanical upgrades are nearing completion

Water Quality Testing

During the course of last year we have increased MBWD water quality testing from the minimum requirement of 4 bacteriological treated water samples per month.

Prior to our new Operation Manager starting with MBWD we conducted a water sources sample schedule, (for metals scans and total organic carbon levels) by sending in 2 well samples annually plus 2 of our tank samples for analysis annually, scheduled in a way that wells were getting sampled every 5 years.

The NEW sampling schedule conducted by MBWD is:

- Test 8 treated water locations every month for bacteriological testing.
- Sample all of the raw water sources monthly for bacteria.
- Sample all of the water sources and tanks monthly (in house) for water quality aspects (pH, turbidity, manganese, iron, and total dissolved solids).
- Sample the inlet and outlet of the greensand treatment plant (used to remove manganese) weekly for the same 5 water quality aspects.
- Sample two locations in the distribution system for disinfection byproducts, tested quarterly.
- A new schedule to sample for metals and total organic carbon levels on all MBWD water sources and all 4 of our tanks every year.
- Also checked are 15 locations in the water system for chlorine residual every week.
- Periodic testing for asbestos fibers is conducted on sections of our asbestos cement piping as well.

Gary Orton
MBWD Board Chair