

QCBFD Public Works Committee Report 2020

This has been an exceptionally trying and eventful year for the PW Committee and I wish to extend a **special thank you to to all the members** of my Committee: Vincent Bailey, Dick Campbell, James Finn, Bob Frazier, Tom Frost, Jim Montstream, Fred "Fig" Newton, Steve Peet, George Prior, and Greg Reppucci for their assistance, inquisitiveness, input, and patience throughout the year. **All Committee members are volunteers** and we do our best to accommodate our QCBFD residents. We appreciate your consideration of this.

The Public Works Committee wishes to share the following:

1. In August 2019 we had positive Total Coliform samples in both wells and E.Coli in Well #2 requiring a boil water advisory. The most likely cause was an elevated water table of our shallow groundwater wells allowing for plant decay and animal fecal material to enter our wells. This was confirmed by video exploration of the wells.
2. The two wells were cleaned and cleared of debris and the Well field topography and excess vegetation was addressed however our main well, Well #1, continued to return Total Coliform present until June of 2020.
3. In Spring 2020 Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) mandated that QCBFD install a 4-log chemical disinfection system. Negotiations are ongoing to address certain technical and procedural issues which prevent our full compliance.
4. PW Committee, after engaging three engineering consulting firms, believes that a comprehensive water treatment upgrade, compliant with RIDOH 4-log chemical disinfection, be developed to assure long term potable, high quality water to the QCBFD community.
5. Technical and regulatory constraints will require a custom treatment design and a pilot installation to assure adequacy and compatibility with our unique water quality. The entire process to full installation of a functional treatment system upgrade, barring regulatory changes, we expect to take up to 24 months
6. On July 28, 2020 RIDOH lifted our Boil Water Advisory due to absence of Total Coliform since June 2020. RIDOH insistence of 4-log chemical disinfection is still expected and included in ongoing active negotiations.
7. RIDOH will likely mandate we institute chemical disinfection and run ONLY off well #1 until this more comprehensive water treatment can be brought online. This would make water consumption on peak demand periods, i.e. July 4th weekend, critical. This year the community was asked to conserve and we were able to **reduce water usage for the week surrounding July 4th by 15%** from the same period in 2019. Very impressive!
 - a. Please continue to conserve water; check faucets, hose bibs, and that your toilets are not continuously running.
 - b. Unattended garden and lawn watering is NOT permitted except by handheld devices.

8. Nitrate water levels, of concern to RIDOH due to the dense surrounding septic system concentration, continue to be tracked monthly. Since 2014, despite a seasonal variability leading to elevated levels in the Fall, levels have remained stable and well below the EPA trigger level of 10 mg/ml for the past 6 years. This year they were at a record low, below 2 for the month of July and August.
9. Lawn sprinkler systems and pool maintenance water systems **must not be cross connected** to the Municipal water system.
 - a. PW committee has the authority, by RIDOH statute, to be allowed access to properties to confirm there are no cross connections to the potable Municipal water system. If reasonable access is denied by the homeowner, QCBFD has the right to isolate the property from the Municipal water supply.
10. **It is strongly recommended, since most properties in QCBFD are not primary residences, that water be turned off when you leave.** Any licensed plumber can assist with manual or remote shutoff valves.
 - a. Please arrange for your home's plumbing to be winterized! Every winter someone's outdoor shower, faucet, or internal plumbing pipe bursts with the arrival of sub freezing temperatures. A burst internal pipe will ruin your home within a few minutes.
 - b. The best prevention is to drain the pipes and shut off the water. If your home is heated be aware that heating systems can go down, due to power outages and extreme weather, often for several hours or days, in severe winter freezing conditions.
11. Public works will continue to offer, for now, curbside winter shutoff and turn-on as a courtesy. It is recommended that this **NOT** be done in place of an internal water shutoff valve as mentioned above. Further it is requested that someone be available to confirm water flow shutoff and turn-on within the residence. Please be considerate with turn-on and shutoff requests.
12. Vegetation growth and encroachment onto the roadways, which are privately owned by the QCBFD at a 40 foot width, **is a safety issue as it impedes sight lines at corners and interferes with traffic flow and emergency vehicles** by narrowing the passable roadway. Homeowners are responsible, at their expense, to maintain any vegetation on the QCBFD right of way. The Fire District will alert homeowners of vegetation which needs to be trimmed and, if necessary, trim or remove offending vegetation overgrowth and bill the homeowner.
13. Our road surfaces underwent chip sealing last summer except for Kenyon, Bayview, and Lucas. These will be addressed next year.
14. Speed bumps, now unmarked due to the chipsealing last year, will be repainted this fall.

Respectfully submitted,

Vincent Reppucci
Chair QCBFD Public Works Committee