

From the TAP



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Your Neighborhood Water District Does It Best!
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Senator Chuck Schumer Requests the United States Navy to “Step Up to the Plate!”

On December 31, 2008, United States Senator Charles E. Schumer and the South Farmingdale Water District (SFWD) issued a strong request for the United States Navy and Department of Justice to immediately follow through on the Navy’s obligation to pay for the capital and operating costs necessary to build and operate water treatment facilities at two South Farmingdale public water supply sites that will be impacted by contamination.

The United States Navy operated the Naval Weapons Industrial Reserve Plant at Grumman in Bethpage, New York for several decades that resulted in soil and significant groundwater contamination containing volatile organic compounds. The SFWD was approached in November 2000 by the United States Navy relative to a widespread groundwater contamination plume* flowing in a southerly direction toward several SFWD well fields. The Navy developed a water contingency plan in connection with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) that resulted in the Navy constructing outpost monitoring wells upgradient of Plants 1 and 3 in SFWD.

The Navy agreed that if contamination from their site was identified in the outpost monitoring wells that they would pay for all future costs that the water suppliers would incur for the required treatment facilities or abandonment and replacement of the respective wells. In 2004, the outpost monitoring wells upgradient of Plants 1

and 3 indicated that they were impacted by contamination from the naval plant site at levels above the trigger values agreed to by the Navy, DEC and SFWD.

The SFWD has been pursuing a settlement with the Navy for nearly five years and while the Navy has been in general accord with the necessary treatment facilities, final resolution and execution of the settlement agreement has simply not been a priority within the U.S. Department of Justice. This concerns the officials at SFWD because the contaminants are “knocking on our door,” in the words of Business Manager, Len Constantinopoli.

“We are here to protect the taxpayer. They shouldn’t have to pay for these treatment plants,” said Senator Schumer. “The Navy knows they need to pay, and they’ve said so. Now they need to stop dragging their feet and pay up.”

In the interim, the SFWD Board of Commissioners has continued to express its concern that one or more of the District’s wells may be impacted before the District can design



United States Senator Charles Schumer (podium) (Front) Gary Brosnan, SFWD Commissioner; (Back) L to R: Ralph Atoria, SFWD Commissioner; Gary Loesch, H2M Engineering; John Hirt, SFWD Commissioner

and construct the treatment facilities that all parties have agreed are necessary, despite the fact that currently, all water served by the District is safe to drink.

The water treatment systems proposed would provide the same quality of water consumers enjoy today, but action has to take place as

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*The plume is 12,100 feet long, 9,600 feet wide and 580 feet deep.

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A Message From The Superintendent, Charlie Prucha

I hope you have been doing well this past season...I think all of us are looking forward to the warmer days of spring and summer!

I'd like to talk about something that is not always visible to our community. I'm referring to the work that your SFWD team does "behind the scenes" in what are sometimes very rough circumstances. SFWD is here for you, and our employees are dedicated to producing quality water for personal and public uses and for fire protection.

A great example is the fact that SFWD emergency crews are on alert around the clock, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year – with no holidays off!

In good or bad weather, our team is on the job fixing water main breaks, which usually takes a four man crew 2 to 4 hours to repair. There were 31 water pipe breaks from January 1st through March 31st this year, and our average response time was 20 – 30 minutes (yes, even in the middle of a cold winter night!).



These crews do critical work and routine jobs such as maintaining and replacing fire hydrants and installing flags on key hydrants so firefighters and other departments can find them in emergencies.

Our people maintain the water plants, which includes testing water samples to ensure quality, and complying with Homeland Security guidelines. Other unnoticed jobs the SFWD team completes are installation of new water taps, repair infrastructure, which is under constant stress, and routine upkeep, from maintenance to grounds-keeping.



SFWD team arrives on scene within 30 minutes to repair water main break

All this, plus they carry out the daily duties of meter reading, inspections, and being available for questions and assistance to all our consumers! Not to mention our service employees hold multiple NYS licenses for water plant operations, water distribution and cross connection control to name a few.

I have always said, it's what you don't see SFWD people do that makes the difference in our daily lives!

Best wishes in the coming summer season.
-Charlie Prucha

Senator Chuck Schumer Requests the U.S. Navy to "Step Up to the Plate!"

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soon as possible. The District cannot defer the construction of treatment facilities any longer waiting for the United States Navy to provide the funds needed to meet this critical need.

While the SFWD Board of Commissioners intends to work diligently with Senator Schumer's office to expedite the final agreement with the U.S. Navy, two plans of action have been put into effect by the District to protect its water supply and to shield its consumers from paying for the treatment facility.

First, SFWD has been approved to bond up to \$18 million to begin design and construction of the necessary treatment facilities. If the treatment facilities are not constructed in time, there is the potential that SFWD would need to close down or restrict wells at Plants 1 and 3. The four wells at these two sites provide nearly 40% of the District's well capacity, which is needed to meet existing water supply and fire flow demands. The loss of any of these wells could adversely impact SFWD's ability to meet peak and emergency pumping requirements, thereby impacting the ability to deliver an adequate water supply to its 45,000 consumers. While the District would prefer to have the money in hand from the Navy prior to building the treatment facilities, it can no longer tolerate any further delays and must proceed with the project. All proceeds associated with the capital cost portion of the settlement will be used to pay for treatment, thereby minimizing any cost burden on taxpayers.

Second, the District met with several civic associations and asked for their help. These community-minded groups provided a tremendous amount of support and positive action that has helped augment SFWD's efforts during these proceedings. With the help of Senator Schumer, the SFWD Board of Water Commissioners, elected officials and civic organizations, are looking for the U.S. Department of Justice to resolve this matter quickly and without hesitation.

Senator Schumer said his office has sent a letter to the Navy asking them to commit to a timetable for reaching a final agreement on payment. He later added, "I will do what's necessary to get the Navy to attend to this immediately. If we can't get an answer from the Department of Justice and the Navy quickly, I will call and speak with them personally to help resolve the situation."



(L to R) United States Senator Charles Schumer, South Farmingdale Water Commissioners John Hirt, Gary Brosnan, Ralph Atoria and SFWD Superintendent Charlie Prucha

Fire Hydrant MAINTENANCE

South Farmingdale Water District continues to inform and alert residents and business owners of its aggressive Fire Hydrant Maintenance Program at every level of operation. An important example is the ongoing maintenance of SFWD fire hydrants, a public safety measure often taken for granted. Hydrants require regular painting to remain visible to firefighters and traffic.

The District also routinely tests all hydrants for performance, inspects them for leaks, and flushes them to maintain maximum pressure. District technicians are trained to respond to any damage, leaks or accidents. SFWD believes that this attention to detail and commitment to public safety is a major advantage to local management and control of our water district.

Commissioner Ralph Atoria commented, "As members of the community, we possess a deep sense of personal responsibility in our response and management of South Farmingdale's water supply. Additionally we are highly aware of fiscal, safety and operational issues that affect our community. Our maintenance program stays within our annual budget, and we wish to thank all our consumers for keeping our fire hydrants visible this past winter."



Water Conservation Tips & Stats

Spring and summer months require regular watering of plants, flowers, shrubs and lawns. In order to remain mindful of conservation, the SFWD recommends adhering to the following:

- Water your lawn early in the morning or at night to avoid excess evaporation. Nassau County Ordinance prohibits watering between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Walk across your lawn. If you see footprints in the grass, it's time to water.
- The use of a hose for flushing driveways, sidewalks and streets is prohibited. Instead, use a broom to clean up driveways and walkways.
- Even numbered addresses and non-numbered homes can water on even numbered days; odd numbered addresses can water on odd numbered days.

Backflow Device... *Why It's Necessary*

A backflow condition may arise when very low or negative street pressure occurs due to water main breaks, hydrants knocked over, etc. When these infrequent events present themselves, water in home and commercial plumbing systems might be siphoned backwards to the street water main in the absence of a backflow prevention device (BPD).

A simple example of this would be a garden hose filling a swimming pool with the hose end submerged in the water when, at the same time, the street water main ruptures thereby setting up a possible negative pressure condition to allow the back siphonage of the pool water. Of course there are many other conditions including backpressure, which can pose a hazard to the water supply.



Backflow prevention devices when properly installed and maintained, guard against these conditions. So please check with our office regarding requirements when installing new plumbing systems including underground irrigation. Your licensed plumber or sprinkler contractor may also be knowledgeable of these requirements. If you have a backflow prevention device already installed on your plumbing systems, be sure to have it tested annually!

The Real Facts!

Did you know it only costs \$4.95 a year per household to have 3 responsible, community-minded Commissioners run your district? That's less than 41¢ a month!

No government agency can provide the same level of service and dedication as a locally controlled water district for that price.

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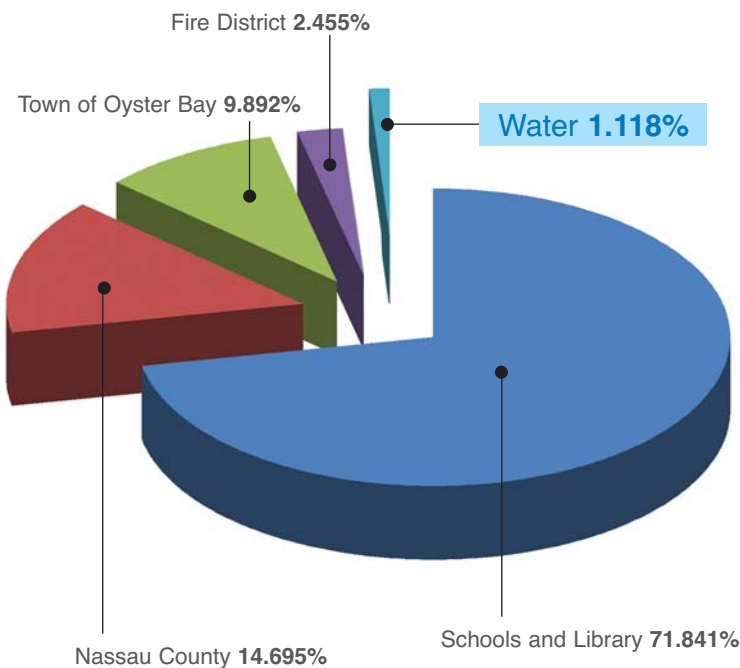
BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

Ralph Atoria - *Chairman*
John Hirt - *Treasurer*
Gary Brosnan - *Secretary*

Leonard Constantinopoli - *Business Manager*
Charles Prucha - *Superintendent*

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TYPICAL SOUTH FARMINGDALE TAX ALLOCATION



FREE WATER BOTTLE *from SFWD*

SFWD is giving away
FREE water bottles!
Stop by soon and pick
one up. Our water tastes
great and can be enjoyed
with this reusable,
recycled, non-leaching
plastic water bottle.*



* Limit 2 per household