



SewerWorks

VOLUME 9 – WINTER 2012

MEET ONE OF OUR BOARD MEMBERS



My educational background includes a BS in chemistry from State University College of New York and an MS degree in biochemistry from the University of Illinois. For a number of years I did scientific research and published several papers before deciding to become a teacher.

I spent the last nineteen years teaching high school science in the City of New Haven public schools. I first became interested in environmental issues in the 1970's realizing that the well being of all people on the planet depends upon keeping ecosystems healthy so that adequate food, water and resources could continue to be provided. I live in New Haven with my husband, and I am interested in contributing time and energy to make this city a better place to live. I volunteered to serve on the GNHWPCA board because wastewater treatment is critically important for prevention of water borne diseases, for developing a sound economic base as well as for recreational uses. GNHWPCA's mission is a good fit for my interests and background. I am impressed with the level of professionalism and creativity of the GNHWPCA staff and their team approach to provide service in such a manner as to mitigate environmental hazards while controlling spiraling costs.

—Joyce Alton, New Haven

GNHWPCA HAPPENINGS

GNHWPCA **Executive Director Sid Holbrook was honored** by the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) with their National Environmental Achievement Local Public Service Award. The award was given for Environmental Stewardship and Promoting Sustainable Innovative Green Initiatives for the Benefit of the Community.

In 2011, the GNHWPCA was selected for the **University of New Haven's Internship Employer of the Year Award**. The selection was made on its support of the schools programs throughout the year. The Authority attends activities such as the bi-annual speed networking events along with judging student presentation competitions. The Authority takes an active role in hosting tours of its sewage treatment facilities for students and assists in job networking within our industry.

GNHWPCA.com is re-launched! With you in mind!

The new GNHWPCA website (www.gnhwpca.com) has come to completion now and is up and running. The current site was launched in two phases with the first coming back in July 2011. The original idea of the website was to improve the way that we communicated with you our customers, our business partners and the general public. It also was designed to be a tool which would allow our customers and those who do business with us, to conduct actual business with the GNHWPCA more effectively. Those we serve include our sewer user customers, their agents, such as real estate attorneys, contractors, consultants, and the general public interested in the sewer system's operations.

The new website features important announcements regarding your rights as a customer—

- The various ways to contact us regarding service questions
- Bill payment Options, while providing the ability to pay bills online through the site
- Official notices of meetings and ongoing & planned construction projects
- The technical policies and procedures, along with authorized sewer rates and fees are also featured on the site. If you're a building contractor, you may find helpful info regarding all the steps you need to follow in order to get new sewer service installed.

The GNHWPCA has as one of its core values the protection of our environment. There are sections which highlight our efforts in those areas. The GNHWPCA encourages everyone to join in the efforts to protect the environment. To help increase awareness amongst our younger generation, we have also featured a section, our *Kids Fun Zone*, which helps the youth understand the values and importance of a healthy environment and clean water sources.

The Greater New Haven Water Pollution Control Authority is just a few clicks away at www.gnhwpca.com.

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Green Infrastructure Aids Reduction of Combined Sewer Overflows

The term “Green Infrastructure” has gained popularity during the past several years as people begin to understand the importance of preserving valuable water resources. Green Infrastructure curbs pollution by strategically reintroducing nature’s original filters—plants and soils—in new ways (like raingardens and green roofs) or by harvesting stormwater (rain barrels and cisterns) for household uses. This capture, filtering, and use of stormwater *before* it enters the sewer pipes limits the flow into the combined sewer system and area waterways.

Green Infrastructure reduces the need for costly public stormwater and combined sewer collection systems and saves the Authority’s rate payers the cost of treating stormwater at the East Shore Treatment Plant. It also has co-benefits, like greening our city, increasing energy efficiency in buildings, filtering water and air pollutants and combating localized flooding—all while creating and promoting a new sector of jobs.

Save the Sound, a program of *The Connecticut Fund for the Environment*, in collaboration with the GNHWPCHA, the City of New Haven, and its partners are working toward developing a better understanding of the key components of Green Infrastructure and how we can practically and cost effectively implement these projects within CSO communities such as Greater New Haven.

Save the Sound and its project partner Natural Resources Defense Council have developed an Advisory Committee which includes GNHWPCHA staff and representatives from the CTDEEP, Cities of New Haven, Bridgeport and local community groups. The committee is developing a feasibility study that will determine opportunities for Green Infrastructure technologies in New Haven and Bridgeport. Hazen and Sawyer, the consulting firm selected by the Advisory Committee to guide the study, expects to finalize the report by the end of this year. Hazen and Sawyer was selected for its 20 years of experience in watershed planning and its most recent success in implementing a 12,000-acre watershed plan in Staten Island, NY. Using its experiences and practical methods, Hazen and Sawyer will provide both cities with critical, actionable and effective green infrastructure recommendations.

The GNHWPCHA hopes that the knowledge gained in this study will assist locally in meeting the goals of eliminating Combined Sewer Overflows in the West River, Quinnipiac River, Mill River and Long Island Sound. We look forward to providing you with updated information as the study concludes, in the meantime email “Green Infrastructure” to info@savethesound.org to sign-up for updates or visit savethesound.org to learn more.

Nitrogen Removal Upgrades

Nitrogen is the nutrient most responsible for excessive growth of phytoplankton, microscopic algae that is abundant in Long Island Sound. While phytoplankton is an important component in the Long Island Sound food chain, supporting a diversity of fish and shellfish, an overabundance can stress or suffocate marine life by lowering dissolved oxygen levels to unsafe concentrations. The problem is especially severe during the summer months in the western end of Long Island Sound. Sources of nitrogen entering Long Island Sound include point sources such as treated wastewater and non-point sources such as land runoff.

In 2002, the Connecticut DEP made a commitment to reduce nitrogen to Long Island Sound with the creation of a Nitrogen removal credit program. The Nitrogen Credit Exchange (NCE) is managed by an independent Nitrogen Credit Advisory Board. The NCE is now entering its 9th year of operation and nearly \$52 million worth of credits will have been bought or sold by the fall of 2010, representing over 15 million nitrogen credits.

The GNHWPCHA has been on the leading edge of municipalities with low levels of Nitrogen leaving the treatment plant; however, new technologies bring even greater opportunities to reduce the levels of Nitrogen discharge. In keeping with the DEP’s goals and utilizing funding made available through the Clean Water Fund program, the GNHWPCHA will begin design of the first of two Phases of Nitrogen removal upgrades at the East Shore Abatement Facility. The first phase of design is scheduled to begin in late spring. These modifications will improve the nitrogen removal efficiency of our wastewater plant and result in fewer pounds of nitrogen entering Long Island Sound.

2012 MEETING SCHEDULE

The GNHWPCHA will hold its’ regular monthly meetings on the second Tuesday of the month, at 6:00 PM, at the Administrative Offices, 260 East Street, New Haven, CT. The meeting dates are:

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| January 10, 2012 | July 10, 2012 |
| February 14, 2012 | August 14, 2012 |
| March 13, 2012 | September 11, 2012 |
| April 10, 2012 | October 9, 2012 |
| May 8, 2012 | November 13, 2012 |
| June 12, 2012 | December 11, 2012 |