

Water & Sewer Department

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This department oversees and maintains the Winsted Water Works water distribution network, the sewer collection system, the town's reservoirs and watersheds and the lake level at Highland Lake. There are approximately 2,700 water & sewer customers.

Crystal Lake Reservoir is the main source of water supply to the Town of Winchester and contains 456 million gallons of useable water within a 146-acre area. Rugg Brook Reservoir is the backup supply and contains 163 million gallons of useable water including the Mad River Diversion into Rugg Brook Reservoir. Elevations of these water supplies are monitored by the Water Department. Water can be transferred from Rugg Brook to Crystal Lake if low supply conditions occur.

The watersheds of both reservoirs are maintained by the Water Department. Work routinely done at these valuable resources consist of clearing brush, picking up trash, maintaining roads and protecting our water system from vandalism or contamination. The system is closely monitored and no trespassing signs have been posted at the reservoirs, filtration plant and water storage tank. The watershed is inspected yearly by Lenard Engineering.

The distribution system consists of approximately 35 miles of water main. The pipes range in size range from 4" to 16" in diameter. These transmission lines are maintained yearly through a regularly scheduled flushing program. Flushing expels deleterious materials from the distribution system keeping tap water clear and clean. The flushing process is accomplished by opening hydrants throughout the system. During the flushing process the hydrants are also checked to assure that they are in good working condition.

There are 358 fire hydrants within the system. They are inspected and winterized in the late fall and monitored throughout the winter to guard them from freezing. The hydrants are also kept clear of snow to maintain their visibility. Gate valves are also exposed in the winter to ensure that they can be easily located should they be needed in an emergency.

Department personnel respond to all Call Before You Dig (CBYD) requests in a timely fashion as required by law. Water and Sewer system components are marked out for clients and contractors excavating within or near the system, to ensure protection and to avoid interruptions of service to our customers.

Other components of the water system require ongoing maintenance. Two water booster stations are checked frequently and necessary repairs are made when problems are discovered. The Water Department also monitors the 1.5 million gallon water storage tank on Wallens Street. The tank is inspected regularly and the water stored within it is tested frequently.

Other duties of the Department include:

- Repair all water service leaks and major interruptions, such as water main breaks. (When repairs are made and service is restored, temporary road patch is initially used. At a later date, full restoration is made including a permanent patch using hot bituminous concrete. Any adjacent disrupted areas are repaired using top soil and grass seed when necessary)
- All water meters in the distribution system are read quarterly. Any meters which are found to be in need of repair during this process are addressed when all the readings are complete. Meter repairs are

scheduled with the resident at their convenience. At this time, water meters are reprogrammed and can be read by driving past each location. The Water Department continues to install these cellular meters on all meters as repairs are made. This will save time reading meters.

- Water Quality Tests are performed on water samples taken from the distribution system weekly. Four separate samples are collected at Department of Public Health approved locations. These samples are then tested at an approved laboratory for processing. The laboratory reports the results to the Water Department and the Department of Public Health on a weekly basis. These results document and ensure compliance with the “Safe Water Drinking Act”.

The sewer collection system consists of approximately 40 miles of gravity sewer line. The sewer system ranges in size from 6” to 36” in diameter. The collection system contains nine sewer pumping stations and approximately 6 miles of force main. Weekly maintenance is performed on each pump station and immediate repairs are made when they are not functioning properly. The sewer lines are maintained, repaired or replaced as required. Occasionally it becomes necessary to remove blockages from plugged pipelines.

The Department also maintains a low-pressure sewer system on East and West Wakefield Boulevard servicing Highland Lake residents. There are 310 individual grinder pump stations on this system. Each station is equipped with a high level alarm and is responded to 7 days a week.