

MARBLEHEAD WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION



THE FLOW N' GO

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COMMISSION, EMPLOYEES RECOGNIZED BY NOAA

"From the WeatherCenter, this is meteorologist Sunny Storm reporting on the monsoon-like rain that flooded the North Shore yesterday. Marblehead received 2.35 inches of rain and had wind gusts as high as 52 miles per hour. Now back to Wendy Breeze and Jack Frost in the studio"

Have you ever wondered where the weatherpersons get information such as rainfall and snowfall measurements, temperature and wind speeds? For Marblehead, the data comes from a weather reporting station maintained by the Water and Sewer Commission.

For the past 25 years, water department staff has recorded various climate data to



report to the National Weather Service on a daily basis. This data is accumulated over time to identify weather trends.

NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, recently presented the Commission with the Honored Institution Award "in grateful recognition of 25 years of Weather Observations."

Two Commission employees, assistant superintendent Gregory Burt and water department employee Michael Marsters, were also presented with certificates recognizing their twenty-five years and ten years, respectively, of "Service in the Government of the United States of America."

TIP OF THE QUARTER

Did you know...

... If everyone in the United States used just one less gallon of water every day, we could save a whopping 85 billion gallons of water per year.

... If everyone flushed their toilet just one less time per day, we could fill a lake about one mile long, one mile wide and four feet deep with the water that is saved.

... You can save up to eight gallons of water each day by turning off the water when you brush your teeth.

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WHAT YOU FLUSH CAN COME BACK TO HAUNT YOU

We don't want to sound like a broken record but some people still don't get the message: flushing the wrong things down your toilet can cause serious costly damage to our sewer pump stations and result in messy sewer backups in homes.

(These, and all past issues of *The Flow n' Go*, can be found at www.marblehead.org/water.)

How do we know that people are still flushing the wrong things down their toilets? In the past few months there have been numerous incidents of the pumps at several of the sewer pump stations stopping because debris such as so-called disposable wipes, diapers, rags and dental floss became entangled in the impellers of the pumps causing the pumps to cease operation.

Not only does this damage the impellers but it also prevents the sewerage from being pumped through the system. If enough sewer accumulates it can be forced back through the line and into homes in the area of the pump station.

And with twenty-eight pump stations in town, that puts a lot of homes at risk.

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Past *The Flow n' Go* articles have implored residents to "Keep Your Toilet Happy—Feed it Only Digestible Materials" (Volume 2, Issue 4) and to "Help Us to Flush Out Non-degradable Debris" (Volume 1, Issue 1).

YOU HAVE TO SEE IT TO BELIEVE IT



In last quarter's issue of *The Flow n' Go* there was an article imploring people not to put dog waste and other materials down stormwater drains. The article explained that whatever goes into the drain system ends up emptying into the ocean.

The article relayed how the Water and Sewer Commission and Board of Health frequently get calls complaining about dog walkers tipping the contents of their 'pick-up' bag over the drain grate or, even worse, tossing the filled bag itself into the drain.

We received comments from several residents who couldn't believe that people would actually throw the bag down the drain system. They thought that we made this up. We are not *that* good.

Since seeing is believing, we sent our *Flow n' Go* sleuth in search of proof that some dog walkers would rather dispose of the bags in the drain instead of carrying them home. The evidence in the picture above barks ... speaks for itself.

Look closely and you will see numerous plastic bags containing you-know-what that were cleaned out from a catch basin. Had these not been removed, they would have eventually ended up polluting our waters. And, this is from just one of over 1,300 such catch basins in Marblehead!

Now do you believe us? Even we couldn't make this up.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HONORS COMMISSIONER FOR SERVICE TO TOWN

F. Carlton "Carl" Siegel, a member of the Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners for over twenty years, was recognized by the Marblehead Chamber of Commerce at their 65th Annual Meeting held this past September. Siegel was recipient of the Frank Regan Community Service Award.

Siegel, while not a true Marbleheader - he was born in upstate New York (but we won't hold that against him) — exemplifies the spirit of the Town. In the 57 years he has lived in Marblehead, he has made his presence and affection for the Town known in many ways.

In addition to his service on the Water and Sewer Commission, Siegel had previously been on the Recreation and Parks Commission and has for many years kept the official tally board at Abbot Hall during elections. He assured that the light tower at Chandler Hovey Park was festively lit for the Independence Day and Christmas holidays.

He is a master craftsman and his expertise is exhibited throughout town. Siegel made the signs at the water and sewer offices and outside the Community Center and worked with a local welder to create the arch over the entrance to Waterside Cemetery. He built the scale lighthouses found at the Village Street School and inside Abbot Public Library and constructed the original snack shed at Gatchell's Playground. These are just a few of the many examples of his craftsmanship that adorn public buildings and sites.

In addition, he has coached several youth sports teams and has refereed hundreds of local games.

While not Marblehead-born, he has demonstrated his devotion to the Town has proven worthy of the Frank Regan Community Service Award and of being bestowed with the title of an Honorary Marbleheader.

Don't put your home, and others, at risk for a sewer back-up

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But you don't need to live in the vicinity of a pump station for your home to be at risk for a sewer backup. The debris could get caught on a bend or imperfection in the homeowner's service line, blocking the line and forcing sewerage back into their home.

Unfortunately, for the homeowner, they are responsible for maintaining the service line from their home to where it meets the town's sewer main. All costs for clearing and repairing the service line would be at their expense.

It's easy to see why it is to your, and the town's, advantage to watch what you flush down the toilet!

Kids' Corner

How to make your own rain gauge

Did you know that you can measure the amount of rain that falls in your backyard? All you need is a plastic soda bottle, tape, a ruler, and a permanent marker.

Have an adult cut the top off a plastic soda bottle. Invert the top into the bottle to make a funnel and tape in place. Using a ruler and marker, make a mark every 1/2 inch on the bottle. Dig a small hole in your yard and bury the bottom of the bottle to anchor in place. After it rains, check your rain gauge to see how much rain you got at your house.

