

# Watts & Drops

AUGUST 2023



## Order Shade Trees Now Before Labor Day Deadline

The clock is ticking to order two free shade trees before the end of Labor Day. Trees will be planted by LELWD staff this autumn.

The Free Shade Tree Program is open to LELWD electric customers. Trees provide natural cooling and consume carbon dioxide. A mature tree can lower energy use between 100-250 kilowatt-hours per year.

LELWD crews will plant the trees in a location mutually agreeable to the homeowner and LELWD. Trees are best planted within 30 feet of east, west, southeast or southwest sides of a house.

Scan the QR code or visit [lelwd.com/greenrewards/trees/](http://lelwd.com/greenrewards/trees/) for more information and to complete the application for one or two trees by the end of Sept. 4th.



## Better Together: Electric & Water Bills Merge

Customers started receiving monthly, combined electric and water bills in July, and the change was largely welcomed by customers who now can make a single payment for both services.

This represented a change from quarterly to monthly billing for water customers. And due to discrepancies in the account names, a handful of electric and water bills did not automatically merge and were combined manually.

Any customers who continue to receive separate electric and water bills are asked to call 978-540-2222.

## Three-Year Project for Cleaner Water Nearing Completion

A complex, three-year project to improve the quality of water in Littleton is nearing completion. The new Whitcomb Avenue Water Treatment Facility is on track to remove both the primary cause of discoloration and a newly regulated chemical contaminant, PFAS, by the year's end.

The water treatment plant will remove iron and manganese, two naturally occurring minerals prevalent in all of Littleton's wells. A buildup of manganese is the primary cause of discolored water, which mostly occurs after water main breaks or other system disruptions.

Filtering the minerals from the raw water combined with flushing the minerals already in the distribution system will improve the appearance and taste of the drinking water. While close to achieving this goal, there remain critical milestones to meet in the next couple of months.

The new water treatment plant will filter raw water from the Whitcomb Avenue wells and the Spectacle Pond well. The iron filtration system is currently online, and the manganese filtration will begin in September. Starting up the filtration systems is a multi-stepped operation that includes testing and analyzing the results, to ensure the process is working correctly.

The treatment plant will also filter per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), a family of manmade chemical compounds found in elevated levels in the Spectacle Pond well. The PFAS filtration system is scheduled to come online after the iron and manganese filters, which help improve the efficacy of the PFAS removal.



In 2019, LELWD discovered PFAS in the Spectacle Pond well just over the state limit of 20 parts per trillion. Since then, use of the well has been limited. When in operation, the Spectacle Pond well water has been blended with Beaver Brook well water to keep PFAS levels under 20 ppt.

After the iron and manganese filters are online, the water treatment plant will begin receiving water from Spectacle Pond to blend with water from the Whitcomb Avenue wells. Because the Whitcomb Avenue wells produce a higher volume than the Beaver Brook source, more Spectacle Pond well water can then be used while remaining under the PFAS limits.

This increased supply will allow for a townwide flushing of the water distribution system while also meeting consumer demand. With the system flushed, and manganese and iron filtered from the drinking water at the plant, occurrences of discolored water are expected to decrease in frequency and duration.



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978-540-2222

#### Office Hours:

Mon. - Thurs. 6:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Closed Fridays

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## Knox & Hebert Join Board of Commissioners



*The LELWD Board of Commissioners (left to right) Dick Taylor, Ivan Pagacik, Joseph Knox, Melissa Hebert, and Scott Larsen.*

Joseph Knox and Melissa Hebert are new LELWD commissioners following the retirements of Bruce Trumbull and Jim Karr earlier this year.

Knox is a realtor who has been active in Littleton for over 30 years, with seven terms on the Select Board and 10 years on the Zoning Board of Appeals. He is currently a member of the Littleton Council on Aging. Knox has also given his time coaching youth sports. He coached the Littleton High School softball team and girl's ice hockey at Lawrence Academy, as well as the women's hockey team at the University of New Hampshire.

Hebert is a technology consultant for Microsoft who served three years on the Select Board. She serves as the secretary of the Long Lake Neighborhood Association, which she has been part of for nearly 10 years. She also served on the Master Plan Update Steering Committee from 2015 to 2017 and volunteered on the Littleton 300th Planning Committee.

Both were appointed at joint meetings of the Select Board and LELWD Board of Commissioners to fill the vacancies. Former commissioners Trumbull served for 23 years and Karr for 8 years.

## Sewer Forums Planned

LELWD plans to host quarterly sewer update forums with the first slated for October. A suggestion of residents and business owners, the forums are intended to provide updates on construction, sewer capacity limits, and progress on increasing capacity. Forums will also provide participants an opportunity to discuss the sewer project and operations directly with LELWD.

Construction kicked off this summer with crews starting to install sewer mains from the high school discharge site to King Street, in the Russell Street area, and across properties from the middle school up to the Town Hall on Shattuck Street. The contractor, Revoli Construction, has paved weekly over gravel-filled trenches where installation is completed. An effort was also made to complete work in school driveways and parking lots prior to the start of the school year.

Site work has also begun at 242 King Street, the location of the new water resource recovery facility. After



treatment, effluent will flow from the WRRF to the discharge site behind the Littleton High School. The site is permitted by the MassDEP for 243,000 gallons per day. It is expected that amount will be completely used by the initial sewer users. The need to expand capacity at the discharge site and search for an additional discharge site are being examined by civil engineers.

More information regarding the sewer forum will be available at a later date.