

Watts & Drops

OCTOBER 2023



New Online Outage Map

While power outages in Littleton and Boxborough are infrequent, they do happen. LELWD customers can now visit the online Outage Center to see which neighborhoods are without power.

Customers can also check the map to confirm LELWD is aware of an outage in their area. If not shown on the map, a customer should call LELWD at 978-540-2222 to report the outage.

The new Outage Center map is made possible by a recent upgrade in meter technology that continuously monitors the system and immediately reports outages. View the map at: www.lelwd.com/outage-center

Tree Program Surpasses 100-Tree Goal



LELWD staff planted 92 shade trees in the first week of October, which was national Public Power Week, celebrating municipally owned electric utilities. Eighteen additional trees were also planted this month, helping the program surpass its 100-tree goal this year. The Free Shade Tree program is one of the many Green Rewards available to LELWD customers to conserve energy, water and money. Visit lelwd.com to learn more.



On September 13th, the new Whitcomb Avenue Water Treatment Plant was dedicated in the memory of Margaret "Meg" Fraser Romilly, a beloved, long-time LELWD employee who passed suddenly in 2022. Her husband, Mark, and members of their family cut the ribbon with local, state and federal officials looking on. The \$20.25 million facility was \$4.2 million underbudget. The cost to ratepayers was reduced by \$4.2 million in state grants.

Water Treatment Plant Online, Flushing Underway

The new water treatment plant on Whitcomb Avenue has increased the supply of drinking water, providing enough to meet customer needs while the system is flushed to remove the sediments that cause discolored water. Flushing started October 16th and will continue through November.

Regular flushing was hampered by the curtailed use of the Spectacle Pond well where testing found elevated levels of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Spectacle Pond well water is now being piped to the treatment plant and blended with the supply from the Whitcomb Avenue wells to lower PFAS levels and meet drinking water standards. In November, the plant's PFAS filters will be fully online. The plant's iron and manganese filters are online, removing the sediments before they enter the water mains.

Visit lelwd.com/flushing for the flushing schedule and steps residents can take in the event flushing causes temporarily discolored water.

Sewer Project Awarded \$3M Loan Forgiveness

Sewer customers will save about \$3 million after the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust announced it is forgiving 10% of the loan for the Littleton Common Sewer Expansion Project. On the \$29,438,000 construction loan issued to Littleton by the Trust, up to \$2,943,800 will be forgiven.

"We know that certain communities face exceptional environmental and financial challenges, and the Trust uses loan forgiveness to help minimize the

financial impact of these vital water infrastructure projects," wrote Susan E. Perez, the Trust's Executive Director, in the Oct. 18th award letter.

The sewer project is moving forward with crews installing a sewer main along King Street, toward Littleton Common and preparing the 242 King Street site for construction of the Water Resource Recovery Facility. For regular updates on the project, visit lelwd.com/sewer-division and sign up for email notifications.



39 Ayer Road, PO Box 2406
Littleton, MA 01460

978-540-2222

Office Hours:

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

Closed Fridays

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Cedar Hill water tank project completed

With the new Cedar Hill water tank completed, crews turned to demolishing the old tank this month. The new tank ensures adequate water pressure for a large part of town. It is also the site of a new fiber-optic, emergency communications system that will improve the two-way radio traffic for the town's first-responders, highway personnel and LELWD crews.

Recent aerial images show the new Cedar Hill water tank that can hold 500,000 gallons. The black-and-white photo, taken with thermal imaging, shows the level of the water in the tank.



U.S. Dept. of Energy Grants \$300,000 to LELWD

The U.S. Department of Energy has selected Littleton Electric Light and Water Departments to receive a \$300,000 grant to develop and implement a strategy to accelerate communities in reaching clean energy targets through electrification and energy efficiency programs. Called an Electrification and Efficiency Blueprint, it will lead to lower energy costs for consumers, reduce fossil fuel emissions, and improve energy efficiency in Littleton, Boxborough and other communities served by municipal power providers.

LELWD was among 12 communities nationwide selected by the DOE to receive a portion of the \$8.8 million in awards to support the implementation of energy improvements in local governments and tribes across the country through a competitive application process, part of the larger Energy

Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program. Electrifying heating, cooling and cooking from fossil fuels helps to improve indoor air quality by eliminating combustion-related pollutants, such as carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxide, and particulate matter. The switch will also help the utilities better align the demand for energy to periods when intermittent renewable resources, such as solar and wind, are generating power.

LELWD is leading five other municipal power utilities in developing the electrification campaign, including Groveland Municipal Light Department, Holden Municipal Light Department, Middleborough Gas and Electric Department, Middleton Electric Light Department, and Rowley Municipal Light Plant.