



Greater Augusta
Utility District

Water | Wastewater | Stormwater

CURRENTS

WINTER 2024

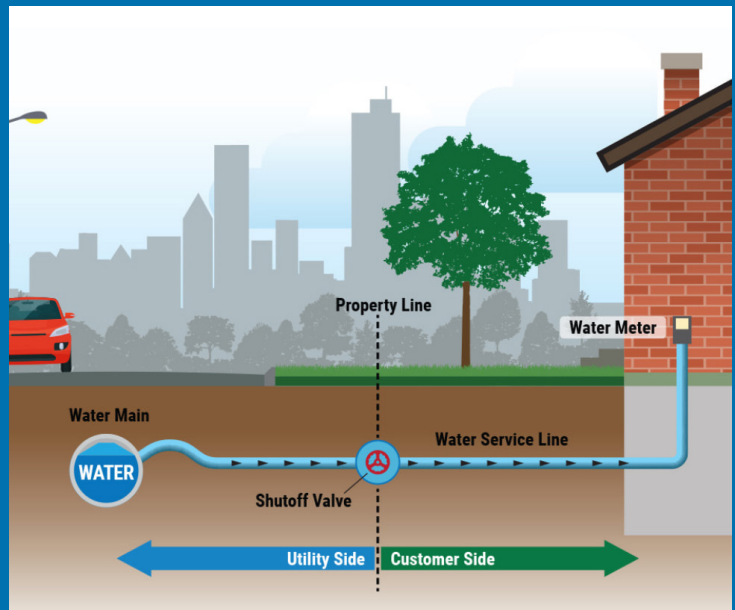
GET THE LEAD OUT!

The Biden-Harris Administration recently announced their final ruling on replacing all lead pipes within the next 10 years, and we are well ahead of the curve here at GAUD. The EPA also changed the way lead in drinking water is regulated. The updated rules required us to thoroughly investigate the types of pipes used in our water system to determine whether or not any of them could be a lead source.

We examined 6,137 water services (a service is a pipe that provides water from the large mains in the street to a customer's premises). Of those, 12 were determined to be lead. These customers have been notified so they can consider the potential risks and remedies.

99 services were determined to be galvanized iron. Galvanized iron services are a potential source of lead because they may have accumulated lead particles over many decades of use. There are currently 516 water services that were unknown based on a review of our records.

For more information on how we have been tackling this issue and to get educated on the effects of lead and how to test it please go to the following page on our site: www.GAUD/Lead



QUICK ACTION TAKEN AROUND PFAS EXCEEDANCE

In November our team was informed that the two Riverside wells exceeded PFAS standards set by the State of Maine. State standards limit PFAS to 20 parts per trillion. Sample results showed the level of PFAS at 23.3 parts per trillion. Our team considered options, discussed these options with the Board and then took the two Riverside wells out of service. We are reviewing potential solutions to this issue based on recent data related to filtering PFAS from drinking water. PFAS are commonly known as forever chemicals and refer to a family of chemicals that have been used for a long time in households and industrial products. For more information on PFAS and drinking water, you can learn more at www.GAUD.ws/PFAS



FORTIFYING GAUD AGAINST CYBERATTACKS

Cyberattacks unfortunately pose a threat to many institutions in the United States, especially in finance, education, healthcare, energy, and utilities. At GAUD, we are keenly aware of cyber risks and are devoted to making sure that our systems can both resist and recover from an attack online.

Our primary threats to digital/cyber security, as at most institutions, are phishing attacks that our people might fall for. Criminal entities create emails that look and sound legitimate enough to convince a person to click on a link that installs malware locally, which can in turn infect other internally connected systems. In the meantime, nation states—especially China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea—employ hundreds of people to hack into U.S. infrastructure, in order to gain sensitive information, obtain ransom, or simply sow chaos. That's why we continually train our staff to beware of phishing emails and to report any suspicious messages to our IT department.

Most successful utility penetrations occur when a device is added to a network without changing the default security passwords from the factory. This enables an adversary to gain access and then manipulate systems. We double-check our equipment over and over to ensure that credentials are not defaults.

We have also installed new firewalls to completely isolate our control system hardware and software from our office hardware and software to prevent adversaries from hacking into our operations.



GAUD BENEFITS FROM OUR ENERGETIC SUMMER INTERNS

We have been hiring summer interns for years now. We always enjoy getting to know a new batch of students.

This year our interns did some painting, inspected catch basins, inspected grease interceptors, located stormwater outfalls, evaluated data, combed through old records, and explained things like Snapchat and TikTok to their aging supervisors. We hate to see them go but we're proud of their achievements here and wish them the best going forward.

Incidentally, if you know a young nerd (we do a lot of engineering) who needs a summer job or is curious about how water, sewer, and stormwater systems work we'd be happy to talk with them.

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

We post any emergency water breaks or road closures along with some fun water trivia on our GAUD Facebook. Check us out and Like us at www.facebook.com/GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict



UNUSUAL SUMMER CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

Our team had a challenging drinking water pipe repair that was 24" in diameter (much bigger than we normally replace) and the location near the 5.7 million gallon water tank near the airport. Happy to report the repair was a success (shown in the photo)! Thanks to our amazing team.

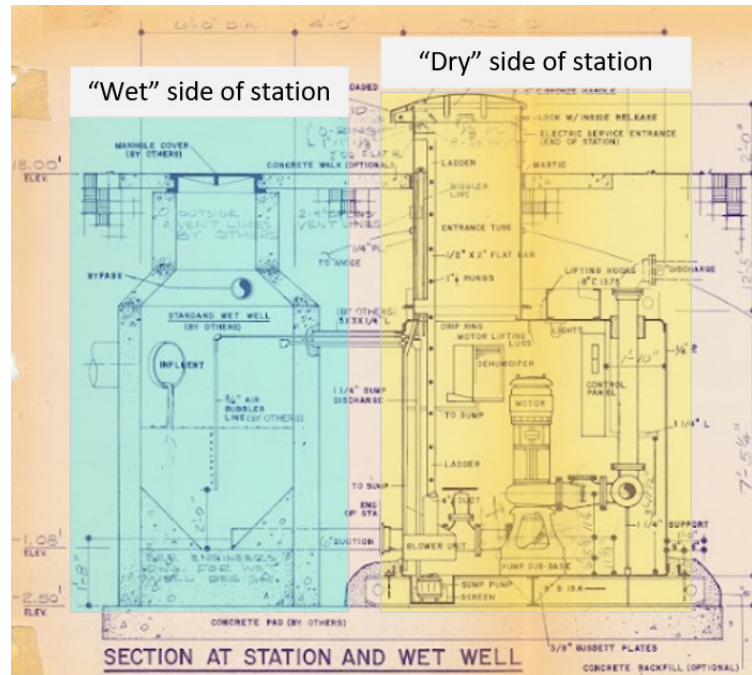


NEW SUBMERSIBLE PUMP STATION ON FRONT STREET

Work has begun on replacing a pumping station that was established in 1963 along Front Street that will reduce the amount of stormwater and groundwater needlessly dumped into the wastewater treatment plant which will help reduce our growing infrastructure costs.

The current pump station has been damaged over the years during significant flooding events. As seen in the following image, the old pump station has two parts: the 'wet' side (in blue) where the wastewater gets stored temporarily before it is pumped to the wastewater treatment plant. The 'dry' side (in yellow) contains all of the pumps and electrical equipment. It's easy to see how filling the 'dry' side with flood waters is, in engineering speak, "bad." The new station is designed to keep electrical equipment above foreseeable flood levels to protect it from future flooding.

The pipes and manholes on Front Street are even older than the pump station itself so we've been sealing them up the best we can to prevent groundwater from seeping into them. The manholes were sealed within the last year using a spray epoxy that our team installs on their own. Handling it this way reduced maintenance costs and avoided a costly contract that would only allow us to seal a few manholes a year. In another cost-saving maneuver, we also relined the sewer pipes—avoiding costly excavation that would have been disruptive to the city.



We want to express our thanks to our own Isreal Colpitt and his team for doing the initial pipe inspection work, sealing the manholes, and overseeing both the contract to reline the pipes and the actual installation of the pipe liners. It cannot be overstated how important it is for us to reline sewer and stormwater pipes whenever it is feasible to do so from a cost and maintenance perspective.

We are really looking forward to the day we can start using the new submersible pump station in 2025. More news to come as we start off the year.

OUR GIS HELPS KEEP TRAFFIC ROLLING... AND COSTS STALLING!

We've worked tirelessly over the past 20 years to create a comprehensive GIS (Geographic Information System)—a digital map with layers that show the location of all our pipes and other infrastructure relative to roads, buildings, and topography.

GIS allows our engineering team to evaluate the location, age and condition of pipes relative to other underground conflicts. This allows us to prioritize repairing the pipes that are most likely to fail and result in dangerous conditions or expensive repairs. We use this information to consider whether or not to participate in upcoming state and local paving projects.

The bottom line is less traffic disruption and savings on road work, which helps keep our rates stable. Another protocol we follow to enhance our street work's long-term efficiency is proactively replacing pipes that are past their prime whenever we encounter them.



TRUSTEE MEETINGS

The monthly meetings of your Board of Trustees are open to the public. For a complete schedule, or to watch archived videos of all meetings since November, 2014, scan the code below.



The Greater Augusta Utility District is a standalone quasi-municipal entity. Its roots go back to 1903, when the Augusta Water District was formed to take over a private water company. Today, the District is a regional public utility that owns, operates and maintains the water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure in Augusta; the wastewater system in Hallowell, and regional wastewater collection and treatment for the communities of Monmouth, Winthrop and Manchester.

CURRENTS

WINTER 2024

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

First the snow flies... then the holiday activities kick into high gear! On that note, we'd like to remind you that our office will be closed the following days:

Christmas – Wednesday, December 25, 2024

New Year Day – Wednesday, January 1, 2025

If you have an issue with your drinking water, sewer water or stormwater on a holiday, please alert Dispatch by calling **(207) 626-2370**.

All of us here at GAUD wish you and your loved ones a fun and festive holiday season!

