

## **GBID Water News – September 2018**

The extremely dry weather and drought conditions facing the province this summer affected Gillies Bay water users as well. The surface water source of Cranby Lake is particularly susceptible to the climate as this water source is a shallow man-made lake. During normal conditions, with our aging infrastructure and limited treatment facility, it can be a challenge to maintain water quality at the best of times. Compound that with the additional challenges of high temperatures and increased seasonal demand, this can result in our system falling below acceptable safety parameters.

This year, the increased demand was of particular concern. The amount of water being pulled through the system meant that the water did not have enough ‘contact time’ with the chlorine to effectively treat the water to make it safe to consume. There are other reasons that a boil water advisory or notice may be issued such as increased turbidity in the lake for example.

In order to help get the system back on track, the GBID implemented additional water restrictions. Water restriction stages are nothing new and most communities have a formal stage 1-4 process. This is something that GBID will be working on improving so that we can better communicate these with the community. We are also building a notice board in front of the fire hall to be able to post additional notices.

The GBID Trustees are volunteers working together with a few staff members to provide water for both safe consumption and fire protection within the community. Support of the community of water users is essential to achieve these goals. There is sometimes a notion that users feel entitled to use water whenever and however they deem appropriate and this is where inequity enters into the picture. Users are presently paying a flat rate for water and most comply with the requests to conserve, but there were several exceptions to the request to conserve resulting in the boil water remaining in effect longer than it may have been otherwise.

Equity and conservation are just two of the several reasons that GBID is moving towards water meters being installed on residential properties and eventually towards metered rates. The metering also allows the GBID to ‘see’ what is going on with our system and target repairs avoiding premature major capital expenditures. The other benefit is that by implementing a conservation strategy as set out by the provincial and federal governments, we stand a better chance at competing for funding.

During the first two phases of meter installations, we have been finding and fixing various deficiencies such as leaks; lack of back-flow prevention; pressure issues; erosion and failed valves. We will be continuing the meter installations over the coming year with a goal of completion by the end of 2019.

A presentation about the water system will be held at the community hall on October 11, 2018 at 7pm. GBID's water operator will present a slide show with an overview of how our water is treated, what the issues are and the plans we have for managing these challenges and progress on water meter project. Refreshments will be available; we encourage the community to attend.

Additional information is also available in the office or on the website.

<http://gillies-bay.ca/conservation/>

**Gillies Bay Master Water Plan 2016**

<http://gillies-bay.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Master-Water-Plan-Report.pdf>

**Gillies Bay Water Conservation Plan 2018**

<http://gillies-bay.ca/wp-content/uploads/GBID-Water-Conservation-Plan.pdf>

*Authored by: The Gillies Bay Improvement District Waterworks Committee 2018*