



# Change-Out to Smart Meter Optional

**W**ith technology advancing at rapid speed, consumers have been relying more and more on smart technology to complete many of their routine tasks. In the public water industry, meter reading equipment is no exception.

In 2014, the Water Authority of Great Neck North completed a meter modernization and replacement program. The equipment provides a great convenience to consumers by allowing meter readers to record water usage without gaining inside access to the property. The meters have a life expectancy of approximately 15 years.

Since then, more innovative devices have been developed and users can now read their water use data via a secure online website and Smartphone app. Other features



include the ability to access hourly water use, analyze water patterns and trigger alerts when there are signs of a leak.

The Authority does not expect the newer equipment to be available free of charge until the next meter change-out program is initiated in approximately 10 to 15 years. Until then, the Authority will only cover expenses to install the state-of-the-

art meters to replace malfunctioning meters that are deemed to be unrepairable, as a result of the current meter failing.

As a courtesy to those who wish to purchase the more modern meter technology now, rather than wait for the next meter change-out program, the Authority is making the equipment available for a price of \$256, which includes installation. Please call the Authority at (516) 487-7973 for more information.

## No Rate Increase for 2018 10th Consecutive Year

**A**s prices for consumer goods and services continue to rise, the Water Authority of Great Neck North Board of Directors is pleased to have adopted a 2018 budget that holds the line on water rates. The coming year marks the 10th consecutive budget without an increase in the rate schedules for water use.

The board recognizes the Authority's employees and management team for their dedicated service and ongoing efforts to help keep costs down, while consistently providing the highest quality water and exemplary customer service at all times.

## Water Authority of Great Neck North

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# Cost of Bottled Water Too Great

**W**ith bottled water sales in the U.S. still climbing dramatically, topping off at \$16 billion in 2016, consumers are reminded that tap water is the far better choice, both economically and environmentally. Tap water is more closely regulated and undergoes more rigorous monitoring and testing than bottled water, yet it costs fractions of a penny compared to bottled water.

Still, the price differential is minuscule in comparison to the price future generations will pay for the environmental consequences of manufacturing, transportation and solid waste disposal associated with plastic bottles.

Americans are currently consuming 12 billion gallons of bottled water in more than 50 billion plastic bottles annually. Manufacturers are using 20 million barrels of fossil fuels annually to meet the U.S. demand for bottled water. That's enough to fuel 1.5 million cars for one year.

Less than 30 percent of those bottles are recycled and about 70 percent end up in landfills, in our waterways and along the sides of our roadways. Typically made of polyethylene terephthalate, a petroleum-based plastic material more commonly called PET, the plastic bottles take up to 450 years to decompose.

Since price has not stopped American consumers from purchasing their drinking water in designer bottles, 50 percent of which are filled from municipal taps, perhaps knowledge of the devastating impact their disposal will have on our environment will influence the public to fill their glasses with tap water instead.



## Interesting to Note:

- The amount of water actually sold in bottles is relatively tiny, compared to tap water volumes. United States public water systems supply more than 1 billion gallons of tap water every hour of the day.
- The total amount of bottled water Americans purchase in one year would only supply U.S. tap water needs for 12 hours.

# Give Easy Access to Hydrants At All Times

**B**locking, obstructing the view or altering the look of a hydrant may impede firefighters from locating it quickly, wasting precious time when every second counts. This can have serious consequences when it comes to saving lives and property.

Consumers are reminded to clear the snow away from the hydrants nearest their homes this winter season, particularly after the plows have pushed the snow to the side of the road. The few minutes it will take to complete the chore can go a long way in an emergency situation. Ideally, a 36-inch walk space to the front and a 20-inch area around the sides and back should be provided.

At the same time, be cautious of any vehicles passing by.

Under no circumstances should anyone park a car or plant anything near a fire hydrant. Additionally, the public should never paint, repair or alter a hydrant in any way.

Public awareness about fire safety and the practice of providing access to hydrants at all times is important for the protection of the community.



# Water Main WORK

The Authority is planning to replace approximately 13,000 linear feet of water main, along with valves, water hydrants and services in Great Neck Estates and Saddle Rock Estates in the Spring of 2018. Additionally, approximately 800 feet of water main will be added to accommodate a new development in Greenway Terrace.

The Authority owns and maintains more than 117 miles of water mains that carry water to more than 32,000 consumers.

## Credit Card Payment Optional

Residents now have the convenient option of paying their water bills with a credit card either online or through an automated phone system. Credit Card payments will NOT be accepted in the office.

A link to online payment choices is available on the Authority's website at [www.waterauthorityofgreatnecknorth.com](http://www.waterauthorityofgreatnecknorth.com). The "Payment Options" link on the bottom of the home page provides access links to the new Credit Card Payment option, as well as the pre-existing Direct Debit Payment option. The process is simple to set up and user-friendly.

### CREDIT CARD PAYMENT

Paymentus, a third party payment card provider, will charge users a \$5.95 processing fee per transaction. Fees are not shared by the Authority. Transactions are limited to \$750. Multiple transactions can be made to cover bills that exceed that amount. Additionally, bills can be paid with a charge card via an automated phone system by calling 1-844-291-3575.

### DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENT

By completing and submitting an authorization form available on line, consumers can grant the Authority permission to automatically debit their identified bank account each billing period, 10 days from the bill date. There are no service fees associated with the Direct Debit Payment.

## ..... Update ..... on EFC Projects

Utilizing funds from the NY State Environmental Facilities Corporation (\$3.759 million in the form of grant money and the remaining as an \$11.279 million zero interest bond), the Authority is continuing to take steps to harden its infrastructure by raising wellheads to protect against flooding and adding more stand-by power sources—among other projects.

### PORTABLE GENERATOR PROJECT COMPLETED



The Authority recently purchased a new portable generator to provide emergency redundancy back-up power at multiple locations. Manual transfer switches and plugs have been installed at remote well sites, so the portable unit can be deployed as needed and quickly connected to support the Authority's distribution system at short notice.

The new modern apparatus includes current operational safety features and has a larger kilowatt output capacity than its older counterparts.

## 2016 Quality Report Correction

Although no violations occurred, the 2016 Drinking Water Quality Report published by the Water Authority of Great Neck North inadvertently contained an error, which is required by the Nassau County Department of Health to be reported to the public and a correction made.

In the *Table of Detected Contaminants*, the maximum level of Perchlorate detected during 2016 should have been listed as 5 ug/l or micrograms per liter, which corresponds to one part of liquid in one billion parts of liquid or parts-per-billion. The minimum amount of Perchlorate detected during 2016 was correctly stated at 0.

The water provided to consumers by the Authority is safe to drink and continually meets and exceed all standards set by the New York State Department of Health and the Federal government.



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**W**ater Authority officials maintain open dialogue with the Nassau County Office of Emergency Management and numerous law enforcement authorities for the protection of the public water supply and to remain readily prepared to handle any emergency situations that may arise.

Residents are asked to exercise vigilance as they travel about the community. The public should contact the Authority at (516) 487-7973 or the police department if any suspicious activity is observed on or near Authority property—including pump houses, water storage facilities and fire hydrants.



### Disaster Preparedness Plan in Place

In the event of an emergency in which public water cannot be consumed after boiling, the Authority has developed a plan for supplying drinking water to consumers.

A location for an Emergency Water Distribution Center, equipped with full generator backup power, has been designated. It is safe from traffic hazards and would allow multiple vehicles and lines of people to effectively flow in and out to access water. Pre-prepared gang tap set-ups (pictured above), would be utilized to feed potable water from a designated hydrant near the center.

Additionally, a plan is in place to use tanker trucks to bring bulk water supply into the area. Bottled water would also be brought in to supply medical facilities and residents with special medical conditions.