

100 Years and Counting

LOCAL AND RENEWABLE ACTON WATER



**Water — A needed resource —
help us protect it — we all need it**

How we got here

The Acton Water District (AWD) marks its Centennial, 1912-2012, of dependable, public water supply.

The AWD is not a town department. Nor is it subsidized by the Town of Acton. Its mission of getting potable and palatable water to each customer's tap is only made possible by the revenue garnered from the water takers. The quarterly water bill along with fees and prudent investments is what sustains our operation. As citizen 'water takers', we have derived one hundred years of safe drinking water, fire protection services, quality of life and economic support. This omnipresence of clean and reliable water supply is an extraordinary task that water takers often take for granted.

We know from experience it takes a water supply adequate to meet the needs of citizens — users who expect a reliable system and acknowledge a good value. Water is the most critical and vital natural resource. The Acton Water District spends significant resources planning for the need to expand the supply of water through new source examination and technological investments; while working to reduce demands as much as possible through multiple conservation programs.

The Massachusetts Water Management Act limits ground water withdrawals based on historical pumping, environmental conditions, and sustainable pumping levels. However, the Acton Community continues to grow, making for a delicate balancing act between meeting the community's demands while working to reduce our demand through efficiency. It requires professional management to filter, manage, and secure this vital life resource. In April, 1895, Acton Town Meeting delegated a team of five citizens — Francis Conant, Delette H. Hall, Hanson A. Littlefield, William D. Tuttle and Daniel J. Wetherbee — to employ a competent engineer to examine sources of water, estimate takers, develop a proposal, and report back. They hired an engineer out of Boston, Mr. Frank L. Fuller, who dug test holes throughout the town and prepared a written recommendation to the Town.

Seventeen years later, the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts passed Chapter 326 of the Acts of 1912. The farmers, business interests and residents joined together and voted to accept the new legislation. They officially incorporated the West and South Water Supply District of Acton on April 16, 1912 by a vote of 57 in favor and one against. The wisdom of this independent charter by the state is important to us takers since it allows the



freedom to focus 100% on water needs, free of other municipal functions. In 1947 the District bounds expanded as the town began to grow. Between 1960 and 1979, the system grew to approximately 50% of its current size. With this growth in town, the District boundaries were once again expanded to include all of Acton in 1962 and the name of the District was officially changed to the Water Supply District of Acton.

The AWD's first Water Commissioners were Chairman Edgar H. Hall, with Charles H. Fairbanks and Waldo E. Whitcomb. The first Clerk was Charles H. Mead. The Commissioners that serve today, Leonard Phillips, Steven Stuntz and Ronald Parenti, continue to hold themselves to the same high standards of service and focus on maintaining the high quality of water established by the original three. Over the years, only 22 men have served as Commissioners including our current Board.

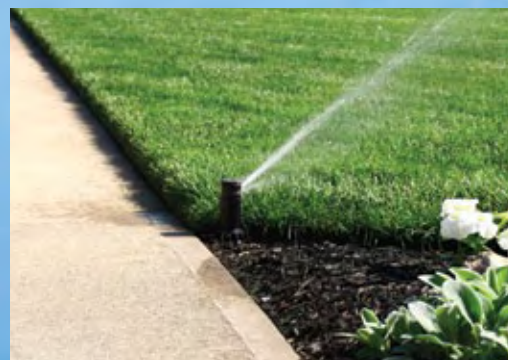
As we pass into the next 100 years, the District has been the beneficiary of four key strategic benefits and capabilities. They are: **Sound Financial Practices, Active Citizen and Professional Involvement, Teamwork, and Strong Technological Involvement by an engaged Leadership Team.**

ESTIMATE OF COST.		
Pipe, 36x27 1/2 in. cast iron pipe at \$1000 per ft.	\$36,000 00	\$33,535 50
Pipe laying, 36x27 1/2 in. at \$0.33	\$11,880 00	\$11,880 00
Excavation, 36x27 1/2 in. at \$0.25	\$9,000 00	\$9,000 00
Backfill, 36x27 1/2 in. at \$0.25	\$9,000 00	\$9,000 00
Gravel, 36x27 1/2 in. at \$0.25	\$9,000 00	\$9,000 00
Stand pipe, 24 in. diam., 100 ft. high, capacity 30,000 gallons,	\$5,000 00	\$5,000 00
Foundation for same,	\$500 00	\$500 00
Roof, (wood) = "	\$500 00	\$500 00
(Pumping Station and Chimney, brick),	\$5,000 00	\$5,000 00
Wells,	\$5,000 00	\$5,000 00
Pumping plant,	\$5,000 00	\$5,000 00
Special castings,	\$5,000 00	\$5,000 00
Gates, 6 in. at \$15 00,	\$900 00	\$900 00
12 in. at \$15 00,	\$1,800 00	\$1,800 00
24 in. at \$15 00,	\$3,600 00	\$3,600 00
36 in. at \$15 00,	\$5,400 00	\$5,400 00
60 in. at \$15 00,	\$9,000 00	\$9,000 00
90 in. at \$15 00,	\$13,500 00	\$13,500 00
120 in. at \$15 00,	\$18,000 00	\$18,000 00
150 in. at \$15 00,	\$22,500 00	\$22,500 00
180 in. at \$15 00,	\$27,000 00	\$27,000 00
210 in. at \$15 00,	\$31,500 00	\$31,500 00
240 in. at \$15 00,	\$36,000 00	\$36,000 00
270 in. at \$15 00,	\$40,500 00	\$40,500 00
300 in. at \$15 00,	\$45,000 00	\$45,000 00
330 in. at \$15 00,	\$49,500 00	\$49,500 00
360 in. at \$15 00,	\$54,000 00	\$54,000 00
390 in. at \$15 00,	\$58,500 00	\$58,500 00
420 in. at \$15 00,	\$63,000 00	\$63,000 00
450 in. at \$15 00,	\$67,500 00	\$67,500 00
480 in. at \$15 00,	\$72,000 00	\$72,000 00
510 in. at \$15 00,	\$76,500 00	\$76,500 00
540 in. at \$15 00,	\$81,000 00	\$81,000 00
570 in. at \$15 00,	\$85,500 00	\$85,500 00
600 in. at \$15 00,	\$90,000 00	\$90,000 00
630 in. at \$15 00,	\$94,500 00	\$94,500 00
660 in. at \$15 00,	\$99,000 00	\$99,000 00
690 in. at \$15 00,	\$103,500 00	\$103,500 00
720 in. at \$15 00,	\$108,000 00	\$108,000 00
750 in. at \$15 00,	\$112,500 00	\$112,500 00
780 in. at \$15 00,	\$117,000 00	\$117,000 00
810 in. at \$15 00,	\$121,500 00	\$121,500 00
840 in. at \$15 00,	\$126,000 00	\$126,000 00
870 in. at \$15 00,	\$130,500 00	\$130,500 00
900 in. at \$15 00,	\$135,000 00	\$135,000 00
930 in. at \$15 00,	\$139,500 00	\$139,500 00
960 in. at \$15 00,	\$144,000 00	\$144,000 00
990 in. at \$15 00,	\$148,500 00	\$148,500 00
1020 in. at \$15 00,	\$153,000 00	\$153,000 00
1050 in. at \$15 00,	\$157,500 00	\$157,500 00
1080 in. at \$15 00,	\$162,000 00	\$162,000 00
1110 in. at \$15 00,	\$166,500 00	\$166,500 00
1140 in. at \$15 00,	\$171,000 00	\$171,000 00
1170 in. at \$15 00,	\$175,500 00	\$175,500 00
1200 in. at \$15 00,	\$180,000 00	\$180,000 00
1230 in. at \$15 00,	\$184,500 00	\$184,500 00
1260 in. at \$15 00,	\$189,000 00	\$189,000 00
1290 in. at \$15 00,	\$193,500 00	\$193,500 00
1320 in. at \$15 00,	\$198,000 00	\$198,000 00
1350 in. at \$15 00,	\$202,500 00	\$202,500 00
1380 in. at \$15 00,	\$207,000 00	\$207,000 00
1410 in. at \$15 00,	\$211,500 00	\$211,500 00
1440 in. at \$15 00,	\$216,000 00	\$216,000 00
1470 in. at \$15 00,	\$220,500 00	\$220,500 00
1500 in. at \$15 00,	\$225,000 00	\$225,000 00
1530 in. at \$15 00,	\$229,500 00	\$229,500 00
1560 in. at \$15 00,	\$234,000 00	\$234,000 00
1590 in. at \$15 00,	\$238,500 00	\$238,500 00
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1680 in. at \$15 00,	\$252,000 00	\$252,000 00
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1770 in. at \$15 00,	\$265,500 00	\$265,500 00
1800 in. at \$15 00,	\$270,000 00	\$270,000 00
1830 in. at \$15 00,	\$274,500 00	\$274,500 00
1860 in. at \$15 00,	\$279,000 00	\$279,000 00
1890 in. at \$15 00,	\$283,500 00	\$283,500 00
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1980 in. at \$15 00,	\$297,000 00	\$297,000 00
2010 in. at \$15 00,	\$301,500 00	\$301,500 00
2040 in. at \$15 00,	\$306,000 00	\$306,000 00
2070 in. at \$15 00,	\$310,500 00	\$310,500 00
2100 in. at \$15 00,	\$315,000 00	\$315,000 00
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2220 in. at \$15 00,	\$333,000 00	\$333,000 00
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2340 in. at \$15 00,	\$351,000 00	\$351,000 00
2370 in. at \$15 00,	\$355,500 00	\$355,500 00
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2490 in. at \$15 00,	\$373,500 00	\$373,500 00
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2880 in. at \$15 00,	\$432,000 00	\$432,000 00
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5460 in. at \$15 00,	\$819,000 00	\$819,000 00
5490 in. at \$15 00,	\$823,500 00	\$823,500 00
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5580 in. at \$15 00,	\$837,000 00	\$837,000 00
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5670 in. at \$15 00,	\$850,500 00	\$850,500 00
5700 in. at \$15 00,	\$855,000 00	\$855,000 00
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5790 in. at \$15 00,	\$868,500 00	\$868,500 00
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6270 in. at \$15 00,	\$940,500 00	\$940,500 00
6300 in. at \$15 00,	\$945,000 00	\$945,000 00
6330 in. at \$15 00,	\$949,500 00	\$949,500 00
6360 in. at \$15 00,	\$954,000 00	\$954,000 00
6390 in. at \$15 00,	\$958,500 00	\$958,500 00
6420 in. at \$15 00,	\$963,000 00	\$963,000 00
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6480 in. at \$15 00,	\$972,000 00	\$972,000 00
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6660 in. at \$15 00,	\$999,000 00	\$999,000 00
6690 in. at \$15 00,	\$1,003,500 00	\$1,003,500 00
6720 in. at \$15 00,	\$1,008,000 00	\$1,008,000 00
6750 in. at \$15 00,	\$1,012,500 00	\$1,012,500 00
6780 in. at \$15 00,	\$1	

How we go forward

As we begin the second century of clean and dependable Acton water, consider how you can contribute to the stewardship of this natural resource in your daily routine. Great examples are to reduce lawn area and outdoor water use, replace old water guzzling fixtures and appliances, and be mindful of the products you use, store, and dispose of at home or work.

Conservation is King! Groundwater is the source of Acton's drinking water. Efficient use and conservation can help keep our water use in check; this will help ensure the future of our water supply. **Water has been and continues to be vital to life in this community; preserve it, protect it, and be aware of water issues.**



A manicured lawn requires a lot of water to maintain.



An Acton home replaced their lawn with a wild flower garden which looks beautiful and uses a lot less water.

Sound financial practices

From the earliest days, as the District has grown, we have faced many crises. The District has maintained a fair, 'business like' practice. A simple expression often used among the District founders was, "Users Who Take, Pay."

Through the years, leadership has tried to maintain prices at reasonable levels for our residential, commercial, industrial and municipal customers. District Treasurers, beginning with Frank Holt and continuing with Stephen Peterson, Sr., Linda Larson and current Treasurer Mary Jo Bates work closely with the Finance Committee and Commissioners to ensure the financial security of the District. The District has been able to aid in community and economic development by working closely with developers and Town departments to provide a safe and ample supply of water and to promote water efficiency and conservation.

In the mid 1970s, the District was challenged by severely threatening discovery of pollution in the South Acton aquifer by a major corporation, W.R. Grace & Company. The subsequent conviction and settlement of the hazardous waste damage created in this incident brought a significant opportunity to provide financial support to District activities going forward — and even continues today. W.R. Grace agreed to a cash settlement of \$2,250,000 to the AWD in reparation.

The money from this settlement was invested prudently instead of spent immediately. More than 30 years later, the District maintains the settlement principal, having spent only interest earned, approximately \$4,500,000. Future generations of water takers will be better served by such responsible financial decision making.



AWD Finance Committee, a volunteer group: (left to right, front row) Charles Bradley, Member; William Kingman, Member; David Butler, Chair; (second row) Brewster Conant, Ex Officio Member; William Guthlein, Member, Non-Voting.



Filtration Tower installed at Assabet 1 well site, 1982.



Carl Troupe, Superintendant, directing tank placement.



Treasurer/Collector Mary Jo Bates (left), raises her right hand to be sworn in to office. Charles 'Chip' Orcutt, District Clerk, (center) does the Honors. Most recent Treasurer/Collector Linda M. Larson, witnesses.

Citizen involvement

At its founding in 1912, citizens formed the District by banding together for their common good — to establish a dependable supply system for clean water and fire protection.

By the late 1970's, a significant instance of contamination of the wells in South Acton was identified and researched, and the source was actively pursued. This was originally driven by citizens. In 1978, the two Assabet Wells were shutdown because of what was thought to be contamination. It was initially neighborhood residents who initiated alerts to Town and District officials. These Actonians formed an activist citizen organization called ACES (Acton Citizens for Environmental Safety). They began to

assemble resources from their ranks and from friends in the region. They found technical resources, political support, and provided active monitoring of the W.R. Grace Manufacturing Plant in South Acton. This involvement was eventually welcome by Town and District officials as the severity of the contamination and needed resources became evident.

Beginning then, and continuing today, important ACES members have included Marty Koenig, Mary Swallow, Charlotte Sagoff, Mary Michelman, Linda O'Neill, John Swallow, Dick McCracken, and Carol Holley to mention a few. Members and

friends have delivered critical citizen support and pressure to supplement government resources and interact with the Town and District, as well Federal and State authorities managing ground water cleanup tasks. The sources of contamination at W.R. Grace were identified over a number of years and the site was eventually established as a federal Superfund site. Proper procedures were established and appropriate steps taken to rectify the problem by the Department of Environmental Quality Engineering (the predecessor of today's Department of Environmental Protection) of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the US Environmental Protection Agency and W.R. Grace. Some Acton Town Officials who are said to have made a difference in this time included the volunteer members of the Acton Conservation Commission, Steve Calishman and the Acton Board of Health, Pam Resor as a Town Selectman, State Representative and eventually State Senator, and Steve Anderson, Acton's Town Counsel.

In 1982, the Clapp Wells in West Acton were shutdown during the summer for contamination. Through state funding, a Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) treatment facility was constructed that now permits pumping of this vital water supply. In 1984, the Lawsbrook Well in South Acton was shut down. A hydrogeological study showed again that the W.R. Grace site was the likely contributor to the source. The result is that today the contaminated soils and groundwater at the Grace facility have been largely remediated. Ongoing treatment systems and monitoring are required to further ensure the safety of Acton's water resources in this area of Town. Active ACES efforts and the many citizens they helped to become aware of the problem share a significant role in protecting the water supply. ACES remains a stakeholder in the management of the EPA Superfund site cleanup today.



John Macleod, then District Manager; with Commissioner William Walsh; Commissioner Stephen Stuntz; Assistant and US Congressman Chester Atkins; and Commissioner Alvin Piper.



The members of the volunteer WLMAC (Water Land Management Advisory Committee), Margaretha Eckhart, Barry Rosen, Chair, Paul Malchodi, Charles Olmstead and John Cipar, circa 2005.



Joseph Lauzon, Past Commissioner, with a 'homemade parade float' prepared to support the 'Acton Pure Water' project.



AWD leaders listen to Massachusetts State Senator James Eldridge. (left to right) David Butler; Charles Bradley; Chris Allen, District Manager; and Sen. Eldridge.

Link to Acton wells probed Grace uses cancer-causing chemical

By JIM SCHUH
Of the News Staff

ACTON — A W.R. Grace Co. official acknowledged Tuesday night that his firm still uses the cancer-causing chemical found in greatest quantity in recent tests of a new-lined town well.

(Related story, 1A)

"We use it (1,1-dichloroethene) in a latex compound," Robert Phipps, W.R. Grace Co.'s technical supervisor, told the people at a Board of Selectmen's meeting in which an oral progress report on a study of groundwater contamination was presented.

"We have very little effluent containing it," Phipps said. The firm presently has no orders for the compound, which is used in making indoor-outdoor carpeting, he said.

The Water District Commissioners decided Tuesday night to institute a moratorium on water use outside the town to compensate for the loss.

The more than two-hour meeting at the Acton Town Hall had centered on the scientific aspects of the hydrogeologic study of the area by Goldberg Dineen and Associates of Boston, under contract to Acton's Selectmen. It followed a report, issued up to date his concerns over lack of government action against the continued use of the chemical by the firm.

"Why are they letting them go on? Why don't they stop them?" he asked. "They are continuing to add and increase the problem."

"I can understand your concern," responded Dr. Thomas Spitzer, the chief of the Technical Support Division.

DANGEROUS CARGO — The W.R. Grace Co. in Acton is still using the carcinogenic chemical 1,1-dichloroethene, but there are reasons why they are not stopping its use.

After two weeks ago, the same type of chemical has shown up in two nearby town wells, one of which is used for drinking water.

Acton water test reveals carcinogens

By JIM SCHUH
Of the News Staff

ACTON — Three chemicals found in two Acton wells closed since December have been described by government specialists as carcinogens.

Assabet Wells One and Two, which supplied 40 percent of the town's water for some five years, were ordered indefinitely closed by the town water commissioners Dec. 19 after tests showed the presence of organic chemicals.



Moderator Richard O'Brien discussed ACES (Acton Citizens for Environmental Safety) historic support with Cofounder Marty Koenig, who lived nearby WR Grace facility and helped signal its contamination danger.



Mary Michelman was one of the leaders of ACES, an advocate for water resources.



Charles W. Orcutt, II, AWD Moderator, AWD Legal Counsel, respected business and community leader devoted to District issues.

Technology involvement

The Acton Water District is a technical leader among public water suppliers in Massachusetts. Dependence of water supply on the availability and unpredictability of precipitation to recharge ground water sources is challenging. This complexity is compounded by the advancing science and awareness of what is found in water today, and emerging regulations therein.



(front row, left to right) Gary Odoardi, Carl Troupe, (second row) Jim Neville, Randy Troupe, Bobby Delaney, 1986.

As the standards for acceptable contaminants in concentrations present increase, Acton Water District employees, with technical knowledge, understanding, and proficiency utilize state-of-the-art water filtration methods to meet these more stringent state regulatory standards. Increasingly, with advances in the sensitivity of laboratory instrumentation, new methods for measuring and detecting contamination are available. As the public becomes more educated and informed, customer service and consumer confidence are significantly more challenging.

Since the enactment of the Safe Drinking Water Act and the discovery and subsequent treatment of contamination, the District has hired various technical staff members. At one point the District ran a State certified drinking water testing laboratory and John Swallow was employed as a part time chemist. During the 1980's, Larry Dayian served as the District's in house environmental engineer. Bob Murch was hired to implement increasingly complex computer controls and metering systems during the 1990's. As Acton's population continued to grow and water use increased, Jane Ceraso was hired as the District's first Environmental Manager to address water use and increase awareness of Acton's water resources. In 2009, Matthew Mostoller replaced Jane and continues to address sustainability and assist operations with the implementation of advanced treatment systems.

AWD employed filtration technology comparatively early in the game. In the mid 1970s, the District went from being a small, relatively remote water supply entity to an industry leader in the treatment of drinking water. Successfully working shoulder to shoulder with the US EPA and State regulators in the highly visible W.R. Grace Superfund Site gave credibility to Acton's technical expertise.

In 2007, the District contracted the construction of a major \$6,000,000 water treatment plant in North Acton near Kennedy Sand & Gravel. This facility takes advantage of state-of-the-art membrane filtration to remove organic color in groundwater to produce a more aesthetically pleasing drinking water for water takers in the growing North Acton area. In the imminent future, other currently operating sources of the system will require implementation of filtration technologies to insure the highest quality and quantity of drinking water.



NAWTP (North Acton Water Treatment Plant), completed in 2009, is engineered to address water filtration.



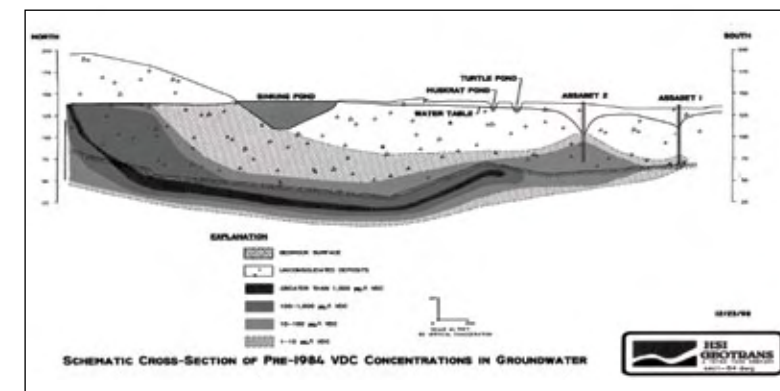
Filling new carbon vessels at Assabet wells, South Acton, 1982.



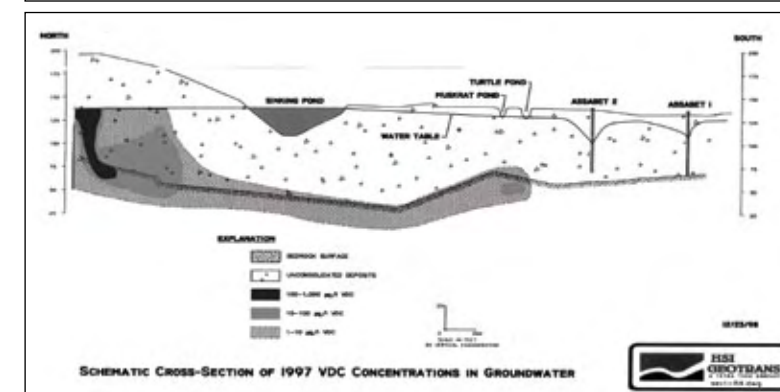
AWD 1999 construction and services crew: Stephen Peterson Jr, Ron Davan, Patrick DeCesare, Paul McGovern, Charles Rouleau, Robert Murch.



Helen Argento (left) and Debra Pyrro work at their desks in the office, 2000.



Drawing shows quantity of contamination present in ground water (indicated by dark, shaded areas) in 1984.



Drawing shows quantity of contamination present in ground water (indicated by dark, shaded areas) in 1997.

After thirteen years — a dramatic reduction in concentrations.

Stability of the leadership at AWD



(top, left to right) Treasurer/Collector Stephen Peterson, Sr., Assistant Linda Larson, Environmental Manager Larry Dayian, Secretary Rochelle Hillman, District Manager John MacLeod.

Engaged, passionate hands-on AWD strategic leadership has been consistent for much of its first 100 years. The current Board of Water Commissioners have held their elected seats for over a quarter century. Their quiet work ethic, technical and operations experience and the crises they have addressed over their time in leadership at the District is impressive and has served Acton water takers well.

Not to be outdone, the Finance Committee, William Kingman, Charles Bradley and David Butler, have a combined contribution of more than fifty years of service, another exceptional storehouse of corporate knowledge. They have additional expertise in long term alternate member Brewster Conant and newly appointed associate member William Guthlein. Your Moderator, Dick O'Brien, has served for over 18 years.

Prior to that, District Moderators John Putnam and Charles Orcutt had served for many years. The Water Land Management Advisory Committee (WLMAC) is a citizen volunteer group made up of two members appointed by the Water commissioners, one appointed by the Board of Selectmen, and two appointed by the moderator who act in an advisory role to the Water Commissioners for research and recommendations. This group has been convened over the years relative to sand and gravel operations on District land, treatment system technologies, and District expansion and capacity. Current members of the WLMAC include Margaretha Eckhardt, Paul Malchodi, Charles Olmstead, Barry Rosen, and until recently John Cipar.

District Superintendents and, since 1981, District Mangers, have also served for extended engagements. They include Superintendents James Fitzgerald, George E. Clapp, Raymond L. Harris, Stephen Scribner, Carl Troupe, and Stephen Peterson Jr. John "Jock" Macleod, first a District Superintendent, was promoted in 1981 to become the first District Manager, retired in 1996, completing an amazing career having moved the District through the WR Grace South Acton Contamination settlement and into a professionally managed District Team. Jim Deming relieved Mr. Macleod and brought large and small community water supply management experience and technology development to the organization. In 2007, Christopher Allen, relieved Mr. Deming, bringing his technical and management development background in the water supply industry to bring AWD into the future.

The AWD enters its second century of continuous operations. Through the diligence of the Water Commissioners, the District Staff, with assistance from Town,

State and Federal officials, and the technical expertise now gained by the District Team, and active participation and diligence of its citizen water takers. We will continue to enjoy a high quality of water at a fair and equitable price for many years.



Commissioner Ronald Parenti, Commissioner Stephen Stuntz, Treasurer/Collector Linda Larson, Commissioner Leonard Phillips, Auditor Maureen Waters Mara, Legal Counsel Mary Bassett, District Manager Jim Deming, and Finance Committee Theodore Jarvis, 1998.



Harry Morse, Two Term Water District Commissioner (1976-1981) and Community leader.



Robert Koch, retired Feb. 15, 2011, after 30 years. Like many before him, he joined the District as a laborer and earned promotion and a retirement from the organization.



Richard O'Brien, current District Moderator, has served the District for over eighteen years.



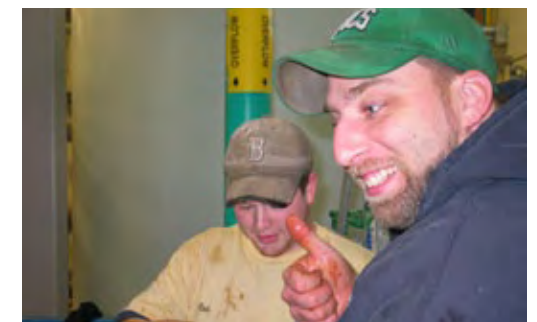
Present at the dedication of Christofferson Well, Gladys Christofferson, Commissioner Joseph Lauzon, and Commissioner Leonard Phillips, 1984.



Outgoing District Manager John MacLeod welcomes his successor, new District Manager Jim Deming at the District Offices.



Massachusetts State Senator Pamela Resor (left) presents a Commonwealth Conservation Award Citation to Chris Allen, Laurie Burt, MassDEP Commissioner, Dick Kilhart, Mass Rural Water Association, and Jane Ceraso, 2008.



Repairs with Rob Dionne and James Trippier.



Board of Water Commissioners, Ronald Parenti, Leonard Phillips, Stephen Stuntz



AWD Office Staff, 2012: (top left to right) Robert Murch, MIS Coordinator; Mary Jo Bates, Treasurer/Collector; Chris Allen, District Manager; (front row) Matt Mostoller, Environmental Manager; Beth Secinaro and Elaine Lawson



AWD Operations Staff, 2012: (top left to right) Stephen Peterson Jr., Keith Kupfer, Jamie Trippier, Andrew Peterson; (front row) Paul McGovern, Don Callahan, Rob Dionne, Charlie Rouleau

Acton Water District

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