

City of
Fitchburg



Department of
Public Works

**301 Broad Street
Fitchburg, MA 01420
Phone: 978-829-1900**

DPW Weekly Update April 13 - April 19, 2020

Dear Mayor, Councilors, and Colleagues;

As we enter the seventh week under the COVID-19 state of emergency, DPW continues to provide essential services to the City while taking care to protect our staff.

- Staffing levels across DPW's six divisions were at 54% during last week:
 - 7% Vacancies, 5% Time Off, 20% Off-Shift, and 14% COVID-19 related.
- Wastewater Plant operators completed the first week of 24/7 sequestering at the East Plant. Three operators have worked, slept, and lived at the plant for a full week without leaving the premises in an effort to eliminate the possibility of being infected by the COVID-19. The second shift of operators rotated in for their week stay on Sunday.
- Over the past few weeks Wastewater Administrations Coordinator Wendy Boulay has been putting her seamstress talents to use sewing masks for City staff and community members. Chances are if you have seen City personnel wearing a beautiful fabric mask it came from Wendy. All of us here at DPW are very appreciative of Wendy's willingness to share her beautiful handmade masks with us and helping us all stay safe and healthy.
- Emergency Management Director Rich Liberatore continued to provide PPE and guidance to DPW. Thanks to his coordination PPE needs are being met across all DPW Divisions.
- Health Director Stephen Curry and Nurse Molly Reid continued to supervise testing, interviewing, and assisting DPW personnel with COVID-19 issues.



DPW staff will continue to monitor the situation and adjust procedures as necessary.

Sincerely,

Nicolas H. Bosonetto, PE
Commissioner of Public Works/City Engineer

STREETS DIVISION

DPW continued to respond to service requests in a timely manner through the [SeeClickFix](#) program. In the past two weeks DPW received 52 new requests and closed 31 requests. The total outstanding requests backlog is now 214, an increase of 21 from the previous reporting period. We will continue to work on the backlog request in preparation for the spring season.

<u>Reporting Period</u> 4/6/20 - 4/19/20		<u>Previous Period</u>	<u>Change</u>
Previous Request Backlog	193		
New Requests	52	45	7
Completed Requests	31	20	11
Total Request Backlog	214	193	21
Potholes	76	59	17
Storm Drains	62	59	3
Tree & Brush Pruning	6	7	-1
Traffic, Signals, Signs	5	5	0
Berm Repairs	9	7	2
All other categories	56	56	0
New Requests	52	45	7
Acknowledged	2	1	1
Completed & Closed	4	0	4
Open	48	45	3

The weather last week continued to warm up with snow fall on Wednesday and Friday night.

	Saturday 4/11	Sunday 4/12	Monday 4/13	Tuesday 4/14	Wednesday 4/15	Thursday 4/16	Friday 4/17
Rain (in)	0.4	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4
Snow (in)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5	0.0	2.5
Hi/Lo Temp (F)	34/45	30/59	48/59	39/54	34/56	30/41	28/45

Sources: <https://www.cocorahs.org/ViewData/ListDailyPrecipReports.aspx> (STA MA-WR-22)
<https://www.timeanddate.com/weather/@4936825/historic>

Street Sweeping

Currently sweeping sidewalks and streets in Ward 5.

Picked up trees on Mechanic Street, Taft Street, Fisher Road, Pine Street Lane and Patton Street after wind storm on Monday.

Potholes

Pothole patching efforts continued during the week using cold-patch at various locations, including the following:

- Airport Road,
- Allen Place,
- Beach Street,
- Bemis Road,
- Boulder Drive,
- Clifton Street,
- Cushing Street,
- Daniels Street,
- Duck Mill Road,
- Ellis Street,
- Exeter Street,
- Fairmount Street,
- High Street,
- Mechanic Street,
- Middle Street,
- Mt Elam Road,
- Nashua Street,
- Otis Street,
- Payson Street,
- Princeton Road,
- Rollstone Road,
- Second Street,
- Swan Ave,
- Water Street,

Mechanic Shop

Mechanic Shop continued to repair street sweepers. Sweepers have many wearing pieces including the brooms, belts, and dirt shoes that require frequent replacement. Sweepers also have many moving parts that need frequent maintenance.

PARKS DIVISION AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Park crews started leveling of Goodrich Park field.

Park Crews continued cleaning up trash from parks and Main Street.

Cogshall Park switched to spring schedule.

All City playgrounds, dog parks, and public bathrooms in parks are closed to the public until the COVID-19 state of emergency is lifted.

Per order of the Health Director, basketball courts were closed and rims boarded over.

Parks, fields, courts, and tracks continue to be open but the public is advised to avoid large gatherings. Please exercise social distancing and avoid touching common surfaces during your visit to the parks. The City's many outdoor recreation opportunities are specially important during this time as they provide an opportunity to relax, exercise, and connect with nature. Many of our residents live in apartments and do not have yards, so our parks provide their only means to get out and enjoy some fresh air and exercise.

All recreation programs and events continue to be cancelled until further notice. We recognize these closures and cancellations can be disappointing and a hardship, however these decisions are being made in the best interest of the community. The Recreation Department will continue to monitor the situation with guidance from the Mayor's Office and the Board of Health.

CEMETERIES DIVISION

Cemetery crews continued to clean up the grounds and surrounding areas. In addition to routine maintenance and administration tasks, the following were completed:

Full Interments	1
Inurnments.....	0
Up righted monuments.....	2
Uncovered/cleaned flat monuments	0
Foundation marking for monuments.....	0
Catch basin repair	0
Trimmed Trees	0
Trimmed shrubs.....	0
Meeting with Families.....	5
Payments - invoiced/processed.....	0
Family Genealogy	2

ENGINEERING DIVISION

Administrative

- Held the second public listening session for the City’s Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Planning Grant. The purpose for the listening session was to solicit input from the public about the City’s key strengths and vulnerabilities related to climate change. Feedback received will be incorporated into the final summary report which is submitted for review and approval to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA), who oversee the grant program.
- Drafted and sent a letter to the property owners of 60 Nestor Ave. to instruct them to cease and desist dumping trees/branches into a stream behind the property. Per § 157-23 of the City Code this is not allowed.
- Worked on updating the DPW’s street excavation policy, including pavement excavation moratoriums and trench restorations. Revised the City’s standard details for permanent trench restorations and temporary trench restorations using AutoCAD.
- Closed SeeClickFix ticket for Harrison Ave.
- Closed SeeClickFix ticket for a tree limb on George Street.
- Acknowledged SeeClickFix ticket for hanging streetlight bulb on 115 Victoria Lane.
- Held conference call with Arcadis to discuss various projects including the Water Division’s Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) Upgrade Project, the Stormwater Utility Feasibility Study, and ongoing Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit Compliance Assistance.
- Participated in monthly coordination call with Unitil gas and electric.

- Worked on transitioning to a new online permitting software. Began investigating various records with addresses that did not match up during the data migration from the old platform to the new one.

Construction

- Met with MP Crowley on site to discuss completion of the Valley Street extension project. There were various issues with the design plans that required field adjustments to achieve the desired grades, ensure proper drainage, and meet the City's standards for road construction. Drafted a memorandum summarizing the field adjustments needed and sent to MP Crowley.
- Printed mailing labels for Beech Street paving project abutters. These residents will be sent letters letting them know that they have one last chance to perform any work required on the utility hookups for their homes before paving begins. Once paving is complete, the street will be placed under a five year excavation moratorium to protect the City's investment.
- Printed mailing labels for Beech St paving abutters that are not hooked-up to gas. In the City of Fitchburg, property owners are not allowed to use liquid propane for home heating if natural gas is available in the street (which it is available on Beech Street). A notice will be sent to these residents informing them that the road is being paved, and that this is their last opportunity to tie into the gas system before the paving begins. Once paving is complete, the street will be placed under a five year moratorium to protect the City's investment.
- Participated in conference call/ preconstruction meeting for the Narrows Road Hydro-Turbine project. This project will replace a large pressure reducing valve (PRV) at the Narrows Road PRV Station with a hydro-turbine to produce electricity, which will be sold back to the electric company to generate revenue for the city. This project is partially funded through a grant from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center.

Dig Safe

- Performed dig safe on Sheldon Street for a Unitil pole installation.
- Performed dig safe for emergency sewer repair on Alice Ave.

Permits & Inspections

- Performed a site inspection to investigate sewer connection at #685 South Street. Confirmed the property is connected to sewer.
- Issued trench and excavation permits for an emergency sewer repair on Alice Ave. Performed inspections during repair.

- Received and began review a Utility Site Plan for an emergency sewer connection at #691 Mt Elam Road. This road was paved in 2019 and is currently under moratorium, which prevents non-emergency excavation within the roadway.
- Performed an inspection at 70 South Street for a driveway permit.
- Performed an inspection to investigate a complaint of a light out on Downey Circle.

Engineering Services			
<u>Type</u>		<u>Number</u>	<u>Fees</u>
PERMITS	Street Occupation Permits	0	\$0
	Trench Permits	1	\$0
	Excavation/Street Opening Permits	1	\$0
	Driveway/Curb Cut Permits	1	n/a
	Sign Permits	0	n/a
	Sewer Permits	0	\$0
INSPECTIONS	Driveway Inspections	1	n/a
	Trench Inspections	1	n/a
	Site Inspections	2	n/a
	Dig-Safe requests	2	n/a
	Sewer/Drain Inspections	1	n/a
	Street Light Inspection	1	n/a
Totals		11	\$0

WATER SUPPLY DIVISION

The Water Supply Division produced 28.3 million gallons of drinking water this past week. No transfer of water between reservoirs is taking place. Reservoirs continued to be inspected and patrolled.

- The Reservoir Caretaker worked with FWD personnel cutting brush on the water side of Lovell Dike that runs parallel to Rindge Road (completed brush cutting on Lovell Dam last week).
- Reservoir Caretaker worked with FWD personnel to sweep sand away from building/curbs at Falulah Plant and repair/loam turf areas damaged during winter plowing.

The Wyman Pond gate was opened to 12 inches on Tuesday morning to compensate for the heavy rainfall and snowmelt (from the Wachusett Mountain Ski Area) that occurred on Monday in an effort to reduce the flooding at the Route 140 culvert between Wachusett Reservoir and Wyman Pond.

Water Treatment

Reservoir Levels as of 4/17/20			
Northern Reservoirs	Elevation below spillway		Southern Reservoirs
Fitchburg/Ashby	Full	- 0.70 feet	Meetinghouse
Scott	Full	Full	Mare Meadow
Lovell	Full	Full	Bickford
Water Filtration Plant Flows/Production from 4/10/20 through 4/16/20			
	Falulah Plant	Regional Plant	Totals
Raw Water Inlet (Gal)	5,670,000	25,543,000	31,213,000
Backwash to waste (Gal)	704,000	2,225,000	2,929,000
Finish Water - Treated & Distributed (Gal)	4,966,000	23,318,000	28,284,000
Capacity	(6 MGD) 14%	(12 MGD) 30%	(18 MGD) 25%
Efficiency	88%	91%	91%

- Due to the COVID-19 crisis, only required/regular maintenance is being completed in the plants as well as any emergency repairs. Treatment personnel have been permanently (for the duration of the crisis) sequestered to each treatment plant and no intermingling or transferring of treatment operators between plants will occur. Outside contractors will only be utilized for emergency repairs or for maintenance that is necessary to keep the treatment plants in good operating condition.
- Obtained permission from Wastewater to begin hauling sludge from the settling lagoons at the Regional Plant. One load per day will be removed and disposed of at the West Plant - it will take 1 to 2 months to remove the 40 loads (20 loads per lagoon) depending on weather.

Water Distribution

- During the course of the week, FWD crews checked/maintained all water trenches repaired with cold patch (final restoration will be completed in the spring when the weather improves and local asphalt plants reopen).
- FWD personnel continued updating the blow off list (locating, cleaning boxes, take new ties, remove from list if not there anymore, etc.).
- FWD personnel closed a gate on Sawyer Passway by the bridge and opened the blow off on the bridge to help move/flush water through the water main on First Street to help with the intermittent discolored water issues that are occurring in that area.
- Investigated a report of no water at 362 Wanoosnoc Road (vacant house under renovations), both the BOT and curb stop were on, plumber checked again and had water inside at the water meter.
- Contractor (Tandem) repaired a water service leak on the owner's side at 24 Klondike Avenue.
- FWD personnel picked up a load of loam at Mass Natural.

- Completed weekly inspections and maintenance/cleaning of Water Division vehicles and equipment.
- FWD personnel cleaned/disinfected steering wheels, shifters door handles and knobs in all Water Division vehicles.
- Completed housekeeping/disinfection of common surfaces at 1200 Rindge Road throughout the course of the week.

Fire Hydrants

Total Hydrants	Out of Operation	Hydrants Replaced	Hydrants Repaired	Maintenance Completed	Painted	Flushed
1,632	3	0	0	137	12	0

- On Wednesday, 4/15, there was a house fire on Newtonville Avenue, between Reingold Avenue and Leroy Street. FWD personnel checked in with FFD advising two hydrants were being used and no issues at that time with hydrants or water supply.
- FWD personnel continued lubing/greasing hydrants on the Low System.
- FWD personnel placed a hydrant out of service on Wanoosnoc Road at Page Ave. Hydrant is leaking in the ground. This will be scheduled for repair/replacement. FFD was notified the hydrant is out of service.
- Investigated a possible missing fire hydrant (pipe/flange sticking out of the ground) on Franklin Road at St. Joseph Avenue. This is not part of a fire hydrant but possibly could be a base to an old fire/police call box that were stationed around the city years ago (there is a conduit and wire inside the pipe). The Fire Department was contacted to see if they have any information on where these call boxes were stationed in the city (waiting to hear back from them).

Administration and Meters/Billing

- Total of 7 real estate closings – final readings completed along with preparation of final bills for attorneys/realtors. Future real estate closing final readings also scheduled.
- 23 invoices totaling \$22,191.35 were processed for FY20 warrant WG20043.
- Two change orders entered into Munis for approval by Purchasing.
- Made changes to backflow database with new owner information.
- Printed all reports associated with billing.
- Completed April water/sewer billing - 10,996 bills generated and sent to Touchpoint for printing/ mailing.
- Printed credit bills to customers that request.
- Printed and scanned sewer bills to Town of Lunenburg and Westminster.
- Revised invoice for unauthorized hydrant use on Fisher Road.
- Sent PPE supply request list to Mary Delaney.
- Finished the Water/Wastewater Commission minutes for the meeting held on 4/8/20.
- The Fitchburg Water Division participated in the conference call that is being held weekly (this is the fifth week) with MA DEP, Massachusetts Water Works Association, and several hundred public water suppliers across the state. The Commissioner of MA DEP, Martin

Suuberg, presented a status update in regard to COVID-19 and its effects/impacts on public drinking water suppliers.

- A conference call/virtual pre-construction meeting was held for the hydroturbine project at the Narrow Road PRV Station.
- A conference call/virtual meeting was held for the WaterSmart software implementation that is part of the city-wide water meter upgrade project.
- Continued working on items related to the Jewell Hill and Porter land protection projects.

In addition to routine maintenance and administrative tasks, the following services were completed:

Water Permits and Inspections	
Type	Number
Emergency DigSafe Mark-outs	0
DigSafe Mark-outs	12
Inspections of Work on Water System	1
Record Plan Updates	9
Special Permit Applications Reviewed	0
New Water Service Applications	0
View Permits reviewed	0
Curb Stops Turned off/on	3
Located/cleaned gate/curb boxes	5
Final Readings/Real Estate Closings	5
New Meter Installations	3
Backflow Preventers Tested	0
Cross Connection Surveys	0
Residential Appointments Made	0
Totals	38

WASTE WATER DIVISION

The WWTF processed 90.18 million gallons of sewage during the first week of April. In total, 27.8 tons of organics* and 74.15 tons of solids were removed and prevented from entering the Nashua River. (*only 3 days of data available)

<u>Week of 4/5/2020 – 4/11/2020</u>		
Sewage Flow	90.18	Million Gallons
Rainfall	0.81	Inches
Secondary Bypass	0.29	Million Gallons
BOD _{in} (lbs)	57,428	Pounds
BOD _{out} (lbs)	1,755	Pounds
BOD Removal (%)	96.27%	
TSS _{in} (lbs)	154,143	Pounds
TSS _{out} (lbs)	5,850	Pounds
TSS Removal (%)	94.05%	

- Deputy Commissioner managing Division remotely (as of Mar. 17th).
- Daily (or more frequent, as needed) conducting video calls with Wastewater Management Team.
- Held multiple communications throughout the week, with Fitchburg Health Department, concerning COVID-19 status of affected Wastewater Division employees.
- Coordinating with Fitchburg Airport, for scheduling of aerial photo/video capture of the Easterly Wastewater Treatment Facility. We are trying to beat the reopening of the Airport, after runways construction work is completed.
- Coordinating with Fitchburg Human Resources & Fitchburg IT to set up a video interview call with a qualified candidate for the “Sewer System General Foreman” position.
- Issued notification correspondences to un-contracted chemicals supply vendors, notifying them that if we experience a supply interruption from a contracted vendor we may call upon them to fulfill a supply need.
- Wed. – Apr. 15th: collaborating with Purchasing & outside counsel (West Group Law, PLLC), the West Plant’s “Request For Expressions of Interest” was published & made available.
- Wed. – Apr. 15th: participated in group “ZOOM” call held by MassDEP Commissioner Martin Suuberg, held for Massachusetts Wastewater Professionals, regarding COVID-19 pandemic.
- Friday, Apr. 17th: sent EPA and MassDEP regulators a Fitchburg Wastewater “COVID-19 Status Update”.

Sewer System

- Performed checks on sewage pump stations: pump stations appear to be running properly, with no observed issues.
- Helped DPW Streets Division remove a tree on Harrison Avenue.
- Checked CSO Regulators: discovered there were three (3) CSO discharge activations due to the early week rain event.
- Started combination manhole (CMH) checks due to rain event on Monday (rain gauge recorded 1.6” of precipitation for the rain event).
- Picked up concrete mixer axle in Gardner (we replaced the mixer’s tires and axle).
- Responded to a sewer system overflow (SSO) event at #31 Gillis Court. The City sewer pipe in the street has low pitch (little slope on the pipe). It appears that rags accumulated in the pipe and caused a blockage; an estimated 100 gallons of sewage spilled into basement.
- Borrowed old backhoe from Water Division, and trained on the machine at the Airport Road sand pit. Sewer crewmen are slowly getting the hang of it!
- Tabulated bids and drafted “recommendation to award letter” to Blue Diamond Equipment for the “DPW On-Call Construction Contract”.
- Reviewed invoices from PJ Albert for Water Street Combination Manhole Separations completed to date; revised invoices and then processed for payment.

DPW ADMINISTRATION

- Winter operations:
 - Reconciled snow & ice accounts to make sure all costs are posted for the winter season. All costs should be posted into MUNIS on 4/24/20 which will allow us to close snow & ice accounts for the year.
 - Submitted appropriation request to the Mayor's office for \$132,000 which will be the final request for this snow season and will allow us to close out the snow & ice accounts.
 - We had one small snow event this week that did not require plowing or salting by DPW crews.
 - Received a call from one of our plow contractors looking for the total hours he plowed for us the last 5 plowing seasons. Compiled information that we had on file and emailed over to him.
- Financial:
 - Reviewed all DPW Department accounts for accuracy and monitored budgets.
 - Completed a financial impact review of water and sewer billings to see what the potential impacts will be in waiving interest on late payments due to the COVID-19 outbreak for payments due for the period March – June 2020. We are not only looking at the impact of the lost interest but also the lost revenue in the periods of March thru June to see what effect it will have on the enterprise utilities.
 - We received the Chapter 90 reimbursement from MassDOT for the Cracksealing project. Total reimbursement \$72,807.84.
 - Received draft budgets from the Mayor's office and reviewed proposed changes. Started working on departmental comments.
- Administrative:
 - Submitted DPW Department absences due to COVID-19 reasons to the human resources department.
 - Continued reviewing applications for the DPW Head Clerk position.
 - Submitted the cancellation notification for April's Public Works Committee meeting to the City Clerk's office and posted on the City Website.
 - Submitted hoisting license renewals to the state of MA for several laborers.

Invoicing, Warrants, and Payrolls						
	Invoices		Deposits		Billings	Payroll
<u>Division</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Total \$</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Total \$</u>		
Streets/Admin/Engineering	18	\$ 14,228	*Note 1	\$ 72,808		
Cemeteries						
Parks						
Recreation						
Water Supply	23	\$ 22,191			\$ 428,464	
Waste Water	35	\$ 98,759	*Note 2	\$ 18,190	\$ 928,293	
			*Note 3			
Total	76	\$ 135,178		\$ 90,998	\$ 1,356,757	\$ -
*1 - Chapter 90 Reimbursement - Cracksealing						
*2 - Septage at East Plant (Gallons)		214,000				
*3 - Industrial Billing Payments						