

Water demand more than doubles in the big freeze

During the extensive freezing conditions at the end of 2010, Kilmaley-Inagh GWS saw daily water demand rise from 1,600 m³ per day to a daily peak of 3,443 m³.

At the height of the crisis, GWS manager, Noel Carmody reported that reservoirs could not be filled as water was being drawn from them just as fast as it was being supplied.

Manager

Explaining why some members of the scheme were without water for a week, Mr Carmody outlined the efforts that had been made to prevent this happening:

‘We appealed many times on local radio for members to check their meters and service connections for leakage during the extreme frost.

‘Unfortunately this went completely unheeded by many. If members had been more proactive in terms of looking for leakage on their connections, then the crisis would not have arisen.

‘Our problems were made more difficult because some members left taps running, but more was due to burst pipes going undetected. Another issue was water meters bursting. All of these factors caused havoc.

Elevated areas

Pointing out that elevated areas and those furthest away from the source will always be the worst effected when there is excessive water demand elsewhere on the scheme, Mr Carmody continued:

‘Our mains system is gravity fed, so a significant rise in demand in one area will inevitably mean that less water and less pressure is available in another.

‘For example, increased water demand in Inagh and Kilmaley/Inch results in problems supplying areas such as Kilnamona, Bushypark and Drumcar-

ronmore, simply because there is little water left in the mains and because there is insufficient pressure to reach these areas.

‘The simple fact is that if members had checked their meters each day during the thaw, supply would have been restored to all areas much sooner and less water restrictions would have had to be imposed.

‘In most cases people were simply not reporting water bursts to us and we had to travel around the scheme to find them. As we have 250 km of mains, we need help from our members.’

Be prepared

Advising members to prepare for freezing conditions in the future, Mr Carmody said that service pipes are simply not buried deep enough at many houses and these will have to be re-laid. He added:

‘Pouring boiling water on a meter will not clear a pipe of ice, but it may burst the meter.

‘Members are advised to insulate their meter and to insulate pipes in their attics and under concrete paths.

‘Farmer members are strongly advised to switch off water supply to troughs and other areas not in use, while people planning to be away from their homes in winter should always drain down their systems and shut off the water supply.



Problems caused by freezing weather conditions in December were compounded by the actions and inactions of many members who failed to heed repeated advice that they check their meters and avoid leaving taps running.

Risks posed by well water

Some members of the scheme have decided to bore new wells or to recommission older wells as a way of cutting down on their water bills.

Kilmaley-Inagh GWS has no problem with this, as we actively encourage farmer members, in particular, to displace their treated water for non-essential purposes, such as farmyard washing.

Having said that, there is evidence that some members are linking in their well supply to the

GWS piped supply. This practice poses clear health risks for you and for other scheme members.

In recent weeks, the scheme was informed of a dirty water incident at a member’s house. It emerged that this was caused by well-water being used by a neighbouring family.

The fact that a non-return valve wasn’t fitted allowed this to happen, as did the fact that pressure from the pump being used in the well was greater than pressure in that part of the distribution main.

Inform scheme

Because of the clear health risks, members with borewells linked into the GWS supply should do the following:

- ensure that a non-return valve is fitted on the connection pipe from the GWS supply.
- inform your group water scheme, as the County Council will need to know that a sample at your home is not representative of the GWS supply.
- boil the water if you intend using it for human consumption.

Water charges: how much you pay is in your hands

With almost all connections now metered, water usage can be tracked throughout the network by bulk meters, while usage by individual members is recorded on household or farm meters.

Members are strongly advised to get into the habit of regularly checking meter readings. A water leak on a connection can lead to a bill of hundreds if not thousands of euro over a 12-month period. Reading a meter costs nothing while failing to read it may cost a lot!

'Free' water allocation

Every household on Kilmaley-Inagh GWS currently receives 165 m³ of water per year. This will reduce in the future, as it is still much more than the volume of water required for normal use by a family of four and is significantly higher than the allowance on other group water schemes.

Currently we charge €0.85 per m³. Other group water schemes across the country charge as much as €1.50 per m³, while members of public schemes here in Clare pay €1.35 m³.

Expensive

Drinking water is going to become an expensive commodity

and that it is why it is important for everyone to eliminate wastage immediately and to be vigilant against further wastage. The more you waste the more you pay. The scheme has to pay for all water produced whether is wasted or used. This means the scheme has to produce more which costs us more money.

If you can keep your demand within the free allowance then you will not receive a bill. It is entirely in your hands.

Reading your meter

It is simple to read your meter. The white dials are cubic meters and the red dials are hundreds, tenths and litres. If you see your litre dial moving and have no water running in your house at the time, then you may have a leak that needs to be investigated further.

If you have a water leak and you consume the allowed 165 m³ (i.e. 165,000 litres) per year you are liable for charges above the free domestic amount.

A typical household (family of four) uses 90 to 100 m³ per year. If you are using more then this then you should become more conscious of your usage and see how you can reduce it.

Water wastage through leaks or carelessness will result in significant extra costs being incurred by the scheme and ultimately its members. To minimise wastage on your connections/meters, you should.

- Carry out a thorough check of your water pipes and systems and make repairs where necessary
- Replace all leaking tap washers, etc.
- Check your water meter reading regularly and take action if you notice any unusual water usage.
- Use your water supply in the knowledge that each litre or gallon used (beyond your annual allowance) will incur additional costs.

If you require help with the meter reading, please contact Noel Carmody @ 087-2836118.



Our water: who monitors it?

Kilmaley-Inagh GWS is implementing the NFGWS quality assurance scheme to ensure the safety and quality of our drinking water.

The goal is to ensure that the quality of our drinking water complies with European drinking water standards from the source to your tap.

250 bacterial samples taken by the scheme in 2010 tested satisfactorily.

Monthly samples of raw and treated water were taken by the scheme and sent for external analysis.

The results of all this sampling were sent to the Clare County Council as the supervisory au-

thority for all group schemes in the county.

Compliance monitoring

In addition to our operational monitoring, the council and the HSE take a number of samples throughout the year as part of compliance monitoring.

All sampling and monitoring is carried out with the goal of ensuring the safety of supply to you our members and so that anything that could happen to endanger supply is caught early and eliminated before it becomes an issue.

Regular cleaning of water mains and storage reservoirs is also an integral part of the quality assurance scheme.



Kilmaley/Inagh GWS water supply is also monitored remotely and secondary chlorination stations, such as the one installed this year at Tullasa (above), ensure that disinfection is maintained to the end of the network.

Website/ text alert update

Please visit our website www.kilmaleyinaghgws.ie for alerts on planned outages, scouring, disruptions and important information on what is going on in the scheme.

Efforts are currently being made to update the site, especially with regard to 'interruption to supply' notices.

Mobiles

Many members have given us their mobile phone numbers for our text alert system that will go live in May this year.

If you still haven't sent on your number to be included in this valuable service, please text your name, number and townland to 087283611 or email your details to: noel.carmody@kilmaleyinaghgws.ie.

Remember, it won't work unless you forward your details so please do so.

Name change

At last years AGM our name change was ratified and our organisation became known as Kilmaley-Inagh Group Water Scheme Co-operative Limited.

The new co-op rules for group water schemes were adopted, giving the management of the scheme a more structured rule base.

Current GWS committee members

GWS Staff

March 23rd date set for Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting will take place in Inagh Community Centre on March 23rd at 8pm.

In recent years attendance has been poor and the GWS committee is appealing to as many members as possible to attend this year's meeting.

Ideally, Kilmaley-Inagh GWS committee should include representatives from all areas of the supply network and it would be great to see some of our women members becoming involved in running the scheme!

All members are welcome and those wishing to play their part as members of the

committee will be particularly welcome.

The board typically meets every 6 weeks for about 2 hours, so it is not a lot of time to ask for over a year.

Retirement

In accordance with the rules of the Society, one third of the committee shall retire each year, but they are eligible for re-election without nomination.

This year John Hehir, John Hegarty, David Sheedy and Andrew Sully will retire.

Nominations for the board, other than retiring members shall be in writing to the secretary and shall contain a statement by the member

nominated of his or her willingness to be elected.

Nominations should be forwarded to the secretary (Noel Carmody, Feighroe, Connolly) to arrive on or before March 22nd.

Agenda

The agenda for the Annual General Meeting is as follows:

1. Minutes of 2010 AGM
2. Chairperson's address
3. Manager's report
4. Financial report & Auditor's report
5. Appointment of Auditor
6. Election of members to the committee
7. Any other business

Proposed Upgrade Works

We are currently seeking funding under the Rural Water Programme for the following upgrade works in 2011:

- pump house refurbishment
- reservoir refurbishment
- deployment of secondary chlorination stations.
- replacement of critical mains at Fermoy, Cragliegh, Kilnamona, Ballymacooda, Maurice Mills, Clonboula and

Furroor, Lickaun, Bealcragga.

- installation of 25 additional telemetry bulk meters for water conservation.

Funding

Some details of the Rural Water Programme were announced in late February and we know that County Clare is to get an allocation of just over €3 million.

It is unclear, as yet, what specific projects will be funded, but your committee has

made the case that the projects outlined above will significantly re-

duce wastage as well as protecting water quality in the network.



The plate press recently installed in the DBO treatment plant as part of a major upgrade.

Officers

Chairman, James B. Lynch,
Boulyneaska, Kilmaley;

Vice Chair, Richard Devereux,
Ballyvraneen, Ennistymon;

Secretary, Noel Carmody,
Feighroe, Connolly;

Treasurer, Tom Burke,
Moyhill, Ennistymon.

Members

Joseph Costello, *Kilmorane Ennis*

Thomas Costelloe, *Edenvale Ennis*

John Hehir, *Feighroe, Connolly*

Raymond Foudy, *Been, Inagh*

John Hegarty, *Moughna, Miltown Malbay*

Pat Crowe, *Ilanbaun, Inagh*

Adrian McMahon, *Drimeen, Ennis*

Thomas Keane, *Drimeen, Ennis*

Michael Halpin, *Bushypark*

Vincent Barry, *Clongowna, Kilnamona*

David Sheedy, *Kilmorane, Ennis*

Pat Gallagher, *Moughna, Miltown Malbay*

Johnny Crawford, *Cloonanaha, Inagh*

Andrew Sully, *Monreel South,*

Ennistymon

John McNerney, *Gortagannive,*
Kilmaley

Noel Carmody, Feighroe, Connolly
(Manager)

Patrick Lynch, Lisroe, Kilmaley
(Caretaker)

Brian Barry, Ballyea, Inagh
(Caretaker)



Kilmaley-Inagh GWS Report

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Message from the Chairman

Once again, as we approach our Annual General Meeting on the 23rd of March we reflect on the past year and look forward to the future.

2010 was a busy year for the water scheme in terms of the completion of the badly-needed upgrade of our water treatment facilities.

The enhanced treatment system is now up and running and we can all look forward to enjoying excellent quality drinking water in our homes.

Our news letter is intended to highlight issues encountered by the committee and management of the group scheme in the course of the year.

The cold snap in the early part of 2010 and further freezing conditions in November and December presented huge challenges.

On my own behalf and on behalf of the entire board, I would like to thank our GWS staff for all their work during and following these difficult periods.

These events highlighted yet again the need for vigilance and I would again appeal to all members to continuously check your meters and service connections for leakage during extreme frost and especially during the days of thaw.

We would like to thank all those who have paid their charges and remind those who have yet to pay to forward payment without delay.

Thank you for your support and co-operation

James B. Lynch
Chairman
Kilmaley-Inagh GWS

Enhanced Treatment Plant providing quality water

An enhanced water treatment facility has been providing quality water to consumers on Kilmaley-Inagh GWS since mid January this year.

Significant changes to the original DBO plant were called for by the GWS committee when it became clear that the original plant simply couldn't be depended on to deal with variations in the quality of water in our lake source.

Following representations to the power-that-be, our case was accepted and the enhanced treatment facility was provided at no cost to our members.

DAF

Construction of the new facility began last October. This involved dismantling some of the old treatment works at the rear of the plant and replacing it with a new Dissolved Air Flotation System (DAF) system, commonly used for surface water supplies.

Work commenced with the removal of the existing plant. As a result, the existing filtration process had to be stopped. This meant that during the construction phase our water could not be fully treated, but disinfection was continued at all times to prevent microbiological contamination.

Work continued over the winter months, although there were some delays due to the severe weather conditions.

Finally on January 10th, the enhanced treatment plant went live, delivering fully treated water into our distribution network.

The DAF system is removing 90% of the colour and turbidity (particulate matter) from our raw water. A pressure filter process then deals with the remaining 10%, so that the clean water can be disinfected before entering the distribution system.

Exceptional

Water produced by the new treatment plant has been excep-

tionally good and is meeting all standards under the European Drinking Water regulations.

As part of the upgrade a sludge plate press was installed. This solidifies the sludge, allowing it to be disposed of as landfill. This has removed the necessity for expensive tankering of liquid sludge.

The upgrade works were carried out by treatment plant operators EPS, supervised by Clare County Council and Engineers appointed by the Department of the Environment (DoEHLG) and Jennings O'Donovan & Associates, Consulting Engineers. The total cost of the upgrade is €620,116.

The new treatment process comes with an increased cost of about of about 5c per cubic metre (1,000 litres) of water produced. Bottled water from a shop costs about €1.20 a litre. We supply 1,000 litres for less than €1 to your tap. The choice is yours.



The recently-constructed Dissolved Air Flotation (DAF) plant at Kilmaley-Inagh GWS. This plant removes about 90% of colour and turbidity from our raw water, while a pressure filter process deals with the remainder.