

Kilmaley-Inagh GWS

Report

Published by Kilmaley-Inagh Group Water Scheme Co-Operative Society Ltd

MARCH 2014

Message From The Chairman

As we approach our Annual General Meeting on the 26th of March we can reflect on another successful and busy year for the scheme. Our newsletter is intended to highlight some of the issues encountered by the committee over the last year.

A program of reservoir refurbishment was successfully completed on 3 reservoirs extending their life span for many more years to come. Our treated water continues to pass all quality assurance testing by the scheme itself, Clare County Council and the HSE.

Irish water is now up and running with responsibility for public water supplies. Our scheme will continue to operate independently into the future as long as our financial viability is maintained. There currently no plans or reason for Irish Water to take group schemes such as ours in charge.

Revenue collection is ongoing and we would like to thank all those who have paid their charges and remind those who have yet to pay to forward their payment as soon as possible. Our arrears management policy is now in place to deal with those refusing to pay their way. Thank you for your support and cooperation.

James B. Lynch
Chairman

Irish Water– What does it mean for the future of our Group Water Scheme?

Irish Water is the new public water authority that has now been established to take over the running of all water and waste water services from the local authorities. Currently it is a completely separate organisation to group water schemes and will continue to remain so. Group water schemes can still of course look to be taken over by Irish Water if they so wish but this must be in agreement with the majority of the schemes shareholders. Group Water schemes continued operation by their local community groups, ensures any profit made through the schemes activities is invested locally in the schemes own water infrastructure and areas for improvement are decided by the scheme itself. Of course any large scale upgrade works are still dependent on grant aid availability from the DEHLG through the local authority. This grant aid will have to be maintained if necessary mains replacement works are to continue. The current

funding arrangements require the scheme to contribute 15% to all capital works approved for funding through the local authority by the DEHLG.

The Local Authority continues to act as the supervisory authority for group schemes in terms of water quality assurance and compliance.

Water Charges, Who will we be paying for our water?

The new water regulator will set the price Irish Water can charge its customers. We will continue to set the price we charge for water on our own scheme at a rate required to ensure the financial requirements and running costs are not compromised. Water treatment and operational subsidy arrangements that currently exist for domestic water are likely to change drastically from January 2015 when Irish Water start billing householders for water on public supplies. The subsidy available to

group water schemes will likely be stream lined in parity with the regulators charging policy. We currently receive a subsidy of approximately €250 per domestic house for the provision and distribution of a free water allowance. **The reality is that if or when this subsidy is reduced the scheme will have to charge its members accordingly to make up the difference.** There may still be a free allowance but it is likely to be significantly less than the current allocation meaning that all members will have to pay for their water supply.

Any scheme members connected to a public waste water system will become customers of Irish Water for waste water services but will remain customers of Kilmaley-Inagh GWS for water supply. Should you be contacted to become a customer of Irish Water for water supply, you inform them you are a member of a group water scheme and not receiving water from a public supply.

Kilmaley Meitheal Walk & Open Air Mass 2013

The Kilmaley Meitheal organisation held its annual open air mass and fundraising walk at Lough Na Minna on Sunday August 4th 2013. The mass was celebrated by Canon Michael McLoughlin on the grounds of the treatment works which included a blessing of the treatment plant itself. The event was well supported by the local community and light refreshments were enjoyed after the mass followed by a walk to Kearneys Bar where a barbeque and social evening were held. We would like to thank the Meitheal Committee for choosing Lough Na Minna as their focal point for this years mass as it was fitting that it fell up on the 40th anniversary of the first meetings to



Canon McLoughlin Celebrating Mass at the Kilmaley Inagh GWS Water Treatment Plant



A good crowd turned out on the day to celebrate the open air mass and fund raising walk

Arrears Management Policy Ratified.

Unpaid water charges continue to be a headache for the board with some shareholders continuing to ignore invoices and statements. A arrears management policy has been adapted by the board and will be the basis for dealing with people in arrears from now on. The rules of the scheme allow the board to limit or withhold supply completely from members who refuse to pay the charges set out by the committee. This is an unfortunate and unpleasant process for all concerned but the financial stability of the scheme depends upon each member paying their fair share of water charges.

Any one in financial difficulty is urged to contact the scheme manager in strict confidence where a weekly or monthly direct debit arrangement can be set up to clear arrears.

The process is outlined as follows.

1. Select accounts with arrears for 4 mths +
2. Issue 'Notification of Arrears letter'
3. Issue 'Final Notification' at 7 mths +
4. Allow member 10 days to respond in writing.
5. If no response/payment issue seven day notice of intent to disconnect supply via registered letter
6. If no response/payment issue Notice of cancellation of membership & Disconnection Notice
7. Implement Disconnection Procedure
8. Decide if pursuit of arrears through the courts is worth while.

Note. Reconnection charge of €500 will apply.

Quality Assurance 2013– 100% compliance.

The scheme continues to comply with the National Federation of Group Water Scheme's quality Assurance program for water quality. Water quality has been excellent through out 2013 with 100% compliance for bacterial and chemical analysis from all internal testing as well external testing carried out by both Clare County Council and the HSE.

Continuous Chlorine monitoring throughout the scheme is ongoing by scheme management as the presence of chlorine in drinking water is an EU Drinking water regulation requirement. Daily testing is carried out by EPS at the treatment plant while monthly samples are sent to external laboratories for analysis. Clare County Council in their role as water supervisory authority test a set number of samples throughout the year. The HSE is also involved in taking samples on an ongoing basis.

Fluoride Queries.

Of late we have received a number of queries in relation to fluoride dosing to our water supply for dental purposes. **We do not add fluoride to our drinking water as we are not required to do so under current drinking water regulations.** Public water supply authorities are required by regulation to add fluoride to drinking water supplies however private group water schemes do not fall under this requirement therefore we do not add fluoride to our water as part of our water treatment process.

Not Checking for water leakage may cost you €1000's.

You must get into the habit of regularly checking your own water meter readings. This is the only indication that you could have a water leak on your connection. An undetected leak can lead to a water bill of hundreds if not thousands of euro in a 12 month period. **Reading your meter costs nothing not reading may cost you a lot.**

Members with a domestic connection currently receive a free allowance of 140m³ of water per year. This will reduce going forward. It is still well above the normal use by a family of four - 90m³ and significantly higher than the allowance on other group schemes. **If you stay within this free allowance you pay nothing.**

Text Alert System

Our mobile text facility is working very well allowing members to receive urgent information by mobile phone. We have over 800 members on the system so there are still 1100 members who have not supplied information to us. It would be beneficial if shareholders would supply their mobile phone numbers to facilitate this process. Text your name, address and mobile number to **0872836118**

How to check a water meter

- The red dials on the meter are litres. White dials are m³ (1000 litres)
- Ensure at time of reading there is no usage going on for example the washing machine on .
- If the furthest red dial on the right is moving water is going through your distribution system This must be investigated further to identify if you have a leak.
- Note the meter reading so you can produce a usage pattern over time.
- Use your water supply in the knowledge that every litre used or leaked has a production cost associated with it.



Upgrade Works

Funding has been applied for the replacement of 2.5 km of problematic 8 inch mains from Lisroe to Regagisha. Refurbishment of Maghara reservoir is scheduled for 2014. Refurbishment of 3 reservoirs during summer 2013 has proved a great success. Installation of Secondary chlorination stations in Kilmaley and Ballyduffmore was completed in 2013 and required to bring chlorine levels within EPA guide lines. Routine maintenance of our water infrastructure continues.

March 26th 2014 date set for Annual General Meeting.

Our AGM will take place at the Kilmaley Inn on March 26th at 8pm. All our members are welcome to attend. We always welcome new committee members. We would encourage members to put themselves forward and get involved in the committee.

Retirement

In accordance with the rules of the society, one third of the board shall retire each year but are eligible for re-election without nomination. This

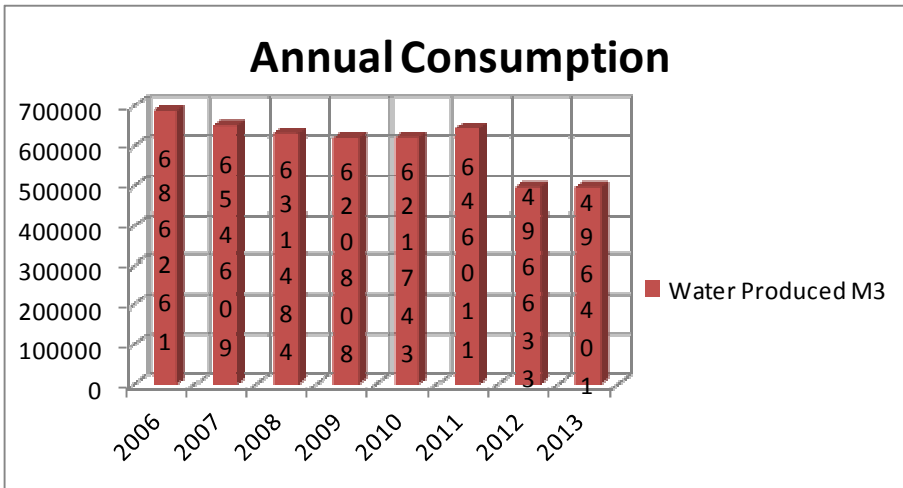
year Tom Keane, Pat Crowe and Adrian McMahon will retire but all 3 are offering themselves for re-election. Joe Costelloe is retiring from the committee and we thank Joe for his many years of involvement in the committee. Nominations for the board, other than retiring members shall be in writing to the 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 to arrive on or before March 25th 2013. Secretary : Noel Carmody, Feighroe, Connolly, Ennis. Tel 0872836118.

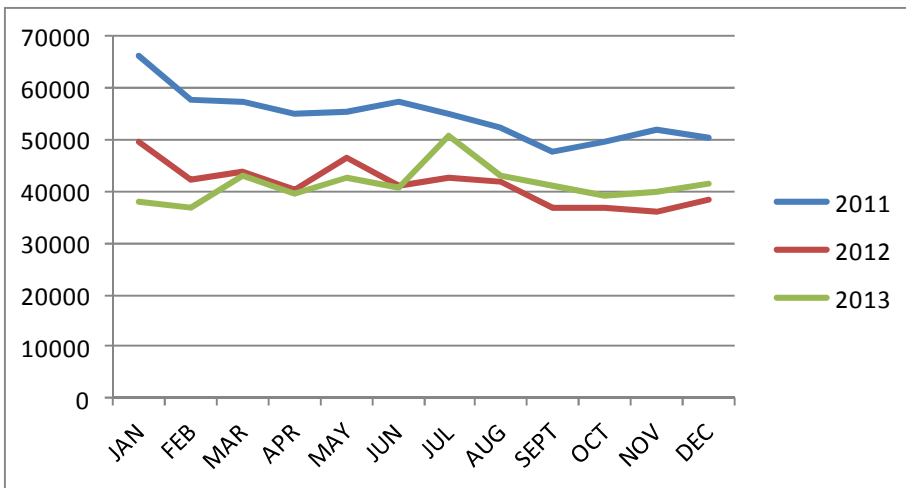
Agenda

1. Minutes of 2013 AGM.
2. Chairpersons Address.
3. Managers report.
4. Financial Report plus Auditor's Report.
5. Appointment of Auditor.
6. Election of Members to Committee.
7. Any other business.

Annual Consumption: The graph below shows the schemes water consumption over the last 8 years. As you can see there is a reduction in demand of 27.66% since 2006. This is due to a number of factors including critical mains replacement, introduction of metered billing, installation of telemetry bulk metering & alarms and reservoir repair. If you spot a water leak report it immediately to a member of the GWS staff.



Monthly Consumption: The graph below illustrates the monthly water demand in m3 (1000L) over the last 3 years. It is interesting to note the increased water demand in July 2013 as a result of the good Summer we all enjoyed. Lough Na Minna lake levels only dropped 10cm during this period of dry weather meaning our source is well capable of meeting demand during prolonged dry periods.



Reservoir Refurbishment 2013.

The schemes reservoirs were constructed during the mid 1970's and had largely remained untouched over the years. Some of these reservoirs were in need of repair due to cracks on the inner surface layer allowing water to be lost through the vertical panel joints. Tenders were sought from specialist companies experienced in reservoir repair and the contract was awarded to Shay Murtagh Ltd of Mullingar. Bypass valves were installed on the reservoirs at Tullasa, Magowna, and Been so that water supply could be maintained while the reservoirs were out of service. The refurbishment included application of a multilayer seal coating the internal walls, new joints on vertical panels. Sealing of roof cracks, installation of new internal & external ladders, entrance covers, air vents, Ball valves and safety rails. The repair work has been very successful and these reservoirs are now completely sealed. The reservoirs now have an extra life span of 20 years as a result of the refurbishment. It is planned that Maghara reservoir will undergo a similar refurbishment in 2014. The pictures below are before & after of Magowna Reservoir.

