

York Water District holding its own despite drought

Monday

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YORK, Maine – A torrential, day-long downpour on Oct. 9 has provided the only measurable rainfall in recent weeks, but it did little to add to the York Water District's depleted Chases Pond.

Still, Superintendent Don Neumann said Monday he's feeling confident that the district will weather this current drought condition that has caused a 4.9 foot drop in the waterline at Chases Pond.

"A month ago, it was at negative 4.5 feet. If you do the math, the pond is holding its own. It's only drawn down about half a foot of water."

The reason is that about one-third to one-half of the daily demand is coming from Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District. The YWD last month entered into an agreement to pipe up to 1 million a day from KKWWD to York's system. Currently, daily usage is at about 800,000 gallons daily, and is expected drop to a seasonal low of about 750,000 gallons.

The agreement lasts until Dec. 1, Neumann said, and will then be reevaluated. "But we still have plenty of water available to us at this time," he said.

Ratepayers are still being asked to voluntarily conserve water at this time, he said.

The interconnection with the KKWWD is a precaution but an important one, he said. “If we don’t take it we could have had serious problems later on in the year if it doesn’t rain.”

YWD is going to be conducting an infrastructure analysis this winter, and Neumann would like to explore whether it makes sense for the district to connect to Belle Marsh. That measure was considered more than a decade ago, but put aside after the York, Kittery and KKW districts entered into the interconnection agreements.

He’s hoping predictions for rain on Thursday and Friday hold true, nonetheless. Even so, he said, the YWD is currently doing fine.

“I feel a little guilty because I’m not nervous yet,” he said. “But I like to think of our pond half full.”

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