

Major water, sewer district projects planned

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YORK, Maine – Two significant sewer and water projects are expected to begin in York Beach and Cape Neddick next spring, and officials are proactively alerting residents now that there will be traffic detours from March right through until Memorial Day.

Projects are slated for the entire length of Church Street and for Shore Road from the Shore Road Market to the Cape Neddick Bridge. During construction, the roads will be closed to all but local traffic.

Superintendents Don Neumann of the York Water District and Tim Haskell of the York Sewer District said their districts are working jointly on the projects and the town's Department of Public Works will also be involved. Neumann called this cooperation "groundbreaking" and hoped it is a sign of further collaborations to come.

For water customers, the end result will be improved water pressure, particularly for fire hydrants, and water quality. For sewer customers, the Church Street project will allow for the replacement of aging mains. The Shore Road project is what Haskell hopes will be the first step in a larger project to provide sewer to an area that the town has been identified as having at least some failing septic systems.

According to Neumann, the water district has a two-year main replacement program that began this fall with new lines on Cape Neddick Road and continues until the fall of 2016 with work on Freeman Street in York Beach. In all cases, the size of the pipe will be increased, and will be replacing aging pipeline.

The water district is increasing its rates by 19.8 percent in January, the first increase since 2008, he said. It recently took out a \$4 million bond, \$3 million for the main replacements and \$1 million for upgrades to the water treatment plant.

The Church Street project will be significant for both districts. The sewer pipes on that road, said Haskell, are clay lined and leaking in places. Much of the pipeline will be traditionally replaced. However, the sewer district will use recent technology to line portions of the existing mains with fiberglass that is installed through a manhole cover and negates the need to open a trench. He said the main that goes through the York Beach ball field will be installed in this manner.

The water district's main is similarly in poor repair and in need of replacing, said Neumann. The cost of the water district portion of the project is \$300,000; and the sewer district, an estimated \$100,000.

The start date for the work is dependent on weather, they said, but will be sometime in March. While it is underway, temporary water will be supplied to all buildings on Church Street, Neumann said. Traffic will be rerouted from Ridge Road onto Beacon Street and then to Long Beach Avenue during the project. The town is expected to grade and shape the road and repave it after work is done.

Shore Road from the market to the bridge will also be closed to all but local traffic from March to the end of May. Again, said Neumann, the new main will improve water quality and flows to hydrants. The water district portion of that project is expected to cost about \$375,000, said Neumann.

Currently, there is no sewer along Shore Road or on Route 1A, said Haskell. Because the water district was opening the road anyway, and because sewerage that part of town is in the town's comprehensive plan, Haskell said the sewer district trustees made the decision to put in the sewer main while the road was open. He does not have a cost, but anticipates it will be around \$150,000.

The possibility of failed septic systems in that part of York, in and around the Cape Neddick River, has long been a concern of the town. Haskell said "we figured now is the time to put in the necessary piping so we're ready."

Neumann and Haskell were quick to praise interim Town Manager Steve Burns for working with them on these projects.

"We're starting to see a shift in communication. In the past, I'd put out my hand and get a nub back, but I kept putting it out there," said Neumann. "But things are changing, thanks to Steve."

"We can't have the town not supporting us, so this change is really welcomed," said Haskell.