



# connections



*The best value in today's market*

## The business of water: myths and realities

The world seems to take water for granted. Water is natural. It falls from the sky in the form of rain and snow—and it's free. Now that is the greatest myth of all!

Before water reaches you, ready to drink, it must be collected, treated and distributed—all at a reasonable price. This is the job performed by your water company, Groton Utilities' (GU) Water Division.

The factors affecting collection, treatment and distribution are numerous, many of which are determined by outside influences such as technology, government regulations and the ever-increasing pressure of changing land use practices. Here is a basic look at the economics of water production and how it affects you, our valued customers.

### IT STARTS WITH COLLECTION

At GU, water is collected in five surface water reservoirs, both natural and man-made, which have a capacity of some 2.3 billion gallons of water. This water collection system is enhanced by three production wells created in the early

1980s to protect against droughts.

The care of this water collection system requires due diligence, planning, management techniques and money, along with regulatory compliance. For example, we are required to release large volumes of water from our reservoirs to insure aquatic life downstream.

### PROTECTING THE WATERSHED

The watershed area feeds our water supply through runoff and stream flow, and must be protected. It encompasses all the reservoirs and their protective land, only a portion of which GU owns. We perform annual inspections on septic systems of adjoining property owners to ensure water quality. The watershed land GU owns is also protected by fencing and by security patrols.

Keeping the entire watershed in good environmental health is also challenging. Removing dead trees and maintaining clear areas around reservoirs helps prevent fires and helps maintain a watershed that produces quality water. Inspections and maintenance of water

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system dams are also integral parts of water supply and protection and are required by law.

### WATER TREATMENT IS KEY

Treating the raw water from our reservoirs is one of the most important steps in providing you with quality water. Federal and state water quality regulations require water companies to maintain a water quality standard that increases virtually every year. Chemical costs and the fact that the water business is a continuous, round-the-clock service and a very labor-intensive operation only add to the economic challenges.

Groton Utilities is at the forefront of technology. The Water Division has added granular activated carbon to all its filter beds used in the filtering process. This enhances the quality of

the treated water as it is pumped into the distribution system on its way to you.

Given the reality of today's geopolitical environment, protecting our watershed, our water treatment facilities and our distribution system have posed new challenges and added new costs. In the past couple of years, we have taken a number of important steps to insure the security of your water supply, its treatment, its distribution and the people who work so hard to serve you.

### MEETING ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

The economics of water production make it challenging to maintain reasonable rates while delivering a quality, potable product. The Water Division continues to meet this challenge in spite of cost pressures.

We continue to improve our water infrastructure and our technical expertise, while using all the knowledge and experience of a trained, certified, talented work force to keep costs in line. Cost control will always be a challenge, because state regulations prohibit municipal water companies from making a profit. We are literally a break-even business.

The future of our water system will likely rely on our will and our ability to set realistic rates. To maintain our traditional reputation for both water quality and exceptional customer service, we must respond to the pressure of market-based rates. Essentially we can only survive if we charge fair, realistic rates, sufficient to respond to water quality and infrastructure requirements.

## What do you get for your money?

Three gallons of GU water ..... **ONE PENNY**

One gallon of soda ..... about \$4

One gallon of bottled water ..... from \$2 to \$7

**USE YOUR PENNIES WISELY!**



## Water report is coming

Groton Utilities' Water Division will mail our annual water quality report to all water customers in June. We are pleased to report that we continue to meet all federal and state standards, as we have in the past.

This Consumer Confidence Report is required by law of all public water supply systems. The upcoming report will detail the water quality test results for calendar year 2005. Read the report for details, but quite simply, you're drinking the best!

# The Cartells kick off concert series



The Concerts in the Park 2006 series in Washington Park in the City of Groton will kick off with a concert at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, June 23. The Cartells will be the featured band.

Rain dates are Friday, August 18 and 25. The concerts are designed to be especially appealing to families for a fun, inexpensive night out. Picnic suppers are welcome. The concert site also has room on the basketball courts for dancing

This six-concert series is sponsored by both Groton Utilities and the City of Groton Parks and Recreation Department. The complete schedule is:

Friday, June 23 — 6:30-9 p.m.

*The Cartells*

Jazz, swing, rhythm & blues and popular music of all styles

Friday, July 7 — 6:30-9 p.m.

*The Blackburns*

Forgotten favorites of the 60s & 70s

Friday, July 14 — 6:30-9 p.m.

*Full Dempsey*

Original Americana

Friday, July 21 — 6:30-9 p.m.

*The Dick Campo Big Band*

New England's "premier" orchestra

Friday, July 28 — 6:30-9 p.m.

*High Times*

Swinging, rhythm, blues and 60s Motown

Friday, August 4

City of Groton Day, No Concert

Friday, August, 11 — 6:30-9 p.m.

*9Teen*

Brass kickin' rock and soul

## Happy anniversary, TVC

Thames Valley Communications (TVC), Groton Utilities' Cable Television Division, marked its second anniversary as a cable television and high-speed Internet service provider on May 24.

In its first two years, TVC has attracted more than 5,000 customers and has a market penetration of 48 percent. TVC has completely wired the City of Groton and is now completing the eastern part of the Town of Groton.

"We are pleased and honored by the community's response to our cable television and high-speed Internet services," said David Lee, TVC's Chief Operating Officer.

"Our first consideration will always be to satisfy the customer with quality local service," Lee said. "We are purposefully moving forward with all deliberate speed, but not so fast that we jeopardize the tradition of local service, by local people, from a local company."

For information on how to sign up for service, call TVC at 446-4009 or stop by TVC's Customer Care Center at 295 Meridian St. in the City of Groton. We're open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with evening hours on Thursdays until 7 p.m. The Center is open Saturdays from 8 a.m. to noon and is closed Sundays and holidays. You can also check out TVC at tvconnect.com.

## Parade set for July 4

Don't miss the annual Fourth of July Parade, sponsored by the Town of Groton.

The parade is scheduled for Tuesday, July 4, 2006 at 10 a.m. This year's theme is to trace the history of Groton along the famous Post Road, known today as Route 1.



The parade starts at Poquonnock Plains Park and proceeds along Route 1 until it concludes at the Groton Shopping Plaza on Long Hill Road. The reviewing stand will be at the Groton Shopping Plaza.

## Holiday Closings

Our offices at the City Municipal Building, including Customer Care and Thames Valley Communications, our Cable Television Division, and Project Management and our Operational Sections, located at The Julio H. Leandri Operations Complex on Poquonnock Road, will be closed for these upcoming holidays:

### Tuesday, July 4

Independence Day

### Monday, September 4

Labor Day

### Monday, October 9

Columbus Day

Our operations crews for both water and electric are available for emergencies during holidays. If you experience an electrical outage or a water main break, call us at 446-4000, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Normal business activity for all three Groton Utilities' Divisions, including electric, water and cable television, is conducted Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Customer Care is also open until 7 p.m. on Thursdays and 8 a.m. to noon on Saturdays.

Groton Utilities hopes you and your family have enjoyable holidays. But, please drive safely. **And, yes, don't forget to buckle up!**



## GROTON UTILITIES

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### Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) statement

Federal and State law prohibits employment discrimination. It is the policy of the City of Groton to comply with the laws which prohibit discrimination as to race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, marital status, national origin, ancestry, veteran status, history of mental disorder, mental retardation or any other legally protected class.

# Visit [energyhog.org](http://energyhog.org)



[www.EnergyHog.org](http://www.EnergyHog.org)

Looking for ways to save energy? Visit our website to learn about our new electric energy conservation programs. You can also link directly to [energyhog.org](http://energyhog.org), which offers a great piece of software to learn more about electric energy conservation.

To find it, go to the Groton Utilities' website at [grotonutilities.com](http://grotonutilities.com). Click the Energy Conservation icon. Next hit the Conservation Links box. At the bottom of the page is a hog's head icon for [energyhog.org](http://energyhog.org). Hit the icon and you'll be whisked away to a site where you can learn more energy-saving tips and how to do your own energy audit. Kids and adults are welcome, and the site has special sections for each.

## Nominations due July 14

Groton Utilities is accepting nominations until July 14 for the 2006 Jacqueline B. Nixon Community Service Award, created to honor a member of the community who has contributed his or her time, energy and resources to make the community a better place in which to live and work.

Persons eligible for the award should live in Greater Groton, and should

exemplify all the qualities suggested by Groton Utilities' slogan of "Giving back to the community." We will present this year's award during City of Groton Day on August 5 at Washington Park.

For an application call 446-4000, go to [grotonutilities.com](http://grotonutilities.com) or visit the Groton Utilities Customer Care Center at the City of Groton Municipal Building, 295 Meridian St.

## Call before you dig

If you're planning any type of project this summer that includes digging, both federal and state laws require you to call 1-800-922-4455 at least two full working days before you begin in order to learn where underground utility lines are located.

Don't think that a small hole won't matter – some underground lines are located just a few inches below the surface. Damaging buried lines could cut service for electricity, gas, water, telephone and more. Worst of all,

someone could be seriously injured.

Call Before You Dig is a one-call notification system that provides excavators and the general public with the ability to inform multiple owners and operators of underground facilities of a proposed excavation. Call them first, and they'll notify area utilities who



will mark what you need to avoid underground. It's worth the wait to be certain you and family will be safe, and it's the law. Call 1-800-922-4455 before you dig!