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## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR WATER SUPPLY**

**March 2018**

The Onondaga County Water Authority is pleased to provide its customers and consumers with the Authority's ***Annual Water Supply Statement and Consumer Confidence Report*** for the year ending December 31, 2017. Throughout this report, readers will find useful information specifically related to OCWA, as well as information related to water in general. In addition to mailing a notice to all customers of record announcing the availability of the report, the Authority continues its practice of providing copies of the report to local libraries. OCWA also advertises the availability of the report in local print media.

While every year is typically filled with a great deal of activity, 2017 was an exceptional year due to the consolidation of Onondaga County's Metropolitan Water Board (MWB) Lake Ontario system into the Onondaga County Water Authority operations. Overnight, on January 1, 2017, OCWA added 31 new employees and assumed full operation and maintenance responsibility for the system's 60 million gallon per day Lake Ontario water treatment plant and related facilities which provides water for more than 50% of OCWA's customers. Other facilities included in the changeover include 124 miles of 24-inch to 60-inch transmission main; seven distribution system pumping stations; and thirteen water storage tanks with a combined capacity of 117.25 million gallons.

OCWA also assumed oversight of the MWB's CARE project, an energy performance contract that involves the replacement of the major pumps and motors in use at the Lake Ontario raw water intake pumping facility, the Lake Ontario clear water pumping station (located at the Lake Ontario water treatment plant campus), and the Eastern Reservoir pumping station located in Manlius. In total, nine large pumps and motors that are at the end of the life cycle, have been or are in the process of being replaced with new, more energy efficient pumps and motors.

By the end of January 2017, the newly combined staff converted all of the Lake Ontario facilities from their existing control systems to OCWA's computerized control system. At the same time, due to a hiring freeze implemented by the Authority in 2016, former MWB employees successfully bid on open OCWA positions and by the end of March of 2017 combined staffing of the newly consolidated organization was voluntarily reduced by a total of eight employees. As a result, where there were formerly two separate control centers, there is now one. Another benefit of the consolidation was the establishment of an exceptional maintenance department. Combined, the two formerly separate maintenance departments formed a unit with talents that complement one another and greatly enhanced OCWA's ability to maintain all the merged systems facilities.

OCWA's engineering staff successfully obtained NYS Health Department grant funding that allowed the Authority to improve its Marcellus water treatment plant fluoride delivery system. Work on the project began in 2017 and wrapped up just after the start of the new year. Building on the success of the Marcellus application, OCWA applied for and was awarded a grant to undertake a similar project at the Lake Ontario Plant. Work on the Lake Ontario plant project will begin in 2018. Combined, the two awards will save OCWA rate payers \$1.4 million for the needed improvements at both plants.

Other 2017 capital improvement projects included the replacement of 20,256 feet of aging water mains, 91 isolation valves, and 72 hydrants throughout the system. OCWA also completed work on the replacement of the water main on Milton Avenue and Bridge Street, in the Village of Solway and the Town of Geddes, as part of the large coordinated community streetscape project. OCWA also completed rehabilitation work on water storage tanks located in Camillus, McConnellsville and Onondaga and completed coating life extension projects on tanks located in North Syracuse, Brewerton, and DeWitt. Another major project completed in 2017 involved the construction of a state of the art meter testing and repair facility at the Authority's headquarters in Salina.

On the water quality front, OCWA actively supported the City of Syracuse Water Department and Onondaga County throughout the cyanobacteria (algae) bloom that impacted Skaneateles Lake in the fall. Additionally, on the heels of the lead issue that greatly impacted Flint, Michigan, OCWA embarked on a project to identify any lead service in the OCWA system. In addition to sending a lead survey to all residential customers connected to the system, OCWA staff also began recording customer owned service materials encountered while performing their daily duties. It should be noted that water delivered from all three OCWA sources is treated to either create a protective coating on your water service line or to otherwise minimize the chances of any materials leaching from your service line in to the water delivered to your home.

Looking ahead, during 2018 OCWA will continue its annual capital improvement program, which now includes the initial planning for a major upgrade to the 53-year-old Lake Ontario Water Treatment Plant campus. OCWA will also be finalizing the conversion of the Lake Ontario facilities still using chlorine gas to sodium hypochlorite, a much safer liquid disinfectant. Other 2018 projects include replacing the Oakridge storage tank in Camillus, plus the ongoing yearly rehabilitation of several distribution storage facilities. Additionally, design for the replacement of three water storage tanks will be started. With respect to other ongoing work, roughly 25,000 feet of water main replacement is planned along with scheduled valve and hydrant replacements.

To learn more about the OCWA water system and water supply, you are urged to read the information included in this report. Readers that have questions regarding the report or require additional information can contact OCWA's Water Systems Chemist Ken Beckering by calling 315-455-7061, extension 3141

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