



THE FLOW N' GO

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

JULY / AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2015

DON'T LET A BURST WATER PIPE PUT A DAMPER ON YOUR VACATION MEMORIES

Your carry-on luggage is safely stored in the overhead compartments. You and your family are belted in and the plane is sitting on the tarmac waiting to take off for a much-deserved summer vacation. You have taken your Dramamine and you are ready to go.

In your head you start reviewing the check-list of things you needed to do before you left the house: stop the mail and newspaper delivery—check; dropped Fido off at the dog-sitter's—check; set the living room light to go on and off automatically—check; asked your neighbor to keep an eye on the house—check; shut off the main water supply to your house—cheooops.

Darn! You forgot to turn the water valve off at the meter before you left.

There is nothing that will make you forget about your fun vacation quicker than returning home to find your furniture floating.

If you will be away from home for a prolonged period of time, it's smart to shut down your home's water supply. (This is a good practice even if you

are going to be gone for just a weekend.)

It is a good idea for everyone in your home to know where to find the water shutoff valve in case of an emergency. It is usually located in the basement on the front, street-facing side of your home.

(Stop reading this right now and find your home's shutoff valve. We'll wait.)

Back? Okay, you've located the valve and can continue reading.

Depending on the age of your home, you will have one of two types of valves: a gate valve or a ball valve.

Older homes will likely have a gate valve. This is the type that has a round handle that must be turned several times to open or close. (It is this valve that most of us who have been around for a while grew up with.)



Gate Valve

Older gate valves can

break so don't force it if the handle won't turn easily. Contact your plumber for assistance.

The ball valve is common in newer homes and services. This type of valve has a flat, lever-type handle that is turned 90 degrees to



Ball Valve

turn the water on or off. When the lever is perpendicular to the pipe, the water is off; when the lever is parallel to the pipe, the water is on.

When you turn off the water supply, it is also a good idea to shut off your water heater as well. This reduces the chance of damage should the water heater somehow run dry.

During the winter months, ask your plumber if shutting off your water supply will have any affect on your heater or furnace. Some systems may require water to keep your home warm and to prevent your pipes from freezing and causing more of a problem.

TIP OF THE QUARTER

Don't Water Your Lawn When it Doesn't Need It

Don't waste water (and money) by watering your lawn when it isn't thirsty.

Do the Walk Test: Walk across your lawn and look back. If the grass where you walked is standing up straight, then your lawn doesn't need to be watered.

If you can see your footprints, give your lawn a drink.

CONTACT INFORMATION

781 631-0102

781 631-2694

781 631-2670 (FAX)

**Marblehead.org/
waterandsewer**

Superintendent
Amy McHugh

Assistant Superintendent
Bradley Perron

Office Manager
Paul Jalbert

Office Location
100 Tower Way
Building #11

Mailing Address
P.O. Box 1108
Marblehead, MA 01945

USE LESS WATER ON YOUR LANDSCAPE THIS GROWING SEASON

If you read the 'Tip of the Quarter' on the front of this month's *Flow N' Go* you already know how to do the Walk Test to determine if your lawn needs watering.

There are other ways to save water and money when caring for your home's landscaping.

Did you know that 50 to 75 percent of a home's water use during the growing season

may be used outside? You can cut this amount by including a landscape design and plants that are low-maintenance and drought-tolerant.

Some of the low-water plants that are appropriate for our area include Sedum, Eastern Red Columbine, Liatris, Blanket Flower and some ornamental grasses.

Watering should be done during the coolest part of the

day to prevent evaporation and use soaker hoses or trickle irrigation for trees and shrubs.

If you have an irrigation system, check it frequently for leaks and broken sprinkler heads. Make sure that your irrigation controller has a rain shutoff device. It makes no sense to water your lawn while it is raining. (How many times have you seen that while driving around

town?)

Mulch around your shrubs and garden plants to reduce evaporation from the soil surface (and to cut down on weed growth).

Use a rain barrel to collect water for use in the landscape.

These are but a few of the ways that you can save water and money while caring for your landscaping.

TREE ROOTS WILL STOP AT NOTHING IN SEARCH OF A NUTRITIOUS MEAL



In some ways, trees are a lot like humans. They start out as small off-springs and, with love and nurturing, thrive and grow into that perfect specimen of Man-kind—or Treekind.

Neither Man nor Trees can survive on water alone.

Man seeks out nourishment in the form of food. Sometimes to the excess. And when he has satisfied his hunger and his body has absorbed the beneficial vitamins and fiber, he passes what remains down the food-chain.

And therein lays the problem.

As the remnants of Man's feasting leaves his kingdom, the hungry tree roots seek out even the tiniest imperfection into the

pipeline that carries it away.

Once inside, the roots grow and grow to absorb as much left-over nutrition as possible, rewarding Man for his generosity with lush growth.

Also like humans, some trees have a bit of evil lurking under their bark. In their quest for survival of the fittest, their roots will eventually block the pipe, preventing their food from escaping so that they can keep it all for themselves. Selfish trees.

And when the trees' food can't make it through, some of it could be returned to the contributor—Man—in the form of a sewer backup into his home.

Unfortunately, this could be very expensive for the generous homeowner.

Since he is responsible for maintenance of the sewer service line from his residence to where it connects to the town's main in the middle of the street, the expense of having those nasty roots drilled out would be the homeowner's responsibility. So wouldn't the cost of the clean-up inside.

And don't expect the tree to share the expense.

One way that you can get revenge is to make sure that when you are planting new trees, bushes and shrubs, you don't plant them anywhere near your sewer line.

That small arborvitae that you plant today will soon be sending out its roots in search of a healthy meal. Don't let your sewer line become its dinner plate.

Kids' Corner

Test Your WaterSense

(Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of articles designed to teach the youth of Marblehead about water conservation through games, quizzes and fun activities.)

So you think you know everything there is to know about water?

You know how to use water—you simply turn on the faucet and all the water you need comes out. You use it to brush your teeth, to wash your hands before you eat and to take your bath.

Your Mom and Dad use it to cook your dinner and to water the family vegetable garden.

But how much do you really know about water?

Go to www.marblehead.org/water and click on Kids' Corner on the left side to Test Your WaterSense.