

WATER *line*

*A publication of the
Avon Lake Board of Municipal Utilities*

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NEWS YOU CAN USE: WINTERIZING YOUR HOME

Getting started on your indoor projects this winter? Don't forget to save yourself money and frustration by making these things happen.

- Disconnect and drain outdoor hoses. Detaching a hose allows water to drain from the faucet. Otherwise, a single, hard overnight freeze can burst either the faucet, or the pipe to which it's connected.
- Turn off water going to the outside of your house. (Look in your basement underneath your outside hose faucets.)
- Insulate and/or heat pipes or faucets in unheated areas. If you have pipes in the attic, an unheated garage or cold crawl space under the house, wrap and/or heat the water pipes before temperatures plummet. Hardware or building supply stores will have materials available.
- Seal off access doors, air vents and cracks. Winter winds whistling through overlooked openings can quickly freeze exposed water pipes.
- Make sure all able bodies in the house know where the incoming water shutoff valve is, and how to turn off the water coming in from the outside water line. If a pipe bursts anywhere in the house - kitchen, bath, basement or crawl space - this valve turns the water off to the house. So don't wait – find it now.
- In severe cold weather, you may want to allow a faucet to drip a small continuous stream – even if you are home. 💧



Typical winter at Avon Lake boat launch

start a fire, plus, overheating a single spot can burst the pipe. Heating a soldered joint could allow it to leak or come completely apart.

- Try a hair dryer with a high heat setting. Wave the warm air back and forth along the pipe, not on one spot. If you don't have a hair dryer, you can wrap the frozen section with rags or towels and pour hot water over them. It's messy, but it works.

During this process, be careful – the pipe may already be broken. (It's not leaking because the water is frozen.) But when it thaws, water could come gushing out. Be ready to run for the master shutoff valve if necessary. Better yet, turn the valve off before undertaking your thaw-out effort.

The most important thing is to take precautions before cold weather arrives. 💧

Source: American Water Works Association

BELMAR PROJECT UPDATE

After a brief postponement, the Belmar combined sewer separation project is set to begin in March 2013. The construction project will separate the storm sewer system from the sanitary sewer system. (The separation is required by the Ohio EPA, will help Avon Lakers keep their water utility costs down in the future and will keep Lake Erie cleaner by reducing the amount of sewage overflows directly into the lake during times of excessive rain.) Construction is expected to be complete by mid-2014.



Typical sewer lateral construction

Homeowners in the Belmar area will have a hand in the task as well – residents will be required to make a new connection (a lateral drain) for their wastewater to the new sanitary sewer within a few years (date TBD). Homeowners have already been notified via mail of their inclusion in the project, and will soon be invited to attend an end of January/early February information session. 💧

OOPS. MY PIPES FROZE

During an extended cold spell, pipes can freeze despite precautions. Do you have the plumber's telephone number handy? Write it down now (better yet, put it into your phone) before you need it in an emergency.

If you think you know where the freeze-up occurred and want to try thawing it yourself:

- Do NOT use a torch or any kind of open flame – you could

TO HELP KEEP UP WITH INFLATION, WATER RATES WILL INCREASE NEXT TWO YEARS

Avon Lake strives to keep your water rates among the lowest in the state and country, while maintaining excellent water quality standards. After absorbing inflationary cost increases in recent years, in December, the Avon Lake Board of Municipal Utilities approved a 4% hike in water rates for both 2013 and 2014. This translates to an increase of just over a penny a day, less than \$5/year for the average Avon Lake resident. 💧

WELCOME IAN HESSEL – YOUR NEWEST UTILITIES BOARD REPRESENTATIVE

On November 19, Ian B. Hessel was sworn in as a member of the Avon Lake Board of Municipal Utilities.

Hessel, an experienced senior finance and operations executive, will fill the position vacated by Charles D. Whitmer, who retired after serving 17 years on the board. Hessel owns Hessel Solutions, Inc., a local company that provides on-demand executives and major-purchase financial negotiation services to companies seeking to supplement existing staff to complete a project or fill a temporary position during a transition. Hessel is a CPA who describes himself as a problem solver and decision maker who is “delighted ... to serve on the ALMU board.” Hessel and his wife, Karen, along with their children, are Avon Lake residents.

ALMU chief executive, Todd Danielson, welcomed Hessel upon his swearing in.



Chief Utilities Executive Todd Danielson welcomes Ian Hessel to the board.

Avon Lake Municipal Utilities’ five board members are elected to serve four-year terms in the city’s general election. Hessel’s term expires December 31, 2015. 💧

ALMU WORKS TO KEEP MONEY IN YOUR WALLET

Even though our water rates are among the lowest in the area, we hate having to pass our rising costs (for system repairs, lake protection measures, inflationary cost increases) on to residents. But since those expenses are always necessary, ALMU constantly researches additional ways save money, allowing us to make our rate increases smaller and less frequent than they otherwise would be.

For example, in 2012 alone, we worked to negotiate better electricity and natural gas rates for ALMU, including joining a program whereby, in times of peak power usage, we actually detach from the power grid and use our generators to power all water pumping and purification activities. We identified a joint bond opportunity with the City, and negotiated with Ohio EPA to allow us to use dirt from upcoming projects as cover material for the monofill closure. All told, we’ve negotiated about \$2.5M in savings that we will realize during the next 3 years. 💧

WE LISTENED – BASEMENT BACKUPS

Your basement is for storing your memories, not your neighbor’s wastewater. To help prevent basement backups (and help reduce the amount of raw sewage that these homes put into Lake Erie – or your basement – during rain events), all Avon Lake residents will need to make sure all their clean water sources (e.g.

foundation drains) no longer go into the sanitary sewer. Generally, this affects only homes built before 1972. (Homeowners who built their homes after 1972 paid for a dedicated clean water line as part of their home construction costs.)

Even so, we know it is an unwanted burden in a time of economic uncertainty, but we must protect our homes and Lake Erie, so ALMU is offering credits to help homeowners offset this expense. Call us at (440) 933-6226 to schedule an inspection by one of our staff to see if your home is already in compliance, and, if not, is eligible for a sewer credit. Also, if your household earns a low to moderate income, you may be eligible for a grant through Lorain County Community Development (LCCD). Once the inspection is complete and you know the cost of what you’ll need, homeowners can contact LCCD directly to apply. The LCCD grant program ends in December 2013, and the LCCD grant program may be out of money before then, so call us today to schedule your inspection. 💧

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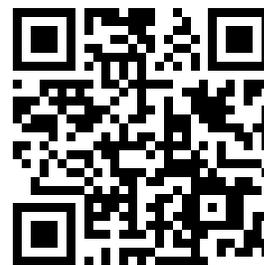
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avonlakewater.org/get-connected/

for the latest in water-related tips and updates.



Keeping citizens informed.

Our monthly board meetings are changing days, times.



Starting Feb. 1, 2013, the Avon Lake Board of Municipal Utilities will meet at ALMU’s administration building, 201 Miller Road, at 6:30 p.m. on the first and third Tuesdays of each month. January’s meetings will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 8 and 22. As always, the public is welcome to attend.