

Kilmaley-Inagh GWS

Report

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Message From The Chairman

As we approach our Annual General Meeting on April 6th we can reflect on another successful and busy year for the scheme. Our newsletter is intended to highlight some of the issues encountered by the committee over the last year. A section of problematic mains at the Miltown junction in Inagh village was replaced this year. A 3 year rolling budget has been introduced by the DEHLG which if properly financed will allow us to continue our program of upgrade works over the next 3 years. Unfortunately with 250 KM of water mains there will always be work to be done. Our treated water continues to pass all quality assurance testing by the scheme itself, Clare County Council and the HSE. Our scheme will continue to operate independently of Irish Water into the future as long as our financial viability is maintained. Revenue collection is ongoing and we would like to thank all those who have paid their charges and remind those who have yet to pay, to forward their payment as soon as possible. Thank you for your cooperation and support..
James B. Lynch
Chairman
Kilmaley Inagh GWS.

Kilmaley-Inagh GWS 2015 Review

Charges Review

Following a review of the financial subsidy given to group water schemes, the government have decided to cut the operation and maintenance subsidy from a maximum payment of €140 per house to €95 per house. This represented a cut in operational funding almost €90,000 to our group water scheme, meaning that water charges had to be reviewed.

Charges were discussed in detail at the AGM and it was decided to cut the free allowance from 100m³ to 50m³. The next 50m³ would be charged at €1 and the remainder would be charged at €0.90. These changes were voted on and agreed by the members who attended the AGM.

Water Conservation Grant 2015 – 2018

Those who registered for the €100 water conservation grant will have received the grant by now. Tips on how to put the grant towards water conservation devices

include

- 1. Toilets account for 30% of water usage in the home. Fit devices that reduce the amount of water flushed.
2. Taps and baths account for 21% of water used in the home. Fitting low flow aerators on taps reduce the water flow but maintain pressure.
3. Showers account for 12% of water usage. Fitting a low flow shower head can reduce water usage by 10%.
4. Washing machines & Dishwashers account for 21% of domestic water usage. Investing in more efficient appliances can save you money on power and water usage. Of course the most important water saving advice of all is that you check for leakage on a regular basis. Some members who did not check for leakage throughout the year were left to pay very large water bills in 2015. Details on the payment of the grant for 2016 are not yet available but anyone who didn't claim the grant for 2015 should be able to register and claim it for

the next 3 years.

New Web Site

In June 2015 we launched our new website full of useful information about our water scheme. Please go to WWW.KIGWS.IE to view the site.

New Payment Options

KIGWS have now developed a bill payment portal on our new website allowing you to pay your bill online using Visa or debit card or through PayPal. This has been very successful with a lot of members continuing to use this facility.

Inagh Village

Upgrade Works

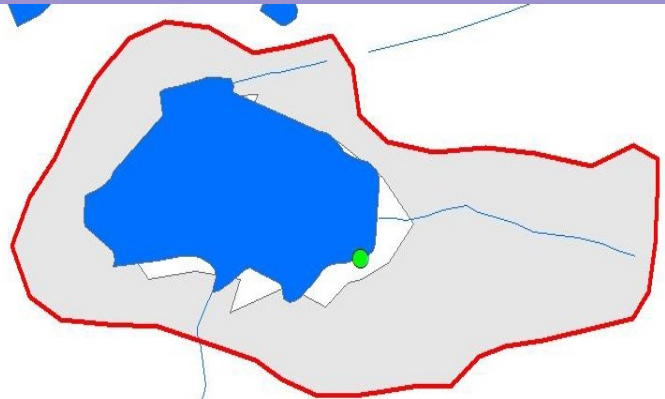
Critical mains replacement was carried out in Inagh Village in November 2015 by Finn Bros Ltd. Ironically the old mains began to leak on the day the works commenced so it is great to have the new mains complete. Plans have been submitted to Clare County Council for replacement of problematic mains. We will find out in the coming weeks if we have received funding and are in a position to see our plan implemented.

Ground Water and Surface Water Reports Complete

- As part of our source protection strategy Kilmaley Inagh GWS completed a surface water catchment report for Lough Na Minna. This identified the area around the lake catchment that impacts on surface water quality. From the report it is obvious that there is a large volume of ground water (contributing to the lake's over all volume. A ground water study was commissioned and completed in 2015 to identify the areas contributing to our ground water supply.
- These reports allows the scheme management to map the surface and ground water zones of contributions to Lough NaMinna and identify potential threats to raw water quality within the lake catchment.



Ground Water Zone of Contribution



Surface Water Zone of Contribution

- As can be seen in the 2 maps the ground water catchment is much larger than the surface water catchment although both areas overlap. The surface water catchment comprises of 185 acres and the larger ground-water catchment extends to 889 acres. The upland afforested area to the east of the lake in the vicinity of Ben Dash hill is considered to be the main driving force for ground water towards the lake.
- It is now possible for KIGWS to assess any proposed development in the vicinity of Lough NaMinna and whether it will have an impact on our water supply.
- In the area surrounding the lake the vulnerability ranges from Extreme to High. Areas of extreme vulnerability are mapped along the eastern, north eastern, north western and southern lake shore. The Upland area towards Ben Dash hill and to the north is mapped as Extremely Vulnerable also.
- We have concerns regarding what impact the construction of the Letteragh wind farm will have on our raw water quality with some turbines being constructed within our surface water catchment. It is critical that no development should impact on lake water quality within the zones of contribution to Lough NaMinna. The construction of roads, tree felling, blasting, etc can all have an adverse impact on ground water quality.

Arrears Management Implemented.

Unpaid water charges continue to be a headache for the board with some shareholders continuing to ignore invoices and statements. An Arrears management policy has been adopted by the board and will be the basis for dealing with people in arrears from now on.

The rules of the scheme allow the board to limit or withhold supply completely from members who refuse to pay the charges agreed at the AGM. This is an unfortunate and unpleasant process for all concerned but the financial stability of the scheme depends on each member paying their fair share of water charges.

Anyone in financial difficulty is urged to contact the scheme manager in strict confidence where a weekly or monthly direct debit arrangement can be set up to clear arrears.

It is unfortunate that some members have refused to cooperate with our charging process and have been left to find alternate water supply. It is unacceptable to the board to have a few members refusing to pay their way and still continue to receive the same service as those who are financially compliant. We are all equal members of the Co-Op with equal obligations to pay our fair share.

The process is outlined as follows.

1. Select accounts with arrears for 4 mths +
2. Issue 'Notification of Arrears letter'
3. Issue 'Final Notification' at 7 mths +
4. Allow member 10 days to respond in writing.
5. If no response/payment issue seven day notice of intent to disconnect supply via registered letter
6. If no response/payment issue Notice of cancellation of membership & Disconnection Notice
7. Implement Disconnection Procedure
8. Decide if pursuit of arrears through the courts is worthwhile.

Note. Reconnection charge of €500 applies.

Not Checking for water leakage may cost you €1000's.

You must get into the habit of regularly checking your own water meter readings. This is the only indication that you could have a water leak on your connection. An undetected leak can lead to a water bill of hundreds if not thousands of euro in a 12 month period. **Reading your meter costs nothing not reading may cost you a lot.**

Members with a domestic connection currently receive a free allowance of 50m³ per year. Normal average usage for a house with 2 adults and 3 children is between 90 to 130 m³ per year. If you are exceeding this you must examine your usage, to determine if you are being wasteful or have a leak on your system.

Text Alert System

Our mobile text facility is working very well, allowing members to receive urgent information by mobile phone. We have 1000 members on the system so there are still 1006 members who have not supplied information to us. It would be beneficial if shareholders would supply their mobile phone numbers to facilitate this process. Messages relating to planned and unplanned service interruptions are only issued by text message

Text your name and account no to 0872836118

How to check a water meter

- The red dials on the meter are litres. White dials are m³ (1000 litres)
- Ensure at time of reading there is no usage going on for example the washing machine on .
- If the furthest red dial on the right is moving water is going through your distribution system This must be investigated further to identify if you have a leak.
- Note the meter reading so you can produce a usage pattern over time.
- Use your water supply in the knowledge that every litre used or leaked has a production cost associated with it.



Irish Water Bills.

No Group scheme member should be paying Irish Water for water services. Some members in certain villages that are connected to a public waste water system are liable for Irish Water waste water charges. For a 2 adult household this bill should be €32.50 per quarter. If you are paying more please examine your bill and ensure you are not paying for water services also!

April 6th 2016 date set for Annual General Meeting.

Our AGM will take place at the Kilmaley Inn on April 6th at 8pm. All our members are welcome to attend. We always welcome new committee members. We would encourage members to put themselves forward and get involved in the committee.

Retirement

In accordance with the rules of the society, one third of the board shall retire each year but are eligible for re-election without nomination. This

year Pat Gallagher, Michael Halpin, Raymond Foudy, Johnny Crawford, will retire but all 4 are offering themselves for re-election.

Nominations for the board, other than retiring members shall be in writing to the secretary and shall contain a statement by the member nominated of his or her willingness to be elected. Nominations should be forwarded to the secretary to arrive on or before 4pm on April 5th

2016.

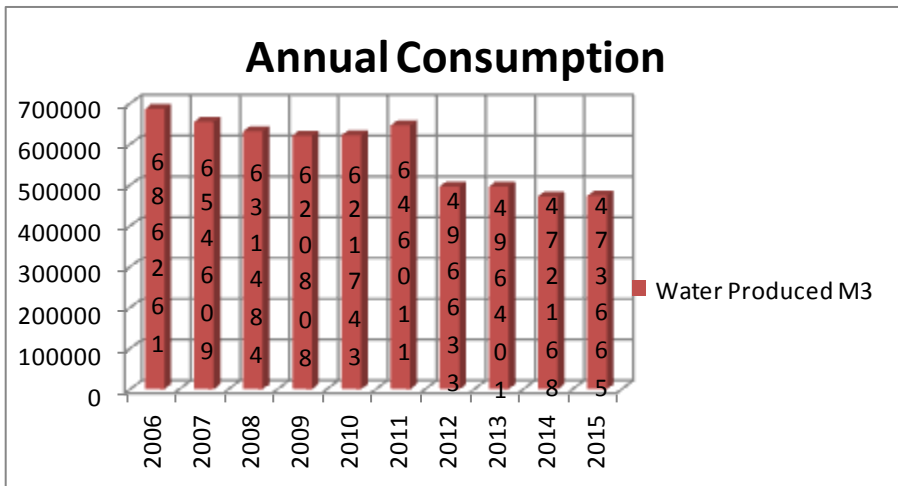
Secretary : Noel Carmody, Feighroe, Connolly, Ennis. Co.Clare. Email, ncarmody@kigws.ie

Tel 0872836118.

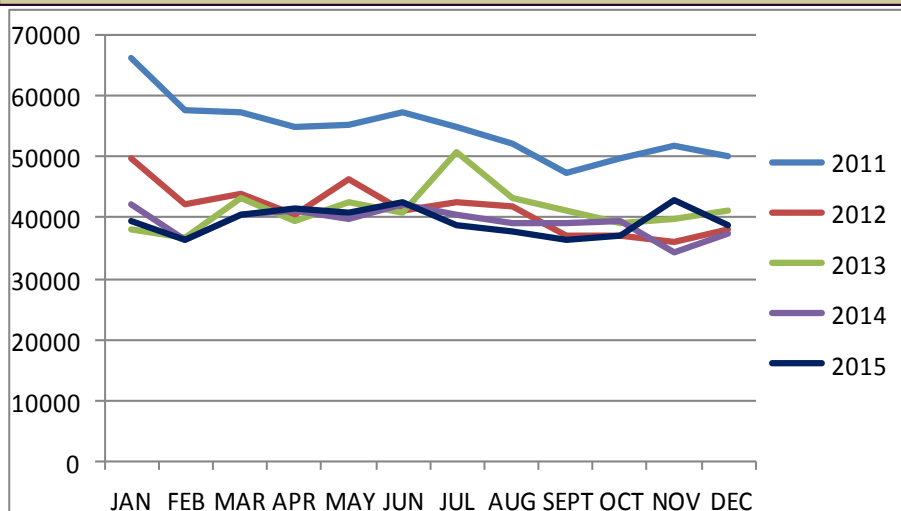
Agenda

1. Minutes of 2015 AGM.
2. Chairpersons Address.
3. Managers Report.
4. Financial Report plus Auditor's Report.
5. Appointment of Auditor.
6. Charging Structure
7. Election of Members to Committee.
8. Any other business.

Annual Consumption: The graph below shows the schemes water consumption over the last 10 years. As you can see there is a reduction in demand of 31% since 2006. This is due to a number of factors including critical mains replacement, introduction of metered billing, installation of telemetry bulk metering & alarms and reservoir repair. Daily network monitoring using information sent from our bulk meters allow us to track water usage all over the scheme. Major leakage can be tracked to an area instantly, enabling quick location of burst mains. If you spot a water leak report it immediately to a member of the GWS staff on 0872836118 or 0872547814.



Monthly Consumption: The graph below illustrates the monthly water demand in m3 (1000L) over the last 5 years. Water usage for 2015 was again consistent with that of the last 4 years and actually slightly lower. A rise in demand in November is due to a leak in Inagh village that could not be repaired until the new water mains were installed at the Miltown Malbay Junction. A sharp fall off in demand in June and July can be attributed to the reading of meters by staff and the identification of leaks on members service networks. It is clear that very few members are checking their consumption on a regular basis. Doing so will minimize your water bill by identifying leakage before a large of volume of water leaks from your system undetected.



Quality Assurance 2015– 100% compliance.

The scheme continues to comply with the National Federation of Group Water Scheme's quality Assurance program for water quality. Water quality has been excellent through out 2015 with 100% compliance for bacterial and chemical analysis from all internal testing as well external testing carried out by both Clare County Council and the HSE. Continuous Chlorine monitoring throughout the scheme is ongoing by scheme management. Daily testing is carried out by EPS at the treatment plant while monthly samples are sent to external laboratories for analysis. Clare County Council in their role as water supervisory authority test a set number of samples throughout the year. The HSE is also involved in taking samples on an ongoing basis to ensure our water meets required standards.

Fluoride Queries.

Of late we have received a number of queries in relation to fluoride dosing to our water supply for dental purposes. **We do not add fluoride to our drinking water as we are not required to do so under current drinking water regulations.** Public water supply authorities are required by regulation to add fluoride to drinking water supplies however private group water schemes such as ours do not have this requirement.