



TOWN OF SHREWSBURY
100 MAPLE AVENUE
SHREWSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS 01545-5398

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Taylor Galusha
tgalusha@shrewsburyma.gov
508-841-8580

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Shrewsbury Water and Sewer Division Completes Unidirectional Flushing Town-Wide



Jonathan Gonzalez-Rosario,
from Hydra Tech,
the day the Town finished
its first full round of UDF

TOWN OF SHREWSBURY, MA - On December 7, 2021, the Town of Shrewsbury completed unidirectional flushing in Zone 12, completing one full pass through all 12 of the flushing zones in Town since the fall of 2019. Water and Sewer Superintendent, Dan Rowley, oversaw this process and other Water Improvement Projects in Town.

Mr. Rowley discussed the history behind the Water Improvement Projects. He explained that the Town's water supply contains the natural mineral manganese and for many years, the Town added liquid polyphosphate to sequester or "suspend" the manganese in the water. He added that as years went on, the levels of manganese elevated and the need for removal became a priority. Mr. Rowley noted that water quality complaints also increased due to the levels of manganese in the water and water mains. In the fall of 2018, the Home Farm Water Treatment plant went into service which began to biologically remove manganese. He explained that this was a major step in improving the Town's water quality, but it did not resolve all of the issues as there was not a formal water main flushing program in place. In the fall of 2019, the unidirectional flushing program began.

Unidirectional Flushing (UDF) is used to improve operations and enhance the water system. Water main flushing is considered an effective method to remove unwanted tastes, odors, or discolorations of the water, and to improve chlorine residual. UDF is a specific type of water main flushing. It isolates each pipeline to create flow in a single direction to quickly and efficiently clean the pipe. By concentrating the flow in one direction, UDF creates higher velocities that are better able to clean the pipe. The major advantages of this method are

improved cleaning of accumulated deposits on pipes, less water is required than conventional flushing, and there is less of an impact on customers.

Mr. Rowley stated that, “Our vision is that unidirectional flushing will be an ongoing program with work taking place in the spring and fall seasons as water demand allows. We will be conducting the work using Town staff as well as help from a contractor.” The goal is to complete unidirectional flushing of the entire town every 2-3 years, depending on the seasonal demand of the water system. Residents should expect less disruptions during the flushing process as the program continues.

John Samia, Chair of the Board of Selectmen, stated that, “Improving water quality has been one of the most important goals for the Town over the past several years. The completion of the first full pass of all twelve flushing zones in the Town represents a significant step toward improved Town water quality. This important work will continue, and we look forward to even more water quality improvements upon further rounds of Unidirectional Flushing zone work. We appreciate the hard work and vision of Mr. Rowley and his team to get the Town to where it is now and we want to thank Town residents for their continued patience and understanding while the Town undertakes this important work.”

There are many additional unseen benefits to the UDF program. During the unidirectional flushing program, water valves are cleaned and exercised prior to being used. This has proven to be very helpful in an emergency situation such as a water main break. Also, they have found several fire hydrants that needed maintenance that might not have been discovered. In addition, this program will extend the life of the water mains in Town.

We would like to thank everyone for their patience and understanding as this work has taken place. We would also like to thank the Hydra Tech Team for all of their hard work and dedication to this project.

For more information about this and other DPW projects, please visit the Town’s website at www.shrewsburyma.gov.