



# Operation Start-up

STRENGTHENING AND SECURING A FIRST CLASS WATER SYSTEM

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON CHANGE IN WATER TREATMENT

A decade of planning, design, and construction for \$1.7 billion in improvements to MWRA's water system is nearing completion. In late June or early July, the last major project, the Walnut Hill Treatment Plant, will be going into service. The new plant will provide state-of-the-art treatment and will consolidate all treatment steps into one plant. These changes will improve water quality by strengthening disinfection with ozone, producing less chlorine disinfection by-products, and enhancing corrosion control.

The biggest change will be the addition of ozone, instead of chlorine, for primary disinfection. Ozone consists of three atoms of oxygen, and is created by applying an electrical current to pure oxygen in a specially designed chamber. Ozone provides better disinfection than chlorine, especially against *Cryptosporidium* and other hard-to-kill pathogens. Chloramine will continue to be used for residual disinfection.

**These changes will not affect the availability of the water supplied to MWRA communities.** But, there may be changes in certain water parameters, in particular pH and chloramine levels, during the change-over from chlorine to ozone. You may also notice an improvement or change in the taste of the water.

### Some of the changes to the water quality are:

- Chloramine levels will be increased, and levels may reach up to around 2.5 mg/L, though most of the values will be only slightly higher than existing levels. This increase in chloramine levels will occur both during and after the start-up to ensure disinfection throughout the entire distribution system.
- There will be an increase in the pH of the water, from the previous target of 9.1 to a new target of 9.3. pH values at the tap should range from 8.8 to 9.5.
- There will be no change in alkalinity, with the target remaining at a 40 mg/l.
- With the use of ozone, dissolved oxygen levels in the water may increase.

**In order to ensure the safety of dialysis patients and other sensitive users; please keep a close watch on all water tests involving these patients, but particularly between June 26 through the end of July.**

**Please ensure that you check pH and chlorine levels regularly for water to be used with all dialysis patients and other sensitive users during this time period.**

If you have any questions about these changes or would like more information about your drinking water, please feel free to contact Stephen Estes-Smargiassi at 617-788-4303 ([Smargias@mwra.state.ma.us](mailto:Smargias@mwra.state.ma.us)) or Joshua Das at 617-788-4668 ([Joshua.Das@mwra.state.ma.us](mailto:Joshua.Das@mwra.state.ma.us)). There will be weekly updates on the MWRA web site ([www.mwra.com](http://www.mwra.com)) with current information on the schedule and water quality changes.

Not sure if you receive MWRA water? Check [www.mwra.com/02org/html/whatis.htm](http://www.mwra.com/02org/html/whatis.htm) for a list of communities served by the new plant.

**24-7 Emergency Contact – MWRA Operations Control Center - 617-305-5950**