

Town of Thomaston  
**ENVIRONMENTAL DEPARTMENT**

Report for October 2023

*LAGOON PLANT OPERATIONS* – This was a difficult month for land application of the treated wastewater. We were able to land apply 10.72 million gallons (MG) with rainfall of 7.15 inches. The volume received for treatment was 12.14 MG. The storage lagoon was 47.20% full at the beginning of the month and 55% at the end. The Kubota is back in service. The aeration system is holding together but at cost. With blowers running nearly 24 hours a day, the plant bill will be much higher every month until the new system is in place.

*LAND SPRAYING OPERATIONS* – The land applied wastewater was monitored, sampled, and tested as required by our DEP permit and all parameters for spray fields 2, 3, 4, and 5 were within limits. Spray field one continues to remain offline. Almost every sign throughout the spray fields has been shot up filling most signs with holes. Tree stands and sheds have been found in the spray areas and their owners have been contacted. Shortly after notifying individuals to remove hunting equipment from the spray fields Town owned equipment was damaged and destroyed.

*CONTROL CENTER OPERATIONS* – The gate installation has begun and hopefully all fence work will be complete by the end of the year. The lack of potable water continues to make lab operations challenging. A proper road has been installed to the Solar Farm making it possible to maintain the facility properly year-round and meeting the State of Maine Safety and Fire codes for access to a Solar Array by a Fire ladder truck.

*PUMP STATIONS* – Townline and Buttermilk pumps continue to struggle as they are approaching 20 years old. Ship Street has been subjected to vandalism several times. Plans are in place to fence it in but are pending available funding.

*STAFFING* – The hunt for good staff continues. Interviews have been conducted and the search is still underway.

*MUNICIPAL UTILITIES* – Street lights were in 99% working order. one light is still down and we are waiting on parts.

This month the solar array produced 43,324 kWh of electricity that went to the grid. We were designed to produce 47,937 kWh but with over seven inches

of rain we were kept in the dark a bit. CMP bills totaled \$17,034.15 and the Town had \$13,854.83 in credits, with electricity costing a total of \$3179.32 for the month.

The solar panels on the roof of the Environmental Department office building and garage produced very well and was all used in the treatment facility. Generating 43,324 kWh's this month was not enough to overcome the power used. As noted in previous reports, the system is currently designed to only supply around 80% of our needs at the time it was built. Next month the long-range forecast is calling for in excess of 6 inches of rain. Rain equals no sun. I anticipate a bill in excess of \$8,000.00 next month.

*SEWER, STORM, AND CLEAN WATER COLLECTION SYSTEM* –Testing continues of the clean water and drain systems throughout town and at a variety of times. Results are being assessed. It has become apparent that the clean water drain system is operating beyond its capacity. If we receive more than 2-1/2 inches of rain in a 24-hour period it is likely basements will flood.

*FINANCIALS* – The department has expended 40% of the FY24 budget at the end of October. The budget remains in order and viable. Progress continues in all areas of the Environmental Dept.