

TO: Wayland Board of Selectmen & Town Administrator
FROM: WaylandWells.com
DATE: June 8, 2012
RE: Public Comment: June 4, 2012 BoS meeting with NStar

Thank you for inviting additional public comment regarding the discussion with NStar officials on June 4.

As discussed at the meeting, it is imperative that NStar provide the documentation that establishes the easements in Wayland. As described, the easement is located in the Aquifer Protection District (Chapter 198, Article 16 of the Town Code). Most of this easement also lies within the Capture Zone of the Meadowview Well. Under normal pumping and recharge conditions, contaminants in the Capture Zone of a well are reasonably likely to reach the wellhead. It also appears that this easement may intersect the Meadowview Well Zone I.

Land uses within the Zone I are strictly limited by MassDEP pursuant to 310 CMR 22.21(3)(b). The wellhead protection and utility info layers are available on the Town's GIS, and mapping of the Zone I may be obtained through the Survey Department.

Please review Figure 3 on page 13 and pages 73-80 of the Wayland Wellhead Protection Plan describing the Meadowview Well source protection area and contamination risks thereto. http://waylandwells.com/WaylandWells/Resources/Entries/2012/1/18_Existing_Water_Supply_Protection_Tools_files/Wellhead%20Protection%20Plan%20June%202011.pdf As you know, the Wellhead Protection Plan was approved last December by MassDEP and formally adopted for implementation by the Department of Public Works.

The Wayland Water Division does not currently rely on the Meadowview Well for drinking water due to elevated manganese and iron concentrations. MassDEP, however, classifies it as an active well and the Town manages it, as required, for use in emergencies. According to the latest Annual Statistical Report filed with MassDEP, the Baldwin Pond Wells contributed little water to the distribution system at various intervals in 2011, for a total of about six months, increasing our reliance on water pumped from other town wells. One cannot underestimate the importance of protecting all our wells, including the Meadowview Well.

It is likely that the vegetation management methods under review would impact the source protection area and water quality of the Meadowview Well. The effects of broad scale deforestation, increased pollutants in runoff, erosion, heavy equipment damaging septic systems, vehicle and equipment fuel leaks, and/or the application of herbicides could put the Town's drinking water supply at risk.

Protecting Wayland's drinking water is governed by statute and corresponding regulations. The applicable legal tools are organized and available at this link: http://www.waylandwells.com/WaylandWells/Resources/Entries/2012/1/18_Existing_Water_Supply_Protection_Tools.html

Please also see Chapter 143 (Pesticides including herbicides) and Chapter 198, Section 1602.1 (Definition of toxic or hazardous) of the Town Code. Note that a special permit is required under Chapter 198, Section 1603.3.11(A) in order to apply herbicides in the Aquifer Protection District.

Based on various comments made at Monday's meeting, it appeared that such chemicals may have been applied by NStar in this neighborhood in the past without notifying property owners and/or obtaining appropriate permits. NStar's apparent practice of sending a generic letter to a few offices in town hall is not sufficient public notice, particularly if those letters do not reach the appropriate governmental bodies, such as the Board of Public Works (the designated tree warden), or the public.

Given the location of the claimed NStar easement in and around sensitive resource areas, the application of "Roundup" or other similar chemical herbicides, as described by Mr. William Hayes at your meeting, would pose an actual or potential public health hazard. Glyphosate alone is not the issue. One must also know exactly which surfactants are used in the particular product to be applied since that mixture can be more toxic than glyphosate alone. Please note the large variety of Roundup products that exist for NStar's possible use.

<http://siri.org/msds/gn.cgi?query=roundup&start=0>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roundup_%28herbicide%29

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roundup_%28herbicide%29#Health_effects

The easy availability of Roundup or other chemical herbicides should not be a factor in encouraging its use on private and town properties. During the meeting last Monday, Mr. Hayes implied that such chemicals are commonly used on our public lands. However, this is not acceptable practice in Wayland. Mechanical means exist and are commonly employed to control undesirable vegetation. Given the availability of alternatives, NStar should ensure that it will make a green and healthy choice for its vegetation management plan in our community.

In view of the foregoing, please act to strictly limit vegetation management in the Meadowview wellhead area. Please require Nstar to comply with all applicable laws and to formally commit to mitigation for water quality monitoring, a mitigation budget, and a method of long-term enforcement since impacts may not show up right away in water test sampling.

We hope this is helpful as you communicate with NStar on behalf of all Wayland residents.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherre Greenbaum, Jennifer Riley, Tom Sciacca, Linda Segal and Kurt Tramposch

www.waylandwells.com