

**IX. Public Facilities**

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# **PUBLIC FACILITIES**

## **General Government**

The majority of the Town's administrative functions located in the Town Hall building located at 208 Sanford Road between Route One and the Maine Turnpike. Town Hall provides offices for the following departments:

- Town Manger
- Town Clerk
- Assessing
- Planning and Development
- Code Enforcement
- Finance and Tax Collection

The Town Hall also contains meeting facilities on the first floor for selectmen's meetings and the meetings of other town boards and commissions.

## **Fire Department**

The Wells Fire Department provides a host of services including Fire Response, Medical Rescues, Life Guard Services, Water Rescues and Emergency Management. The Department recently completed a survey of those who needed service. With a 48.7% response rate, over 90% responded were "very happy" with the service.

## **Facilities**

The Town of Wells Fire Department has 3 stations located in the community:

### **The Corner Station**

The Corner Station is located on Route 1 / Post Road at the intersection of Route 109 / Sanford Road. This is the department's main headquarters and the location of the administrative offices. It is the only station in town that is staffed 24 hours per day and 7 days per week by career firefighters.

### **Highpine Station**

The Highpine Station is located on Highpine Loop Road, just off Route 109 / Sanford Road and includes a meeting room and kitchen on the 2nd floor. The Town has committed to replacing this station with a new fire station that will also include a community meeting room.

## **Branch Station**

The Branch Station is a former schoolhouse and is located on Route 9A / Branch Road at the intersection of Clark Road and Cole's Hill Road. There is also a small meeting room upstairs and a kitchen downstairs.

## **Hydrants**

The department works closely with the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells (KKW) Water District for installation of hydrants within the KKW district. Areas outside of the District is served by dry hydrants.

## **Vehicles and Equipment**

Vehicles and equipment used by the Fire Department need to be replaced on an ongoing basis and are typically planned for within the Capital Improvements Planning Process.

## **Personnel**

The Department has 11 fulltime employees including the Fire Chief, Administrative Assistant to the fire Chief, three Captains and 6 fire fighters.

## **Career Personnel**

The career personnel operate three shifts. Each shift has one captain and two career firefighters assigned. The shift members work a 48/96 schedule. This means that they work 48 hour shift followed by 96 hours off. This rotates continuously throughout the year.

## **Call Firefighters/Personnel**

Wells Fire Department has approximately 20 active call members who respond to emergencies, maintain their training or attend other necessary requirements set by the department during the time away from their jobs and families. Each member is assigned to 1 of 2 sub-stations. Each sub-station is assigned a call officer.

## Incident Summary -2003 & 2012

Incident Category	Count 2003	Count - 2012
Fire	72	65
Overpressure Rupture, Explosion, Overheat (no fire)	5	2
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service Incident	222	401
Hazardous Condition (no fire)	101	64
Service Call	113	117
Good Intent Call	74	74
False Alarm & False Call	78	128
Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	0	1
Special Incident Type	14	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>853</b>

Source: Town of Wells

### **Police Department**

The Wells Police Department is located on Route 1 / Post Road at the intersection of Route 109 / Sanford Road. The Department consists of a Patrol Division (which also includes 1 animal control officer and 2 K-9 units), a Criminal Investigation Division (CID) and a Communications Division (Dispatch). The Wells Police Department employs 23 sworn police officers, 5 dispatchers, and 1 animal control officer.

The Police Department is the primary provider of law enforcement and related community service throughout the Town. The Department responds to over 20,000 calls for service yearly and makes thousands of traffic stops. The Police Department makes over 200 criminal arrests a year, ranging from simple assault to armed robbery.

The Communications Division dispatches for Police, Fire, EMS, Lifeguard and Highway and handles approximately 60,000 incoming telephone calls yearly, which include both routine business calls and emergency (generally 9-1-1) calls.

Vehicles and equipment used by the Police Department need to be replaced on an ongoing basis and are typically planned for within the Capital Improvements Planning Process.

### **Wells Emergency Medical Services**

Wells Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is a non-profit corporation, owned by the Town of Wells, operated by a Board of Directors who are appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Wells EMS Provides ambulance services to the Wells community and its' guests 24 hours a day I 7 days a week, with three fully equipped ambulances with state of the art equipment, staffed with 40 part-time EMS licensed professional employees and a full-time Director. Wells EMS operates 3 Type III ambulances and 3 12- Lead EKG monitors purchased through CIP with town funds.

The Service responds to more than 1,500 ambulance calls annually (many of the calls involve more than one ambulance and/or more than one patient). The number of calls has steadily risen since 2000, increasing

from 1,038 in that year to 1,534 in 2003 2013. Through August 2014, there were already 1,090 calls for service. Of all calls to WEMS, 72% are medical related and 28% are trauma related. Most hospital transfers by WEMS (66%) are to York Hospital, with 25% going to Biddeford Medical Center, 7% going to Sanford Medical Center and 2% to other hospitals.

During the period from Memorial Day to Labor Day there are four full time personnel on duty 24/7. The remainder of the year there will be three personnel on duty and two on at night 24/7. Additional assistance is received when needed from Wells Fire Department, who are paid for their services, and the Wells Police Department

Wells EMS operates from a leased space in the Wells Regional Medical Facility, located on Sanford Road. The approximately 3,900 square foot space includes: three ambulance bays, Director's offices, EMT office with three work stations, a medical supply room, kitchen I break room, four bedrooms, and two bathrooms/shower. The EMS moved into this facility in October 2000 from the Wells Comer Fire Station, which was not designed for another full time service.

Vehicles and equipment used by the EMS Department needs to be replaced on an ongoing basis and are typically planned for within the Capital Improvements Planning Process.

## **Public Works**

The Public Works Department is located at 577 N. Berwick Road in the recently completed (2013) highway garage. The Public Works Department is made up of 3 divisions: Beach Services, Street Maintenance and the Transfer Station.

### **Street Maintenance Division**

This division consists of 10 employees, including the Assistant Road Commissioner. They are responsible for maintaining over 200 miles of roads in Wells. The crew is supplemented in winter by independent contractors for snow plowing.

### **Beach Services Division**

Beach Services operates from March to late October and includes a number of seasonal employees and volunteers for Beach Cleaning, Parking Lot Attendants, Piping Plover Monitoring and Restroom Cleaning.

### **Transfer Station**

The Town operated transfer station and recycling facility is located at 386 Willie Hill Road off Route 9. In 2011, the town switched to a Pay As You Throw (PAYT) program with bags that can be purchased at various locations throughout the town.

The transfer station charges a fee for the following items: Electronics, Lights & Fixtures, Metal, Miscellaneous Items, Shingles, Tires and Rims, Appliances, Tress and Brush, Construction/Demo, Furniture & Bulky Items. There is no charge for Cardboard, Paper, Bottles and Cans, Plastic, Oil, Grass & Leaves and Good Wood Pallets. There are a number of items that are not accepted including, but not limited to, Gasoline, Pesticides, Animal Waste, Bio-Hazard Materials and Expired Prescription.

## **Vehicles and Equipment**

Vehicles and equipment for the Street Maintenance Division, Beach Services Division and Transfer Station need to be replaced on an ongoing basis and are typically planned for within the Capital Improvements Planning Process.

## **Facilities and Equipment**

Facilities and equipment need to be replaced on an ongoing basis and are typically planned for within the Capital Improvements Planning Process.

## **Library**

The Wells Public Library is housed in a building on Route One that is part of the school complex described in the Education Section of this chapter. The use of the library has grown steadily over the past seven years.

The collection consists of over 53,000 materials, which include adult and children's books, reference resources, audio books, movies, magazines, eBooks, digital audio books, video games, and large print adult books. In 2014 the library added a total of 2,378 items. Circulation in 2014 was 83,936 down slightly from 2013. The number of adults attending programs has risen significantly, up 30% between FY 12 and FY 14. We attribute this to a shift in the public's expectation of what services a library can and should provide.

In 2014 the Library Trustees completed a long-range Strategic Plan that provides a set of goals, objectives and tasks to be undertaken by the library and Trustees through 2019. This plan prioritizes customer service and access for all.

At present the library is over capacity and the conditions are very crowded for programming and materials. Along with the need for additional office space, other possibilities include a community room, a makerspace, a designated teen room, quiet study rooms, a larger children's room, and a computer center.

The Wells Public Library Foundation is working on a capital campaign to raise part of the funds for an expansion and renovation, and will ask the community for a bond to support the difference.

## **Education**

Public education in Wells is provided by the Wells-Ogunquit Community School District which serves students residing in both Wells and Ogunquit. The District office is located at 1460 Post Road.

## **Enrollment**

The District had a total enrollment of 1,330 students during the 13/14 school year and is projected to have approximately the same number in 14/15. This is down from a total of 1,507 Wells and Ogunquit students enrolled in 2003.

## **Schools**

### *Wells High School*

The Wells High School is located at 200 Wells Road and provides education for grades 9-12. The High School is undergoing a major renovation that will be completed in 2015. The project includes modernizing the classrooms, adding a separate 18,000 square foot building for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) studies, a new cafeteria, new performing arts auditorium, a new practice gymnasium, new heating plant and a walkway from the High School to the Junior High School.

### *Wells Junior High*

The Wells Junior High is located at 1470 Post Road and provides education for grades 5-8

### *Wells Elementary School*

The Wells Elementary School is located at 276 Sanford Road and provides education for grades K-4.

## **Cemeteries**

The Ocean View Cemetery Association owns and operates the Ocean View Cemetery on Route One. This Association is a private organization, although the Town provides financial support for burial of paupers and the maintenance of veterans' graves. There are available gravesites and an undeveloped area within the cemetery.

## **Harbor Facilities**

See Marine Resources and the Wells Harbor Management Plan. The Wells Harbor Management Plan provides an analysis of the Harbor Facilities and Infrastructure.

## **Wastewater Treatment System**

Public sewer service in Wells is provided by the Wells Sanitary District. The district is an independent entity with its own elected trustees.

The District operates a sewer system with approximately 45 miles of sewers, including 10 pump stations. The sewage treatment plant can treat up to 2 million gallons per day (mgd). The service area includes most of the beach areas, Route One corridor and adjacent areas. There are some unsewered developed areas within the general service area, primarily along the west of Route One. The district's master plan proposes providing service in these areas.

During 2013, the District treated 261.4 million gallons of sewage with a peak summer flow of approximately 1.4 million gallons a day. In that year, 1,169 cubic yards of biosolids were generated, processed and disposed at a licensed facility in Plymouth Maine. The District presently has enough reserve capacity to meet the town's needs for many years.

Presently, the District does not provide service beyond the Maine Turnpike. Over the past few years, the town, developers and the Trustees have discussed the possibility of extending service beyond the Maine Turnpike. To that end, in 2013, the District purchased a lot of land in the vicinity of the MTA entrance on the Sanford Road. This purchase will provide a footprint for the location of a pump station. In the event the community decides to continue sewer service west of the Maine Turnpike entrance on Sanford Road.

The district's policy is to provide sewer service and to expand the system as necessary to accommodate new users. To date it has been the policy of the district to require that new users pay the costs for enlargements and/or extensions of the system.

Although the Wells Sanitary District is a separate entity, its policies and actions play a major role in the growth and development of the Town. The availability of public sewerage is key development factor and is necessary for certain types of nonresidential development and for moderate or higher density residential development.

## **Water Service**

Public water service in Wells is provided by the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District (KKW). KKW was established in 1921 by an act of the Maine State Legislature as public quasi-municipal water utility. The District services portions of Wells, Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, Ogunquit, Arundel, Biddeford and York. In Wells, the service area consists primarily of the beaches, the Route One corridor and adjacent areas. The District publishes a newsletter twice a year which is available from their website.

The District's primary source of supply is Branch Brook, a Class A surface water that has been used continually as a public drinking water supply by KKW since 1895. Protection of this valuable resource remains a top priority to the District. The District estimates that Branch Brook has an average flow rate in excess of 10 MGD and a safe yield during extreme drought conditions of 3 MGD. The Branch Brook supply accounts for 60-70% of the District's supply needs and is used on a year round basis. In addition to Branch Brook, the District owns and maintains four naturally developed gravel wellsites (groundwater) sources. These sources include the Branch Brook or Plant Wells, Harriseckett Road and Merriland River supplies. These supplies are typically operated at high flow capacities to meet summer peak demand but have limited yields on an annual basis. As a protective measure, the District has entered into an interconnection agreement with the BSWC and a mutual aid supply agreement with the YWD to meet short-term supply deficits and for emergency purposes. The District's policy is to meet the needs of future growth and development. This would include both supply and distribution. The district presently passes the cost of system expansion on to new users either in the form of construction costs or system development charges.

In 2010, the District completed a 3,100-foot pipe replacement project along Route 1 in Wells and completed a Forest Management Plan for its nearly 2,000 acres of watershed land, which updated the original plan developed in 1982. The plan contains an inventory of tree types and maturity status and outlines a schedule for timber harvests, tree plantings, and land management priorities. These efforts will help to ensure the continued high quality of Branch Brook as a drinking water supply source by maintaining diverse and healthy forests and minimizing the harmful effects from erosion throughout the watershed. A new fish ladder was opened on Branch Brook in May of 2013 to allow passage of fish like herring, alewife and elvers as well as trout. Also in 2013, the District saw both a 1.5% growth in customers and a 4.5% increase in water production over the previous year.

## Utility Rights-of-Way

Wells is crossed by four utility rights-of-way, all of which run in a north-south direction. Verizon (formerly New England Telephone) has two of these and Central Maine Power has the other two.

Verizon has a right-of-way (ROW) that runs through the marshes between Route One and the beaches. Bell Atlantic had removed the lines and has no need for this ROW. Some adjacent property owners have been able to obtain portions of the right of way from the phone company. Verizon also has a ROW that runs along the Sanford-Wells town line.

Central Maine Power (CMP) has two rights-of-way through the town. One, lies between the Maine Turnpike and Route One. This ROW has not yet been developed and is in reserve for future expansion of transmission capacity. Given the pressure for residential development in this section of Wells, the potential is great for future land use conflicts around this ROW corridor, as property buyers may not be aware of this area's status. CMP also has a ROW in the western part of Wells running from the North Berwick town line near Route 9 to Branch Brook west of Chicks Crossing Road. In addition to the existing transmission lines, there is now a natural gas transmission pipe located within this right of way.

The fourth right way is the old Eastern Line, the ordinal right of way of the Boston and Maine Railroad. Rail Service was discontinued when the rail was relocated to the east. In the 1960s, the right of way was purchased is now used for an interstate natural gas transmission pipe. This right of way is under investigation for use a non-motorized trail. See the discussion in the Transportation Section.