



Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

# Department of Environmental Protection

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August 6, 2012

Tri Town Water Board  
One JFK Memorial Drive  
Braintree, MA 02184

**Re: Braintree, Randolph, Holbrook: Tri Town Water Board**

Dear Board Members:

Thank you for inviting me and my staff to your March 15, 2012 board meeting. We were impressed by the amount of thought and planning that has occurred to address the deteriorating condition of the water treatment plants servicing the member communities, as well as to address the shortfall of available water between the safe yield of the reservoir system, the Water Management registration of the system and future water needs of the Tri-Town district. Despite these efforts, MassDEP remains concerned that the planning has not resulted in action to alleviate the issues at hand. Each day of inaction continues to place the public's availability to a clean, reliable water supply at risk.

Members of Tri-Town may benefit from the services of a mediator to resolve differences that prevent Tri-Town from moving forward to complete projects that are stalled in the planning stages. MassDEP has qualified mediators on staff and is willing to provide this service at no cost to the Board. The mediation sessions are confidential in accordance with M.G.L. c.233 s.23c and information that is privately disclosed to the mediator is not revealed to other parties. If the Board is inclined to explore this option further, I would be pleased to work with you on setting up a mediation session.

Looking forward, and as you are aware, the Randolph-Holbrook treatment plant needs immediate repair of the tube settlers. This underscores the need for the Tri Town Water Board to come to agreement on a replacement treatment plant. It is likely that other emergency repairs will be necessary in the future given the poor condition of the plant. The cost of these repairs could be better spent on the construction cost of a new treatment plant.

At a recent meeting with Drinking Water personnel at the Southeast Regional Office, it became clear that the system may lack adequate storage and interconnections to supply water to the citizens of Randolph and Holbrook during a routine shut down of the treatment plant. Difficulties providing water during maintenance operations illustrates the dire consequences associated with a potentially long-term, catastrophic failure of the Randolph-Holbrook plant. This brings into serious question whether the system has adequate capacity as defined by the U.S. EPA.

This information is available in alternate format. Call Michelle Waters-Ekanem, Diversity Director, at 617-292-5751. TDD# 1-866-539-7622 or 1-617-574-6868  
MassDEP Website [www.mass.gov/dep](http://www.mass.gov/dep)

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As I noted in my original letter to the TriTown Board in February 2012, MassDEP will not consider funding two treatment plants through State Revolving Fund financing. The economy of scale both on construction and operation should convince the Board that it is in the best interest of its customers to construct only one treatment plant. MassDEP is hopeful that one Project Evaluation Form that can be supported by the Board and all three communities will be submitted later this summer.

Please understand that the MassDEP is required to ensure the availability of clean and reliable drinking water by both state and federal laws – the Massachusetts Constitution and the federal Safe Drinking Water Act respectively. We strongly encourage you to identify cooperative solutions designed to provide quality water within the firm yield of your water supply system so the needs of the Tri-Town can be met. The Department remains available to aid the Tri-Town Board in meeting that very important goal.

If you would like discuss these issues in more detail or request help in this matter I can be reached at (617) 292-5748.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bethany Card', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bethany Card  
Assistant Commissioner  
Bureau of Resource Protection