

### Saving Water Will Help

Helping to win the war by saving water is not so far from the truth as it may sound. Philadelphians can do that very thing during the coming months.

War industries in this area must have plenty of water. Thousands of war workers who have flocked to the city must have water in their homes. To meet these vast and increased demands the city cannot expand its distribution facilities. To make ends meet, water use must be limited as much as possible to essentials.

There is no lack of water itself. The two rivers at our doors provide an ample supply. But drinking water is a manufactured product. It has to be filtered and pumped and piped to the thousands of outlets where the consumer turns on the spigots.

Our water system can accommodate only so many gallons a day. Plans have been made to increase that capacity, but the improvements cannot be completed this summer.

Even normal demands of the hot weather season strain the plant's resources to the utmost. A sudden drought has been a possibility in every recent summer.

This year to the usual consumption are added the extraordinary requirements of new plants and new residents numbered in the thousands.

To make the available water go around, waste must be avoided.

It is for this reason that the city and the Defense Council launched some time ago a campaign of education and appeal directed at conservation of water during the summer months, when demands are greatest.

The results of that campaign to date have just been made public, and they provide eloquent testimony to the willingness of the people to co-operate in every way to conserve water.

During the first five months of last year the daily average consumption in Philadelphia was 325,000,000 gallons. For May of this year that total was cut to 307,000,000 gallons. During June, 1944, the daily average consumption was 331,000,000 gallons. For June of this year it dropped to 308,600,000 gallons.

This June saving of an average daily 23,000,000 gallons is a remarkably fine showing. Last month contained many hot, dry days and normally consumption would surely have equaled the figures for the same month last year.

That these showed a large decrease, despite the abnormal demands of the industrial area, is a tribute to the co-operation of the public and an effective demonstration of the huge savings possible by a little joint action.

In homes and buildings throughout the city, defective plumbing, worn-out washers, loose spigots and leaky pipes have been wasting an immense amount of water.

Because of carelessness or thoughtlessness, aggravated by the low cost of water in the city and the absence in so many homes of meters, millions of gallons have been dissipated every day.

The pieps for conservation, so that our war effort shall not be hampered by lack of water, has apparently borne fruit in the savings of the last two months. Continued and increased efforts along the same line can carry us past the danger mark of a water shortage.

This midsummer without the danger of a water shortage in which the public can engage for a few days or weeks did then relax. Today's savings have to be repeated tomorrow and even stepped up for the remainder of the summer at least.

We have shown already that we can get along on less water than we think we can get along on. If we repair leaks, if we avoid the unnecessary use of water, we can keep our plants within their capacity, we can assure everyone an adequate supply and we can be helping to win the war.

# WPB to Water System

## Will Determine Need Here or Improvement

A high official of the War Production Board will inspect Philadelphia's antiquated water system today, to determine whether the city should be given the final go-ahead sign for needed water supply improvements.

The official, Arthur E. Gorman, chief of the Water Production Section, Power Branch of the WPB, made this disclosure himself yesterday as he arrived to address a regional conference of the American Water Works Association at the Benjamin Franklin Hotel.

### LINKED TO WAR EFFORT

Gorman declared he knew "nothing" about the Philadelphia water system but, he said, the WPB would make improvements for water systems only as a method of aiding the war effort.

"I am here to obtain the facts which I will present to the WPB," he declared.

Martin J. McLaughlin, chief of the Bureau of Water, said Gorman would be taken to the Queen Lane filter plant, where the bureau hopes to build a \$1,800,000 pre-treatment plant, and to Torresdale, where plans have been made for the erection of a \$1,083,000 pumping station.

### BIDS RECEIVED

Bids for both projects have been received, McLaughlin said, but no decision on them has been reached. Improvements at the Queen Lane plant will include the load on iron beds, while contemplated construction at Torresdale includes piping to carry the load on a new pumping station, he said.

Earlier, in addressing the conference, McLaughlin said that the Philadelphia water system "is not equipped to meet the abnormal demands imposed upon it by wartime conditions."

### BREAKDOWN FEARED

Long before the wartime rise in water consumption here, officials of the bureau said that the system was faced with the ever-present danger of a breakdown in one or more sections.

Breakdown of an important part, they declared, would place a heavy strain on other sections of the system and would force curtailment of the supply in the adjacent sections of the city and might even cut off water entirely for a period.

McLaughlin told the conference that about \$1,000,000 worth of replacement and improvement program approved by voters in the 1939 election "hardly been given a start before war came."

### 25 PCT. INCREASE

"Before Pearl Harbor the maximum daily water consumption was 490,000,000 gallons, which is approximately the capacity of our system," he reported. "But after Dec. 7, war plans increased the use of water by 25 per cent," he said.

"The city was able to meet this sudden increase only through an intensive summer water conservation campaign," McLaughlin reported. "It credited new stations and methods for the success of the campaign."

### VALUE STRENGTH

In addressing an afternoon session of the conference, in which the Pennsylvania Water Operators' Association is participating, Gorman said the WPB considered water as an important market for

# Inspection System

## PRIORITIES SOUGHT FOR WATER PLANT

### Director Neeson Declares Breakdown now would be a Calamity

A breakdown in Philadelphia's water supply and distribution system now would be a calamity.

The acute water situation of the city was thus epitomized today by Director Neeson in an address at the weekly luncheon of the Rotary Club in the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel.

Neeson described in detail what he considers the necessary for Federal authorities to grant more priorities for the purchase of materials necessary to carry out the most urgent features of the city's water rehabilitation program which has been mapped out at an estimated total cost of \$18,000,000. The money was made available in a municipal loan approved by the voters in April, 1940.

### Aids at Capital

While the director was speaking, four of his engineering assistants were in Washington to confer with the Water Power Branch of the War Production Board. The delegation included Martin J. McLaughlin, chief of the Bureau of Water, and Seth M. Low, former bureau chief and now special engineer in charge of the rehabilitation program.

The Rotarians were told by Neeson that the only improvements for which the city can hope to obtain Federal permission at present are those which will increase or conserve the flow of water to plants in war industry.

"All public works projects, unless to facilitate war work, are out for the duration," he said. "If our nation had not been thrown into the war, 70 per cent of our water program would be well under way now."

### Heavy Expense Feared

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# '70 CHARGES BIG WASTE IN WATER FUNDS

## 40 P. C. Spent on 100-Man Payroll, Says Group.

Forty percent of all the money spent thus far for rehabilitation of Philadelphia's broken-down water system has been devoted to a 100-man payroll, it was charged yesterday by the Committee of Seventy.

"We are informed by engineering authorities that further technical work and designing was necessary after the preliminary plan for rebuilding and repairing (the system) was presented by the consulting engineers on April 3, 1940," read a committee letter.

"That they do not believe it required the services of 100 persons over this long period of time and the expenditure of \$457,000."

### \$1,200,326 Already Spent

The committee said that in the two and a half years since the voters approved an \$18,000,000 bond issue, \$1,200,326 has been spent, of which only about 60 per cent—\$742,740—went for payments on contracts and materials.

The letter conceded that priorities may postpone for several years the most important parts of the rehabilitation plan, and estimated that the delay would increase the net cost by approximately 25 per cent, to \$450,000.

"If the present rate of spending continues," it was charged, "by the time the city can secure equipment to proceed with some phases of the plan, a large portion of the \$18,000,000 will have been frittered away in unessential payrolls. The man payroll should be substantially reduced at once and the money reserved for contracts and materials."

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# NEESON SAYS WPB IS RESPONSIBLE IF WATER FAILS

## Asserts Industry here Threatened by 'Evasion' on Repair Program

### UNABLE TO GET PRIORITY

Director John A. Neeson, of Public Works, notified the War Production Board today that it will have to accept full responsibility if Philadelphia's water supply breaks down and this city's war effort is paralyzed.

The director's statement followed reports he received of a conference in Washington yesterday of Martin J. McLaughlin, chief of the Bureau of Water, Seth M. Low, consulting engineer in charge of the \$18,000,000 water supply rehabilitation program, John A. Ziegler, superintendent of pumping stations, and Nathan M. Jacobs, of Pittsburgh, consulting engineer for the city.

A final ruling is expected from Herbert S. May, chief of the WPB power branch.

"The committee conceded by 'important parts of the rehabilitation plan' may be postponed as early as priorities and estimated that that factor would increase the net cost by 25 per cent, or \$450,000."

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# Blaming Uncle Sam For City Hall's Sins

## Your collection of stage jokes is incomplete unless you've heard the newest one from Philadelphia's GOPlundered City Hall: Blaming the Federal Government for any breakdown in Philadelphia's decrepit water system.

Of course, everybody knows it wasn't Uncle Sam who allowed this utility to fall into wreck and ruin during the city's half-century of political mismanagement.

Nobody knows this better than Public Works Director John H. Neeson, who told the Rotary Club, Wednesday, that chief responsibility for deterioration of the city water system lies with "the indecisive policy of past city administrations. Neeson added:

"Philadelphia can lay claim more than any other city to the distinction of talking the most about the course of water supply and doing less about it."

But that applies to the entire water situation. And it applies to the present City Hall administration, which is dominated by the same old GOP machine. Voters approved an \$18,000,000 water rehabilitation program in April, 1941—but the City Hall master minds refused to undertake this program until after war was declared and essential materials no longer were obtainable.

Yet in another breath Director Neeson issues a statement notifying the War Production Board that, having refused to divert war materials for the water system, WPB will have to accept full responsibility for any breakdown in equipment.

That's like blaming Washington for Philadelphia's dirty streets or any of the other abundant evidences of mismanagement in City Hall.

For Philadelphia's water disgrace is nothing new. Far back in the time of another war—Spanish-American War—Katherine Bingham wrote of Philadelphia's water system:

"Philadelphia, once noted for its cleanliness, showed up plainly the result of poor government. A heavy rain stirred up the water in the reservoirs to such a degree that it required some determination to bathe in it. Even after the water had been boiled and filtered for use on the table . . . the sight of it rendered one miserable and despondent."

The War Production Board, at its hearing this week on the city's appeal for higher priority on repair materials, heard much the same story from its own engineers, who inspected the city system. They reported they were "amazed at the run-down condition found" in a system "neglected and apparently hidden with politics for years."

They found that although water revenues averaged \$6,000,000 a year "little or no money has been spent in recent years to keep the plant in repair."

Why? Because GoPolicy in City Hall today, as for a half-century, has been spent as little as possible on essential municipal services—and as much as possible on political purposes dedicated to keeping the machine in power.

Now, that the results of this policy threaten the city's war-time water supply—the buck is passed to Washington. We shall express our wish to pass it right back where it belongs.

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# City Asks Higher Priority For Waterworks Program

## Striving to obtain higher priorities in WPB, the Philadelphia city engineers are through with at least the most vital part of its waterworks rehabilitation program.

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