

Wreck

(continued from page 1)

A company representative told them the water was coming from a natural spring—during the driest season on record, when the creek opposite the Wests' home on Second Street was bone dry.

The Wests bought a shutoff valve, which National Utilities installed.

"It continued to leak," Betty West said. "When I told the water company about it, they still said it was a natural spring. Water ran alongside my house, through the front yard and down the road. They said it couldn't possibly be their lines because they had tested the water and there was no chlorine in it."

In July the Wests found water running out from under their front porch. Larry dug a 100-foot trench in the yard between the road and the back porch but couldn't find the problem, with water running out of the trench and down the road.

"Larry kept pumping the water out and it kept filling right up again," Betty West said.

National Utilities came back and tested the water again and said it couldn't possibly be coming from their pipes because it contained no chlorine, Betty West said. Trying to find the source of the water, Larry West enlarged the trench in the yard, only to have water flowing out to the back yard, as well as to the front.

"Finally we ripped the back porch out because we figured the leak was under there" Betty West said. "I stuck a shovel down into the mud and suddenly we had a fountain. Larry then found the water line and the leak—right under our back porch."

The next day Larry saw a man from the water company in the neighborhood and asked him to come and look at the leak.

"He told us it was definitely a major leak and someone would be out there the following day to fix it," Betty West said.

No one showed up. She called National Utilities three times. Finally a secretary told her something had happened to the well pump and the repair crew wouldn't be able to come to her house.

"When the pump broke, the water stopped bubbling out of the ground by our porch," she said. "But when the company replaced it, the water immediately came back. But they told me the well pump had nothing to do with us."

In desperation, a neighbor complained to a local television station, which aired the story and footage of the leak August 7.

"That's when National Utilities finally showed up to do some work—the day after the broadcast," Betty West said. "It was odd—the whole time our water was leaking, we had great water pressure. But some cottages on Center, High and Sooby streets didn't have any water at all or had very low water

Singles' dance for adults Aug. 18

Reach Out Singles Everywhere (R.O.S.E.) will hold an Adult Singles Dance August 18, at the American Legion Post 395, 386 Wyoming Avenue, Kingston, 8 p.m. to midnight.

This is a No Smoking dance. Dress shorts and dress denim will be acceptable attire.

For tickets or more information, call 288-4278 or 779-4405.

Turkey shoot Aug. 20

Harveys Lake Rod and Gun Club will hold an old fashioned turkey shoot at 12 noon, August 20, at the club grounds, Kunkle-Alderson Road, off Route 309.

There will be contests for pistol and rifles. Iron sights and scopes may be used, 15 and 25 yard pistols, 50 and 100 yard pistols. Many great prizes will be given. Shoot is open to the public.

Irem Women to host luncheon Aug. 17

Irem Women's Auxiliary will hold a luncheon August 17 at Irem Temple Country Club at 12:30 p.m.

Reservations must be made by August 15, with Mrs. Alfred Colmer 675-9057 or Mrs. Martha Reese, 675-5929.

Luncheon is open to members and friends.

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POST PHOTO/GRACE R. DOVE

Charles West shows where exposed water lines follow a creek bed and run through a culvert at Second Street at Harveys Lake.

pressure. The lines are all screwed up—they don't know which lines serve which homes. Our problems began in April when they turned on the water to the summer homes."

Ironically, while water was flooding the Wests' yard and running down Second street, the summer residents had no water at all for 2 1/2 months. Last summer they didn't have water at all, West said.

"They were livid—water was running down the street from my yard and they had to go out and

Customers are responsible for the water line from their property line into their homes. This leak was her responsibility."

Harveys Lake experienced "a few problems" last summer, but Becchetti said they were only temporary losses of water. "When there's a problem, we always try to restore service within 24 hours," he said. "There have been a few problems, but we replaced all those lines."

Leaks aren't the only problem, residents say.

Betty Gray and Francis McHugh say the water looks murky, smells strongly "like Clorox" and sometimes makes them sick to their stomachs.

"I don't dare add bleach to my washer loads," Betty Gray said. "My towels are white enough already—they look almost new. Whatever they're putting in the water also bleaches my hair. The one day it made my eyes burn."

"The water also gets rusty," McHugh said. "We have very low pressure and sometimes no water at all."

Mrs. West's son, Charles, used a pool chlorine test kit to test a fresh sample of tap water from Mrs. Gray's house. Their color-coded kit shows the safe level to be 1.0 to 1.5, an extremely pale yellow color after the testing solution is added. A darker yellow indicates the chlorine level is 3.0, too high to safely swim in.

"Whoa! Look at this!" Charles said, after adding the test solu-



POST PHOTO/GRACE R. DOVE

Betty West stands by her back porch, which she had to remove to find a water leak which also damaged part of the foundation of her home on Second Street at Harveys Lake.

tion to the water. "It goes right off the scale!"

The sample had turned bright orange.

National Utilities tries to stay as close to state and federal drinking water standards as possible, especially when adding chlorine, Becchetti contended. "We try to keep the chlorine as low as possible, but within the standards," he said.

Mrs. West said she has lived on Second Street for eight years. When she first moved there, National Utilities told her the black plastic water lines laid in the creek and the culvert at High Street

were temporary. Eight years later they're still there.

"I could sit on my front porch and watch the light making rain-bows on the water spraying from leaks in the pipe in the creek," she said.

The pipes go up the creek past Kitchen Road to Hemlock Gardens, Charles West said.

The black plastic pipes run the length of High Street, in the street gutter in front of people's driveways and along tree lawns. Most of it is exposed to the weather. One section at the head of High Street runs into the ground in the middle of the Center Street intersection and is covered with sev-

eral inches of cold patch asphalt.

A Rube Goldberg assembly on Center Street contains pipes of two or three different sizes, all set at odd angles, and four shutoff spigots, just to run a partially exposed line into a home.

"The Harveys Lake division is basically a summer system," Becchetti said. "Most of the summer lines are on top of the ground. We bury them where they cross driveways or places where people could drive over them. The winter lines are buried."

Snowplows occasionally have hit exposed summer lines, but haven't caused any problems, he added.

"The lines are all screwed up — they don't know which lines serve which homes."

Betty West
National Utilities customer

buy bottled water," Mrs. West said.

The Wests are on the year-round water line and pay \$33.43 a quarter to National Utilities. Summer residents pay \$100 for service from April 15 to October 15, which the company lowered after they complained they were paying for water they hadn't used, Mrs. West said.

"That leak wasn't our responsibility," said Fred Becchetti of National Utilities. "Our responsibility ends at the property line."

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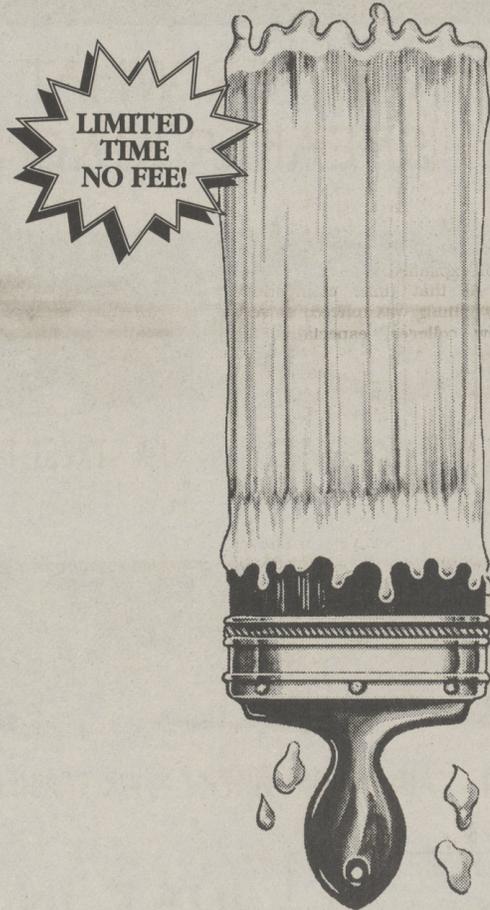
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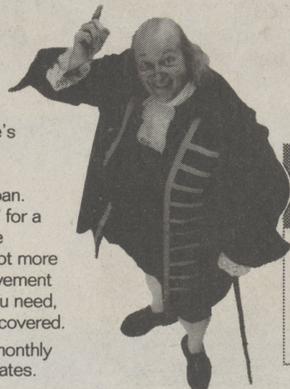
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