

Team Assists Tangier Island Public Works

This past July, members of **Water Reach** participated on a mission to Tangier Island to assist the community with their ongoing water and wastewater challenges. The team members included **Joseph Brown**, SERCAP (far left in photo); **Dave King**, City of Fredericksburg (and Chapter Past-President), **Ken Fanfoni**, Augusta County, **Chris Perry**, City of Richmond; **Jeff Kapinos**, RK&K; and **Doug Phillips**, retired (not shown).



Water Reach is a non-profit organization of public works professionals who lend their talents and expertise to assist distressed communities in Virginia struggling to maintain their water and wastewater works. **Water Reach** is funded by the Virginia Section of the American Waterworks Association (AWWA) and the Virginia Water Environment Association (VWEA). Tangier is a small island in the Chesapeake Bay and is part of

Accomack County. There are approximately 500 inhabitants on the island who benefit from public water and sewer services provided by the town. **Water Reach** has been assisting the town for many years, providing guidance and expertise with water, sewer, and other public works related issues. Past major projects **Water Reach** has assisted with include repainting of the town's above ground water storage tank, purchase and installation of reverse osmosis drinking water vending machines, installation of remote read water meters, and installation of a new sludge press unit at the town's wastewater facility.

Water Reach recently assisted the town with securing a \$60,000 VDH grant to replace failing pipes in 4 of the islands source water vaults. The existing galvanized pipes are severely corroded and the VDH Office of Drinking Water has identified the project as an urgent task. During the July mission trip, **Water Reach** team members took photos and gathered additional information needed to prepare a project bid package for the town. The project is anticipated to be completed before the end of this year.



Water Reach team members inspecting 1 of Tangier's 4 wells to be renovated with \$60,000 VDH grant.

Water Reach has also been working diligently to implement Tangier's new remote-read water meter system. The system consists of 283 meters installed by Consolidated Pipe under a previous project that **Water Reach** assisted with. **Joseph Brown** has been working closely with tech support from the Master Meter company and with town manager Renee Tyler to troubleshoot various system start-up issues. **Water Reach** will continue to assist the town over the next several months to assure the system works reliably, at which point **Water Reach** will assist the town with transitioning their current flat rate billing system to a consumption-based billing system. This is another key task that VDH has been seeking accomplishment for many years.

In addition to the water meter system activation and source-well project reconnaissance, the **Water Reach** team worked on many other tasks during its 2-day mission trip, including but not limited to: fixing a broken reverse osmosis water vending machine, reviewing the wastewater plant and new filter press for operational improvements, reviewing problems with 2 broken fire hydrants and developing a repair plan, and met with the town manager to discuss various water and wastewater issues, including implementation of a water distribution cross-connection program.

Special thanks go to **Mike Rinko** with Colonial Scientific who attended the trip with **Water Reach** and provided instrumental assistance with getting one of the reverse osmosis machines back in operation. Due to the high salinity content of the town's potable water system the RO machines are very important to the town's residents as source of safe drinking water.



Dave King at one of Tangier's reverse osmosis water filtration units repaired by Water Reach in July.

Water Reach has many opportunities for people who are interested in making a difference for disadvantaged communities with their water and wastewater systems. Please contact Jeff Kapinos at jkapinos7@gmail.com or Dave King at dking@fredericksburgva.gov if you are interested in becoming a member.