



Gary Cowan, the Irrigation Contractor

## Irrigation Comes to Marston

Steve Soreff, MD

Over the last several years there has been steady progress in the changes to make once town deeded property called, Marston, into Marston Farm Recreation Area. On [September 28, 2019](#), members of the Nottingham Select Board broke ground there. Starting in May 2020 and continuing through October the ground was shaped. On [May 22, 2021](#), the Nottingham Parks & Recreation Department organized a major clean-up of the area. The first walking trails were cut and marked during the cleanup day. On June 30, 2021, [COMAC Pump and Well](#) commenced drilling a well there. Of note, the well will also function as a town backup water supply. On [May 23, 2022](#), crews from New Hampshire Electric Co-op (NHEC) began connecting the power lines on Old Mill Road to the transformer next to the utility shed at the Marston Farm Recreational Area (MFRA)

The reason for the well is to get water in order to irrigate the ball fields. And the reason for the power is to move the well water through the irrigation system. Today, Wednesday, July 20, 2022, and last week, [Hillside Landscape and Irrigation](#) placed the irrigation rubber hoses under the ball fields and activated them. Hillside is the irrigation contractor. This reporter saw and learned how the underground hoses were positioned there without having to dig trenches. It was an eye-opener and I want to share with you how it was done.

I will walk the readers through the process as Gary Cowan and Matt Kouchoukos did for me today.



Left Matt Kouchoukos and right Gary Cowan

Gary Cowan is the irrigation contractor. His company is [Hillside Landscaping & Irrigation](#). It has been in the business for 42 years. Matt Kouchoukos is the volunteer project manager and a leader in the creation of MFRA. Another volunteer working with them on this very hot day was Rick Bacon.

Here are the steps involved. The rubber irrigation hose to be placed over the ball fields is attached to the other end of a digging drive.



The attached hose is on the right side and the drilling section is on the left.

A thin steel sheet connects to the hose-drill apparatus to the Ditch Witch (DW) machine. It is also called a Ditch Witch trencher,



It

The Ditch Witch machine

The drill forward and the hose behind is placed in a hole at the depth the hose will be buried. at Then Gary driving the DW follows the route for the hose to be placed. Meanwhile, as he moved forward the hose is played out behind. The steel sheet plane moves through the earth. It creates a thin line in the dirt which fills in as the machine moves forward. But, the neat part is that the hose is buried and no trench has been dug.

At intervals along the buried hose route, flags are placed designing the location for future irrigation sprinklers are be attached.



The white flag and the sprinkler

The hose is buried along its route. Gary digs a hole down to it. He then attaches the sprinkler vertically with a short rubber horizontal piece to the buried hose.



Sprinkler left, connecting piece middle, the buried hose right

The attached vertical sprinkler, its short horizontal hose and the connected buried hose are then covered.



The covered sprinkler is ready to work.

Here is the result,. For the first time ever, today, Wednesday, July 20, 2022 the softball field irrigation system was turned n.



First time irrigation of softball field turned on and working.

The plan is to move the irrigation system to be run electrically. Once the irrigation system is working, next will be reseeding the field.

Much progress at Marston. Thanks to all