

# SALT WATER FOR FIRES.

## Practical Plans Prepared by Engineer Jackson.

### Supply Pipes Will be Placed Where They Can Best be Used.

### Business Districts Protected Even More Than at Present.

About two years ago the fire commissioners conceived the idea of utilizing salt water from the harbor in putting out fires in that part of the city known both as the business and fated district.

Until recently, however, no practicable scheme was presented until the plan which was made by city engineer Jackson, at the request of the commissioners, and which has been described in part, was completed.

The fire commissioners saw that if one fireboat could force 6500 gallons of water per minute through the mains, the combined forces of two fireboats (the second having already been provided for by appropriation) would equal 13,000 or more gallons per minute, or be equivalent in service to 24 second-size land engines.

The use of the power of the fireboat now

save many times \$50,000 in many ways, not reckoning the saving in land engines, houses, horses, etc., and in a few years it would mean the saving of millions of dollars.

The commissioners do not feel that it will be necessary to spend \$60,000 now, but that \$10,000 will be quite sufficient to run a line of pipe and test the feasibility of the plan, which is similar to that now in operation in Cleveland, Detroit and other western cities.

In those cities wrought steel pipes are used, but for Boston cast iron would be better, it is claimed, because not so liable to rust, owing partly to the carbon and partly to its tar covering.

Commissioner Murphy says that engineers everywhere have no question about the feasibility of the new plan, and a prominent engineer says it gives better results than land engines.

In drawing the plan the locations were governed by opportunity, it being found practically impossible to lay pipes on certain streets, so they will be laid on the most convenient streets to cover the largest territory.

Although the scheme is in embryo as yet, it will soon be brought before the city government, with the proposition to establish four stations on the water front, which will be accessible both to fireboats and land engines.

They will not be "permanent stations" (which may come in the future), but floating stations, so called, the latter being fairly effective and approximately inexpensive.

The stations will be placed in the following localities: One near Rowe's wharf and one each in the vicinity of Mt Washington av, Congress st and Charles river (Charlestown) bridges.

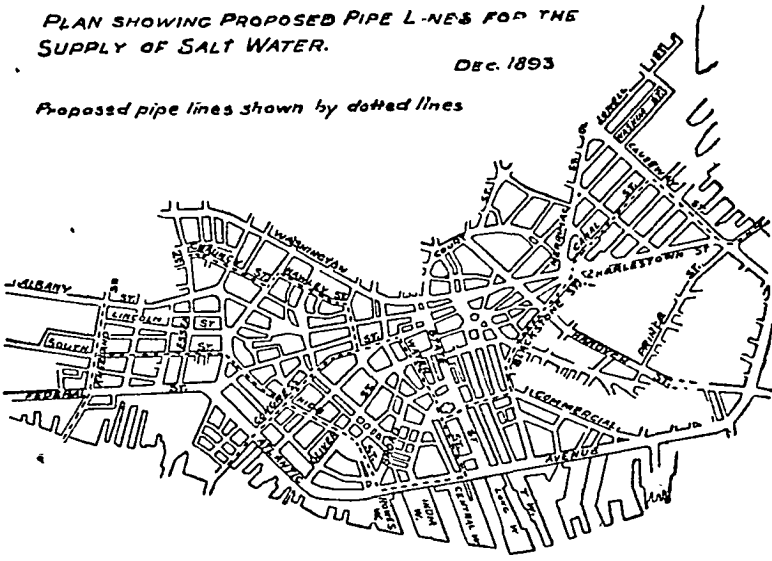
The buildings along the water front will naturally be taken care of in case of fire because of their proximity to the water.

In connection with the proposed system, communication may be effected between

PLAN SHOWING PROPOSED PIPE LINES FOR THE SUPPLY OF SALT WATER.

Dec. 1893

Proposed pipe lines shown by dotted lines



in commission, would add about 25 percent to the "land service," and two boats would equal 50 percent, having hydrants placed along the proposed main pipe lines, thus doing away with the necessity of stripping the suburbs in case of a fairly large fire.

The plan presented shows a dangerous section, comprising large floor areas, narrow streets and great values under one roof.

By it the pipes will be laid so that no point in the district, however remote, will be much more than 400 feet from the main.

The pipes will be full of water all the time, and when fire breaks out the boats at any or all stations along the water front will force enough water through, with hydrants as close as you please, to permit 10 connections to be made with each hydrant and have water enough for all, or the whole force may be concentrated in any section.

Theoretically speaking, a fireboat stationed near the N Y & N E depot will furnish pressure and water enough for 10 streams through 400 feet of hose each for a fire away up Summer st, and of course two boats can do twice as much.

To carry out the idea to perfection the cost would be about \$50,000, but it is believed that, if adopted, the plan would

the hydrants and fireboats by telephone as well as telegraph, and gates may be introduced anywhere in the main pipes, all controlled by wires in a cable form running through the pipes.

As a rule the maximum "land" stream is two inches, obtained by four "siameses," but two fireboats can easily furnish 12 two-inch streams under the proposed plan, the water going through 12-inch pipes.

Stand pipes on the outside of buildings, recommended by the commissioners, could readily be fed by the fireboats, and, in fact, salt water could be used for almost any purpose connected with fires throughout the district.

As will be seen by the plan, State st would be covered by the Water st pipe, as would Milk st.

There is quite a stretch from Water to High, but the intervening territory would come within the 400 or 500 feet line. The section below Washington st, from Essex st, would be well covered by a line through Chauncy, Hawley, Congress and Blackstone sts, and the Kneeland st line would cover the district around Albany st.

In case of a fire like that of Friday evening valuable assistance would be rendered through Canal and Causeway sts, and by the pipe from Blackstone st and Dock sq, using a long line of hose.