



# LAKEHAVEN UTILITY DISTRICT

31627 1st Ave. S. | PO Box 4249 | Federal Way, WA 98063-4249  
Federal Way: 253-941-1516, Tacoma: 253-927-2922 | [www.lakehaven.org](http://www.lakehaven.org)

**March - April 2002**

## **Commissioner's Corner**

**Beverly J. Tweddle**



After many years immersed in the changing world of state and local government, I am convinced that one factor continues to stand above others in shaping the success of our system of representative government. That factor is the honest and frequent sharing of information between elected officials and the public they serve.

I must confess that periodically, under the vigorous influence of this belief, I feel the urge to drop by your homes (I would call first, of course!) to tell you personally what we are doing at your water and sewer utility. I view the sharing of opinions, questions and concerns regarding the operation of the water and sewer systems to be the ultimate resource in my efforts to fulfill the job I am privileged to hold as a member of the Lakehaven Board of Commissioners. Obviously time, among other necessary considerations, prevents me from speaking with each customer personally. As the true "owners" of the water and sewer utility, however, you should feel able and welcome to participate meaningfully in the management of this public enterprise.

As we are a people committed to the idea that our nation can flourish only through systems of representative government, the need for information sharing by, and with, our elected representatives is critical. Too often, it seems, it is merely assumed that government will be responsive to the public it serves. This complacency creates the perception that, beyond election cycles, the electorate doesn't care about the way in which government is run. As we know from experience, however, elections, by themselves, will not always serve as a mechanism to ensure good government, particularly in an environment where information about the conduct of government is not freely shared between the elected and the electorate.

Almost worse than outright complacency, I believe, is accepting the argument that a government truly "by" the people is impractical in current times and will not function to efficiently deliver the services of modern government. Efficiency, while as laudable in government as it is in private business, should never overtake the free dissemination of information in our hierarchy of values. To those who believe that the answer is simply that government should be made to run as a business, I offer the recent accounting scandal involving the Enron Corporation as evidence of what closed-door practices can lead to in any enterprise.

The ultimate check on government is, of course, the people who elect those who serve. For the electorate to be able to perform this balancing function, knowledge, which can come only through the open sharing of information and opinions, is essential. The lesson I have learned over the years is that if you demand it, the information you receive from agencies of government that serve you will allow you to receive better service and elect better representatives.

I also believe that it is important in our system of layered government, that the various agencies entrusted with public resources work cooperatively. In this regard, I am particularly pleased to report that we continue to develop a positive working relationship with other agencies, including the City of Federal Way, which is the municipal agency with general purpose jurisdiction over the largest segment of the District. The Board has long adopted the view that, unless the ratepayers deem otherwise, the District is best able to meet the needs of water/sewer service in our large and diverse service area. This works better with cooperation and we continue to work with the City to pool our

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Commissioner

**Charles I. Gibson**  
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**Timothy A. McClain**  
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**Donald L.P. Miller**  
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resources in areas where joint and cooperative undertakings make the most sense. A couple of areas where this is working to benefit the customers of each agency are joint public works projects and emergency planning.

I also want to express my thanks to the other cities with jurisdiction within the District, namely Auburn, Des Moines, Kent, Edgewood, Milton and Pacific, on their jobs well done!

## **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

The 2002 legislative session continues the trend of the past years, with an abundance of ideas being discussed on how to solve the water resource problems of the state and little actual progress on legislation. Current discussions center on ways to fund water storage projects, a key component of the solution to regional supply issues, and measures to deal with the needs of purveyors to grow into water rights over time.

Progress has been made on the District's 2002 Legislative Agenda. Bills covering public works limitations, voters rights on assumption of districts, connection charges and selection of engineering consultants were introduced. It is uncertain at the present time whether passage of legislation on these items will occur this session.

The District continues to press for federal participation in the funding of reclaimed water projects. The funding bill has been approved in the House, with consideration in the Senate expected later in the year.

We'll report on the results of the session in the next Newsletter.

## **DISTRICT REPORTS SPOTLESS AUDIT**

The District is pleased to report a clean audit for fiscal year 2000 from the Office of the State Auditor. The Auditor's Office annually reviews the District's financial statements and records for accuracy and legal compliance in, among other areas, matters of travel, open public meetings, public contracting and internal policies. Internal controls over cash receipting, payroll and accounts payable are also reviewed.

The audit report may be reviewed on the District's website at <http://www.Lakehaven.org>. The opinion is also available on the State Auditor's Office website at <http://www.sao.wa.gov>.

## **SECOND SUPPLY PIPELINE**

The Second Supply Project is a 42-mile water pipeline and storage project that will provide up to 65 million gallons of water per day from the Green River watershed about 25 miles due east of Lakehaven. The pipe network will supply needed water to Tacoma, Seattle, Kent, Covington and the Lakehaven Utility District.

So far a 9-mile section from Tacoma to Lakehaven was completed in 2000. The construction of a 10-mile section from the foothills of the Cascade Mountains to Covington is currently underway and scheduled for completion in May of this year. Another 6-mile section from Covington to Kent is currently being designed with a targeted construction completion date in early 2003. The final Main Branch pieces include a 7-mile section from Kent to Lakehaven and a 2-mile section connecting the Main Branch to Tacoma's Headworks facility near Howard Hanson Dam on the Green River. These sections are scheduled for final design this year with the completion of construction occurring by fall of 2004. The remaining 8-mile North Branch pipeline connecting Seattle's system to the Main Branch is expected to see completion in 2006. In the mean time, the Howard Hanson Dam Additional

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Water Storage portion of the project recently received a "new construction start" and a \$3 million appropriation from Congress. Design is at about 60% complete and a water storage test is scheduled for next spring. While the completion of the entire project is still contemplated for the end of 2006, Lakehaven customers could see our 1/9th share of the available water at the end of 2004 or early 2005.

We will periodically keep you posted on the progress of this exciting project.

## **CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

In an effort to support customers who are unable to pay their monthly water/sewer bills due to temporary financial hardship, the Lakehaven Utility District Board of Commissioners created a Customer Assistance Program (CAP) in 1993. This program is administered by the Multi-Service Center, a non-profit agency organized under King County. All donations are sent to this agency and are allocated based on need.

In its initial year, donations in the amount of \$3,400 were received. With this money, Lakehaven Utility District was able to assist a number of families through the Multi-Service Center. In 1999, there was a significant reduction in contributions. The District Board of Commissioners and staff went into action and formed a committee to review the issues and make recommendations on fundraising activities. The change was dramatic! Donations to the program in 2001 totaled \$7,395. To date, the District has assisted 328 families and raised \$40,583.



**Customer Assistance Committee**  
Top left to right: Debi Manglallan,  
Commissioner Dick Mayer, Joe Gray  
Bottom left to right: Cornease Kinlow, Linda Kochmar,  
Julie Bibeau, George Brown, Rad Rusimovic

We at Lakehaven wish to thank all customers who have so generously contributed to this important program and encourages you to continue with your donations.

## **DISTRICT RATES AMONG LOWEST IN STATE**

Results of the water and sewer rate survey performed by the Association of Washington Cities, City Engineers Association of Washington and the Washington State Chapter of the American Public Works Association, reveal that the District has among the lowest rates for municipal water and sewer service in the state.

Of the 204 agencies surveyed for water rates, the District's rates of \$12.54 per month, based on one thousand cubic feet of water consumed, were the eleventh lowest. When rates for outside customers are factored in (imposed by many agencies) the District's rates drop to the seventh lowest. The highest reported rate was over \$70 per month.

Of the 172 agencies surveyed for sewer rates, the District's rates were below the mid point. When the higher sewer rates charged by many agencies for outside customers are considered, the rates drop significantly in the ranking.

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## **Your Board of Commissioners**

Tom Jovanovich - President

Dick Mayer - Vice President

Ed Stewart - Secretary

Beverly J. Tweddle - Commissioner

Donald L. P. Miller - Commissioner

Regular Board of Commissioners meetings are held at:  
Lakehaven Center  
31531 First Ave. S.  
Federal Way at 6 p.m.

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