



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

November - December 1999

Commissioner's Corner

Donald L. P. Miller



Happy holidays from all of us to you, our customers. While we all prepare for holidays & holydays, I want to say thanks to each of you. The District's goal has been to provide first class service to our customers at the lowest reasonable rates. According to a recent survey published by the Association of Washington Cities, Lakehaven's water rates are in the lowest ten percent of over two hundred agencies surveyed.

Sometimes you may hear or read a negative story about the District, but overall we are usually doing it right. The Commissioners may not always agree, but we work extra hard to come to consensus for our customers. During my years on the Board we have come a long way and while I sometimes miss the simple times, we are ready for the millennium.

A few tips or heads-up items come to mind as we enter the fall/winter months:

1. Check for leaking faucets, or wet spots indicating your service line is in need of repair on your side of the property.
2. Use water wisely, but still enjoy it. A good bath or shower relieves tension.
3. Drain the water tank - once per year is recommended.
4. Update fixtures in bath & kitchen (as needed). It's a good place to remodel according to value added.
5. If you are going to dig a trench or a hole and need to have the underground utility location marked, call the Utilities Underground Location Center at 1-800-424-5555.
6. Send suggestions to us.

Above all, have a great holiday season!

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The District continues to work on legislation which will require a city to seek the approval of a water/sewer district's customers before embarking on proceedings to assume the service jurisdiction of the district. Your Board of Commissioners is convinced that the ratepayers of this utility want to have a say in who provides these essential public services and whether a tax may be levied upon. The recently released legislative agenda of the City of Federal Way continues to include the statement that the City is opposed to any legislation which would make it more difficult for cities to assume districts.

As previously reported, the District is working on legislation which would provide that water purveyors storing water within the ground water system would retain a water right to remove and use the stored water. Early indications from the Department of Ecology, the agency responsible for overseeing water rights in this state, are that the DOE may be interested in pursuing this legislative issue with the District during the upcoming session.

Leonard D. Englund
Commissioner

Charles I. Gibson
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Timothy A. McClain
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We will continue to keep you updated as the legislative session progresses. Please let us know your thoughts or questions on our legislative program.

YEAR 2000 (Y2K)

The Lakehaven Utility District is doing everything within its control to ensure that normal water and sewer service continues as we enter the year 2000. We will have staff working on New Years Eve and have full confidence in those elements within our control.

There are, however, a number of elements outside our control, which could impact service. The main issue is having power available to run our wells, pump stations, sewer lift stations and wastewater treatment facilities. Lakehaven does have some power generation capability, but any extended power outages could affect our ability to provide normal service.

Lakehaven conducted an exercise to test water supply and monitoring systems to determine whether they are Y2K compliant. The District is pleased to announce that during the two hour test period, all systems functioned properly and no date specific problems were encountered.

The District also has tested its wastewater systems at the Lakota treatment plant and all systems functioned properly and no date specific problems were encountered. The conversion of all administrative systems to a new enterprise wide network is in progress and Y2K tests are being performed in this area as well.

Lakehaven is working with all appropriate state and local agencies to coordinate contingency plans. The King County Office of Emergency Management suggests that citizens be prepared to be on their own for 3-7 days in case there are significant problems for suppliers of critical services.

STATUS OF LOCAL AQUIFERS

As a result of the wet and cooler summer we all experienced this year, our summer water production was significantly below projections. Normally we experience a summer peak day demand of over 22 million gallons per day (MGD) with several days topping the 20-MGD mark. This year our highest production day was only 17.8 MGD. This is good news for our groundwater supply. In fact, with the past several wet years behind us, we are now able to reduce the amount of water being purchased from the City of Tacoma and use more of our own groundwater.

Water levels recorded in the Redondo-Milton Channel Aquifer, which is our primary water supply system located about 100 feet below ground, are reminiscent of levels measured in the late 1980's. The Mirror Lake Aquifer, approximately 300 feet below ground, will experience its fifth consecutive year of increasing water levels. As we continue to study the District's Deep Aquifer, at a depth of about 900 feet, we will likely end the year very near last years levels while producing more water than we have historically used from this source. All of our other smaller pocket aquifers, known as the Eastern Upland Aquifers, (located east of Interstate 5) are near 1990 levels.

CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

In April of 1993, the District established the Customer Assistance program to assist those customers in our District not able, for financial reasons, to pay their water/sewer bills. The program, which is administered by the South King County Multi-Service Agency, has helped numerous customers with the donations we have received. However, funds are starting to run low. If you would like to contribute, you may do so by adding a dollar amount to your bi-

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monthly water/sewer bill, or dropping a donation off at our customer service counter. Your money will assist someone in our community, perhaps even a neighbor. Because the need is so great, any donation makes a difference.

To receive assistance from the program, please call the Multi-Service center at 253-838-6810.

YOUR SEWER BILL

Water conservation is not just for the summer, but the winter as well. The sewer charge for single family residences is determined each year by winter water usage (shown in the billings for the months of January through April). Conserving your water usage now will not only save you money on your water bill but your sewer bill as well.

DON'T FREEZE UP!! WINTERIZE PIPES

Don't let snow and ice catch you unprepared. Prevent the expense and inconvenience of frozen pipes by taking a few simple steps now.

1. Insulate exposed pipes and faucets.
2. Disconnect and drain hoses. Wrap the faucet with rags and duct tape, or buy a Styrofoam faucet cover.
3. Winterize your vacant house.
4. Make sure everyone in your household knows where your home's water shut-off valve is located. If a pipe bursts anywhere in the house, this valve turns it off. Depending on where the water line enters your home, the shut-off valve will be either in your garage in the form of a turn-type handle, or outside the foundation where your outside faucet is located. The latter usually consists of a piece of "L" shaped bar which, when turned, will turn the nut on the water pipe to shut the water off. If this handle is severely rusted, we suggest getting assistance from your plumber and having the handle replaced.



Knowing the location of your shut-off valve and its proper operation is essential. You can help by keeping the water meter unobstructed for easy access in case of emergency.

Most hardware stores have products specifically designed to insulate pipes, including heat tape. If your pipe should freeze up, thaw them by wrapping hot wet rags around them and slowly adding hot water. You can also use a hairdryer on a low setting, making sure not to aim at one spot too long. NEVER use a blowtorch on frozen pipes.

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Your Board of Commissioners

Beverly J. Tweddle - President

Donald L. P. Miller - Vice President

Dick Mayer - Secretary

Tom Jovanovich - Commissioner

Ed Stewart - Commissioner

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

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