

Commissioners' Corner



Ron Nowicki

Lakehaven in Transition: Lakehaven Water and Sewer District is currently at a major transition point. Much of the equipment that is critical to the operation of the two wastewater plants is approaching its anticipated service life. Both Redondo and Lakota were originally placed into service in the 1960's. Major upgrades occurred at both plants almost thirty years later. Now those improvements are nearly 30 years old. In the harsh environment of wastewater treatment, effective maintenance and skilled operators have kept the plants performing well, but more renovations are necessary. On top of dealing

with aging infrastructure, many environmental regulations have evolved into "constituent specific" rules, which require more skilled and technically competent individuals to understand and implement the process control changes to meet these requirements.

Our administrative complex includes a triple-wide trailer and a 1970's office building that cannot sustain space demands for our staff. Our utility is becoming increasingly more complex and expensive to operate and maintain. Despite this, our largest single rate increase for most of our customers over the past 10 years has been a franchise fee and utility tax to the City of Federal Way.

We currently have a capital improvement program budget over the next ten years which approaches \$250 million. Included in this program is the construction of a new administration complex to house our expanding work force and targeted expansions at both wastewater treatment plants, including major electrical work, nutrient removal, odor control, and disinfection system improvements. We are also upgrading our sewer collection systems and pump stations – think of pipes and pumps in the ground. Some of our water mains have been in service for over 60 years. Water main replacements are becoming more common and necessary and we are in the process of changing all our water meters to automatic read meters over the next five years. This will provide more information on water consumption patterns for our customers and reduce the time it takes to read and process bills for the more than 30,000 customer/owner accounts we handle.

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Lakehaven Links

Our Mission

The Lakehaven Water and Sewer District is committed to the continued delivery of safe, reliable and high quality drinking water and environmentally responsible sewer service to our customers.

Board of Commissioners

Don Miller, President
Peter Sanchez, Vice President
Len Englund, Secretary
Ron Nowicki
Tim McClain

Regular Board of Commissioners meetings are held at 6:00 p.m the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month at the Lakehaven Center at 31531 1st Ave South, Federal Way.

Contact Us

Federal Way: 253-941-1516
Tacoma: 253-927-2922
After Hours Emergencies:
253-941-1516

Business Hours:
Monday – Friday
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

www.lakehaven.org

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All of this work, along with the additional staff we need to hire in a difficult labor market, will require additional revenues. We are studying funding and timing options to respond to this, including securing bonds, other borrowing options, and implementing rate adjustments.

These are some important challenges facing our utility. Please attend our meetings and become knowledgeable. Your voice and opinion matters.

Automated Meter Reading

The District will be pilot testing a new automated meter reading system this year that will involve the installation of approximately 600 automated read meters at homes within the District's service area. The new system will allow meter readers to drive by each meter and electronically collect meter data.

In addition to increasing efficiency, the new system is expected to reduce data collection errors and provide additional water consumption information for ratepayers. Other utility providers have successfully used these systems for a number of years. Assuming success of the pilot testing, over 30,000 automated read meters will be deployed over the next four to five years.

Two Long-Term Employees Retiring

Saying goodbye is always hard to do, particularly when long-term employees reach the end of their careers.

Roger Neigel - Hired in 1980, Roger was one of the District's most experienced field maintenance personnel. He spent countless hours repairing and maintaining the underground infrastructure that makes our utility services possible. His exceptional knowledge and expertise on a backhoe will be hard to replace.

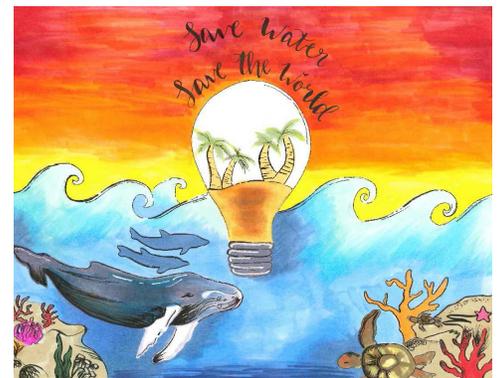
Kathy Brown - Kathy has worked in the District's Engineering Department since 1987. She provided property owners with the necessary resources to obtain or upgrade water and sewer service. Her friendly manner and knowledge has helped thousands of customers obtain water and sewer service.

2019 Poster Contest Winners

Lakehaven Water and Sewer District presented awards to local elementary students participating in its 23rd annual Water Conservation Poster Contest at the District's June 13th Board meeting. The purpose of the contest is to help children understand the importance of water conservation through the development of posters containing a water conservation message.

Approximately 60 members of the community, including students and their families, teachers and principals, attended the Board meeting. There were 112 poster entries submitted from 6 Federal Way Elementary Schools (Montessori Academy at Spring Valley, Mark Twain, Lake Grove, St. Vincent, Christian Faith and Star Lake), and 13 winning posters were selected to include in the District's 2020 Water Conservation Calendar.

A special "Thank you!" goes to Wild Waves Theme Park, SKFR Fire Station, Red Canoe Credit Union, Qualstar Credit Union, Shirtz-to-Go, Costco, and Subzero Ice Cream for their generous donations to the contest winners.



L – R 1st Row: Jacob R., Nina L., Ellie M., Zoe W., Quentin Z. and Sionemau T.
L – R 2nd Row: Maddie T. (1st Place Winner - see artwork on right), Juliana R., Elianna N., Peityn B.
L – R 3rd Row: Commissioners McClain, Nowicki, Sanchez and Miller