

Commissioners' Corner



Ron Nowicki

I spend part of my winters in Southern Arizona, returning to my residence in Federal Way on an almost monthly basis to attend to commissioner duties at Lakehaven, do chores around the house, and visit with children and grandchildren. As I write this article in early April, the COVID 19 Pandemic has put these plans into turmoil.

In March, the utility systems we operate were designated as "critical infrastructure" under Governor

Inlee's Emergency Declaration. Because of the extra importance of these services to you during these difficult times, I will give you a quick overview of what we have been doing to continue to provide reliable water and wastewater services to your homes and businesses.

For our customers (owners) having difficulties paying their water/sewer bills, we have suspended shutoffs, as well as the assessment of penalties and interest on delinquent accounts. In order to help those in need during the pandemic, we implemented changes to our Customer Assistance Program to provide, as funds are available, fifty dollars (\$50) towards current water and sewer bills for customers who have lost jobs or businesses because of the pandemic.

For the protection of our employees, in March we shifted to maintaining only essential operations. While only a small percentage of employees have been working on-site, a larger number of our managerial and administrative staff are working remotely (using laptops and cell phones). At the outset, we had about 30% of our workforce on the job and the rest prepared to serve as needed. As we learn how to operate more efficiently in this environment, this could increase to 75% or so. While definitely not normal, we need to maintain all the equipment and facilities that provide the service you expect, which we intend to do in full.

To implement these changes, we entered into agreements with the two unions that represent the majority of our roughly 110 employees concerning how we would differentiate the pay between those sheltering at home, working remotely, and working on-site.

Continued...

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

Peter Sanchez, President

Ron Nowicki, Vice President

Len Englund, Secretary

Don Miller, Commissioner

Laura Belvin, Commissioner

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

Commissioners' Corner, cont. from page 1

For the safety and protection of our employees, their families and the communities in which they live, we are also requiring health checks, increased sanitation, the wearing of masks, and social distancing at work.

In another measure taken to protect employees and the community we serve, we have restricted office hours and are limiting the interaction of the customer service and development engineering representatives to phone and email only.

We need to take care of each other during these trying times. The District will continue to do our very best to make sure that you have safe drinking water and reliable wastewater service throughout this unique period.

Stay Safe



Annual Water Quality Report

Starting July 1, 2020 you will be able to view the Lakehaven Water & Sewer District Annual Water Quality Report on-line at www.lakehaven.org/CCR. This report contains important information about the source and quality of your drinking water during 2019. Please call (253) 946-5442 if you would like a paper report delivered to your home.

Caring Customer

Special thanks to area resident Cheryl Hurst and her charitable organization "Do The Right Thing" for donating disinfection and cleaning supplies to the District. These supplies, delivered in late March, arrived at a time when the District's supplies were low and the extra items were very helpful in the District's efforts to maintain a safe and properly sanitized workplace.



Very special thanks also to the City of Federal Way for delivering personal protection devices to the District during the COVID 19 Emergency.

COVID 19 Update

(Note: This article was prepared in mid-April and may not reflect conditions during the full two-month distribution period of this newsletter. Check www.lakehaven.org for the latest updates)

The District has been able to keep water and sewer service fully operational during the COVID 19 Emergency despite significant reductions in on-site staffing levels aimed at protecting employees and the community from the spread of the coronavirus. In order to ensure that all customers have service during the period of the Emergency, water shutoffs associated with delinquent accounts were suspended in March. The District is also restoring water service to ratepayers that were shut off prior to the suspension of shutoffs (this does not require payment on the account, but does require that a request for service restoration be made to Customer Services). The Board modified the Customer Assistance Program to allow any customer having lost a job or business due to COVID 19 to receive, while funds are available, \$50 towards the payment of a water and/or sewer bill that became due on, or after, March 23, 2020. Contact Customer Service at 253-941-1516 if you are interested in assistance.

The Board has suspended holding Board meetings in person during this time and will continue to hold meetings remotely during the emergency. The public is invited to attend remotely. (Information to attend meetings remotely can be found on the District's website).