

Commissioners' Corner



Don Miller

It is no exaggeration to say that the world has been a very different place for all of us over the better part of the last year and half. Covid-19 has not only changed your lives, but many aspects of the way we operate at the District. Social distancing, masking, Zoom meetings, closing our offices, and having a large number of our staff teleworking was not part of our world before Covid-19. We adapted, just like you have, and found a way to keep things moving forward despite the many challenges associated with what became the “new

normal”. What hasn’t changed, however, is our commitment to customer service, a term which can best be described as a culture of caring about our customers. In that regard it is personal, and is built into all jobs at the District. When we happen to receive a call or letter from a customer acknowledging that our staff has gone the extra mile to provide good customer service, we realize even more how important this commitment is.

One of the biggest changes is in how we have managed the collection of water and sewer accounts. As you know, Governor Inslee issued a proclamation last spring providing that water and sewer utilities could not terminate service to residential customers with delinquent accounts nor charge late-payment penalties. We went further than that to assist District customers and applied the moratorium on shut-offs to business customers as well. We also deferred lien filings and interest on account balances during the emergency. Subsequent to that, we developed an arrangement to allow customers to enter into payment plans that would allow payment of delinquent balances in installments. I am happy to report that nearly three hundred of you have applied for benefits from our CAP program, which provides \$50 towards a customer’s delinquent account.

Much will be changing over the coming months. It appears presently that the moratorium on shutoffs will end at the end of July. This will present challenges on how to address the expanded number and size of delinquent accounts. We will be discussing how we can resume normal collection activities without putting customers in difficult circumstances.

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

Ron Nowicki, President
Len Englund, Vice President
Don Miller, Secretary
Laura Belvin, Commissioner
Peter Sanchez, Commissioner

Regular Board of Commissioners meetings are held at 6:00 p.m the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month. Please check the website for meeting information.

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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We also hope to be able to coordinate the application of federal, state, and local benefits that become available to assist customers with delinquent balances. How much of this funding will be available and how it will be distributed is still a question.



Other business is still being conducted. We continue our efforts to upgrade the utility systems so that they will meet the burden of providing reliable water and sewer service into the future. Because I miss the personal connections, I look forward to returning to in-person gatherings. In the meantime, I hope many of you, like Patti and me, are enjoying the opportunities to spend more time with your family and maybe have some time in your garden as the summer weather allows.

It remains a pleasure to serve you all.

New Sewer Pump Station

The District began construction on a new sewer pump station in May. The new facility, which replaces a smaller pump station built in 1985, is located just east of Highway 99 along South 359th Street. Where the original pump station could transfer wastewater flows to the Lakota Wastewater Treatment Plant at a rate of nearly 800 gallons per minute, the new \$7.2 million Pump Station 33B will have room to grow to a capacity of 6,300 gallons per minute. This should be more than adequate to handle long-term growth in the southern part of the District's service area. The project is expected to be completed in the summer of 2022.

Water Supply Status

Much has been reported recently about droughts across the western part of the country and the impacts these droughts will have on municipal water supply. With the benefit of a supply of water from both surface and groundwater sources, the District anticipates no shortages of water this year. Because of slightly higher than normal snowfalls in the Green River watershed this past winter, the surface water supply we receive through the Second Supply Pipeline ("SSP") is expected to remain available through most of the summer. The use of SSP water allows less water to be pumped from the ground, reserving more water in the aquifers. These aquifers, which are naturally replenished through infiltration of rainwater, serve as a source of supply for future needs. While the summer is expected to be drier than normal, these combined sources have sufficient capacity to meet our expected summer demands.



Flush or Trash?

Wipes — used for changing diapers, personal hygiene, housecleaning, and more — cause major problems when flushed down toilets. Though many of these products are labeled "flushable" or "septic safe," they are anything but. Just because a product CAN be flushed doesn't mean it SHOULD be flushed. The pandemic has worsened this problem due to the increased use of



disinfectant wipes and the increased use of personal hygiene wipes while many of us work from home. The ONLY product safe for flushing is toilet paper. Lakehaven is asking that if residents do use wipes, put them in the trash — don't flush them! For more information about disposable wipes and the problems they are causing in your sewer district, please visit our [website](#).