



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

March - April 2014



Lakehaven Employees and Commissioners, and Federal Way Muscular Therapy Raised \$634.00 for the Customer Assistance Program at the 1st Annual “Souper Bowl” Luncheon. Go ‘Hawks!!

Commissioner's Corner

Len Englund



It is early February 2014 as I write this Commissioner Corner article and we are just off the heels of a great Super Bowl victory by the Seahawks and an unexpected weekend snowstorm that tangled traffic for many hours. The hilly street in front of my house is exceptionally treacherous when it

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snows. Every time we have snow it turns our street into a slippery parking lot. The result is predictable—a lot of damaged cars and frustrated drivers. It still surprises me to see how many of our neighbors attempt to drive unprepared for the conditions.

Imagine a Super Bowl team that wasn't prepared for Super Bowl Sunday. Losing the big game would be almost a certainty. The same focus on preparation is important in the water and sewer utility business. With this in mind, your Lakehaven team, like our victorious Seahawks, is well prepared to win the battle from the field to the main office!

We are constantly looking for new ways to become more efficient. One project that comes to mind is the Lakota Treatment Plant Diffuser project.

Teaming with Puget Sound Energy and the Washington State Department of Commerce, the District acquired two grants totaling about \$500,000 to help offset the \$1.4 million dollar cost of the project. Coupled with a projected 30% operational efficiency improvement, the cost savings are good evidence that Lakehaven staff continues to slay the cost dragon in order to ensure the best possible rates!

Securing grants and low interest loans is but one part of the process. It starts with leadership and sound fiscal policies. Each year Lakehaven, like all agencies and municipal corporations in the state, undergoes an audit by the State of Washington's Office of the State Auditor. In the years I've been a Commissioner (and many before that), I am proud to say that Lakehaven has been free of audit findings.

What does "free of findings" mean? It simply means our financial house is in order, we have complied with state laws and our internal controls are adequate to safeguard public assets. As a result of this audit history and sound financial reserves, we retain an ability to achieve superior credit ratings when we go to the bond market. Moody's recently gave the District the state's highest rating for a water/sewer district. Superior credit ratings allow us to get the best loan rates when we need to borrow money.

I am proud of our Lakehaven team! Whether it's in the field or in the office, our employees come to work every day knowing that their mission is to make the systems that are so important to the lives of those in our community work as efficiently as possible. Like the Seahawks, our staff is "Number One"!

If you are out and about and happen to see our trucks, field workers, or if you simply stop by our office to apply for a permit or to pay your bill, please feel free to thank the dedicated staff you meet. They happily serve you and all the people and businesses we are pleased to call "our customers". Next time you turn on the faucet or flush your toilet, please remember that about a hundred dedicated Lakehaven team members are behind the scenes every day to make that possible!

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LAKOTA WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT DIFFUSER PROJECT

The District just recently finished an energy efficiency equipment upgrade in partnership with Puget Sound Energy (PSE) and the Washington State Department of Commerce (DOC). The project completed total replacement of the existing air bubbling diffuser membranes that supply oxygen to the secondary treatment process at the Lakota Wastewater Treatment Plant with more energy efficient and longer lasting diffusers. For this \$1.4 million dollar project, the District obtained approximately \$500,000 in grant funds from PSE and DOC. We were also able to finance the remaining costs through a low interest loan. The new diffuser technology will be about 30% more energy efficient and last more than twice as long as the previous diffusers. The project, which is finalized and operational, is exceeding energy savings projections.

Planning of a formal public notification ribbon cutting ceremony to commemorate the project is underway.



CLEAN AUDIT

The District received a clean audit report from the Office of the State Auditor for the recently completed audit of year 2012. A “clean” audit is one in which no findings are issued and no material misstatements are noted in the District’s financial statements. The audit, performed annually by the Auditor’s Office, examines the District’s financial

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statements and its compliance with legal regulations that govern the operation of the water and sewer utility. The District takes pride in meeting its financial reporting and legal compliance obligations and the current report continues the District's long record of having no audit findings.

WATER PRODUCTION / CONSUMPTION

Managing the water supply, both from the standpoint of quantity and quality, is an essential requirement for providing reliable water resources to our customers. As required by state law, the District tracks water production and consumption within our water service area each year. This tracking focuses on, among other things; the total amount of water produced, the average amount consumed per capita, and demand characteristics during the year.

Looking at these figures over the last ten years provides some interesting insights into the water consumption patterns in our community. Even with a small amount of growth in our customer base, overall water consumption is down over the last ten years. Correspondingly, per capita demand for water has dropped significantly. The biggest shift however, is the lack of peaking we traditionally see in the summer months, when landscape irrigation occurs.

The trend we are seeing mirrors that of other water utilities in the region. While summer weather has a large impact on irrigation demand, the biggest factor in the overall lower levels of consumption is likely the impact of low demand plumbing fixtures and appliances that are in use in most businesses and residences. In addition to the influence of weather and plumbing fixtures on water demand, we like to think that you have also done your part to use water wisely. Keep up the good work!

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KID'S CORNER - ANNUAL WATER FESTIVAL



The 15th Annual South King County Regional Water Festival will be held in March again this year at the Green River Community College. Cities of Kent and Auburn, Lakehaven Utility District and Soos Creek Water & Sewer organize and pay \$11 per student from their service area attending the event. The festival provides 4th and 5th grade students with a fun field trip and an opportunity to learn about clean water and its importance to all of us.

Your Board of Commissioners

Tim McClain - President
Don Miller - Vice President
Ron Nowicki - Secretary
Len Englund - Commissioner
Chuck Gibson - Commissioner

Regular Board of Commissioners meetings are held the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month.
These meetings are held at the Lakehaven Center at:

Lakehaven Center
31531 First Ave. S.
Federal Way at 6 p.m.

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