



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

May - June 2015

Commissioner's Corner

Ron Nowicki



I was recently asked about Lakehaven and what makes it different from other governmental agencies. That got me thinking (a troublesome proposition) and brought me to the topic for this Commissioner Corner.

The Lakehaven Utility District is a special purpose district organized under Title 57 of the Revised Code of Washington. Special purpose districts are units of local government that provide distinct, rather than general purpose, governmental services within designated boundaries. Unlike cities and counties, which have a wide range of functions and more general purpose powers and authority, special purpose districts have only specific and limited powers to carry out their services.

Lakehaven is governed by an elected board of five commissioners, serving staggered six-year terms. The Board is granted authority under the law specifically tailored to the overall operation of the water and sewer utilities, including the power to set rates, build infrastructure, enter into contracts and acquire land for public purposes through condemnation proceedings. We are also subject to many of the laws that apply to other agencies of government, including: the open public meetings act, the public records act, competitive bid laws, state environmental policy act, and the constitutional limitation on the use of public funds for private purposes. Like other agencies, we are audited annually by the State Auditor and are subject to the rules of the Government Accounting Standards Board.

Leonard D. Englund
Commissioner

Charles I. Gibson
Commissioner

Timothy A. McClain
Commissioner

Donald L.P. Miller
Commissioner

Ronald E. Nowicki
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Cities and counties derive a large portion of their revenues from taxes. Because we do not have the authority to tax, all of the revenues needed to meet operating expenses, such as to pay salaries and make loan payments, as well as to fund capital improvement projects that expand and improve the water and sewer systems, are necessarily funded out of our rates and capital facilities charges. This reliance on rates and charges from customers means we have to be very careful in how we forecast our revenues, which we do every year at budget time. Forecasting revenues tends to be more of a challenge with the water utility. Water consumption has been trending down for many years, thanks to efficiency changes in household plumbing and appliances and the conservation efforts of customers, and tends to fluctuate from year

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to year. Beyond the effects of conservation, the primary variable is the weather. As you can well imagine, having a hot or cold summer can play a large part in overall water consumption for a given year.

Beyond the background information, the central and most important point I want to make in discussing the District is that it is yours. Yes you, the Lakehaven customers, are the true owners of the utility systems we operate. This belief comes from the fact that you bought the system through your connection charges and you pay for its operation through your rates. In line with this view, each ratepayer owns the pipes, lift stations, storage tanks, treatment plants, trucks, computers and all the other facilities and equipment that are needed to operate the district. As commissioners, our responsibility is to represent your best interests and to make sure that rates are fair, while sufficient to cover the needs of the District for the long term. We also need to make sure that we operate the water and sewer systems efficiently and safely while meeting all applicable environmental regulations. Most of all, we need to treat our customers with compassion and respect.

One additional note I will make is that the water you are receiving through the Second Supply Pipeline is now being fully treated at the new Filtration Plant. The water treatment facility, built through contributions you made as partners with the customers of Tacoma, Kent and the Covington Water District, began operation earlier this year. The water you are currently drinking as a result of the Filtration Plant being on line is now cleaner and freer of undesired contaminants than at any time in the past. Stay tuned for more information on the Filtration Plant and the dedication ceremony to mark its completion in the next Newsletter!

We are here to serve you, our owners, and if you see something we can do better, please let us know.

CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORT

Starting July 1, 2015 you will be able to view the Lakehaven Utility District Annual Water Quality Report online at www.lakehaven.org/docs/CCR-2014.pdf. This report contains important information about the source and quality of your drinking water. Please call (253) 946-5442 if you would like a paper report delivered to your home.

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For more information about how Lakehaven Utility District maintains the safety of your drinking water and to view additional water quality information go to www.lakehaven.org.

FATS, OILS & GREASE (FOG)

When Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) go down the drain, they clog pipes, create odors and can cause sewer backups. Follow these simple steps to eliminate FOG from your drains.

WIPE IT

Wipe cooking oil, butter, sauces and salad dressing off cooking equipment using paper towels before washing.

TOSS IT

Scrape and toss any leftover solid food into the food bin or garbage before washing the dishes or putting them in the dishwasher.

CLEAN IT

Businesses - Monitor your grease trap weekly. Use a turkey baster to measure the grease build up.



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KID'S CORNER ANNUAL WATER FESTIVAL

The District sponsored 226 Federal Way 4th and 5th grade students at the 2015 Water Festival. Presenters at the Festival teach our students the importance of water conservation and how to become better stewards to safeguard the environment. This is a fun learning experience for the students and offers water conservation as part of their curriculum.



Federal Way elementary students participate in the Pond Dipping Event at Green River Community College

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Your Board of Commissioners

Don Miller - President
Ron Nowicki - Vice President
Len Englund - Secretary
Tim McClain - 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.

Federal Way (253) 941-1516

Tacoma (253) 927-2922

Emergencies (253) 941-1516

Public Records Officer: Lisa Alexander - (253) 946-5420

Business Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:30pm

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