



# 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](http://www.lakehaven.org)

November - December 2013



TEMPERATURES ARE DROPPING - TIME TO PROTECT YOUR PIPES AND WINTERIZE!

## **Commissioner's Corner**

Chuck Gibson



In addition to being the holiday season, this is the beginning of the time of year that we can expect to experience freezing temperatures. Because of the impact of prolonged freezing temperatures on exposed plumbing, it is important that you check the water pipes under your house for adequate insulation, cover your outside water faucets, and drain or blow out your irrigation systems. Also watch for wet areas developing in your yard between the water meter and your house or business. Leaks in the service line caused by damage from freezing can go unnoticed until you receive an abnormally high water bill later. This can be particularly true if the damage is in your irrigation system.

If your water bill does seem high, check for leaks. The best way to check for a leak is to shut off all water outlets in your house or business and look to see if the small wheel in the water meter is turning. If it is turning, you may have a leak somewhere between the meter and the house. If you do find a leak, arrange to have it fixed right away and let our Customer Service Department know that you have repaired it. Staff will review your bill and may be able to provide partial credit for the excess water used because of the leak. Fixing leaks promptly also may reduce your sewer bill (which is based on water use in the four wet months, November, December, January, and February).

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Charles I. Gibson  
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Timothy A. McClain  
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Donald L.P. Miller  
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Ronald E. Nowicki  
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On a final note about rates, our Customer Service staff has been receiving a number of calls about high water bills following the summer watering season. While the warm, dry summer days are certainly welcomed, irrigating your landscaping to keep it healthy and attractive during these periods can significantly increase your overall water consumption. This, of course, leads to higher water bills (sewer bills are not impacted by summer irrigation). To encourage conservation and account for the higher cost of peak demand water, the District, like many public water systems, uses an “inverted block rate” system for water rates. This means that the more water you use, the higher the marginal rate you are charged for the water. While we have some of the lowest rates in the area, it is a fact of life that it is going to cost more money to keep your lawns green in the summer. If you are interested in taking a look at drought resistant plants that will look good in the summer with minimal watering, visit our Water Conservation Garden (located at French Lake Park).

In my last Commissioner’s Corner, I mentioned the problems that inflow and infiltration (I & I) can create in our sewer system. I & I problems occur primarily where water in saturated soils enters the sewer collection system through damaged side sewers and main facilities. This is typically more of a problem in the winter months. The heavy rains that occurred the weekend of September 28th provide a good example of the impact that I & I can have on our sewer system. During the heavy rainfall, total inflow to the Redondo Treatment Plant spiked to levels above the hydraulic limit of the plant, which was already lowered due to scheduled maintenance work that required that part of the treatment system be taken out of service. Although the plant experienced an overflow, nearly all the overflow was contained on the plant property and returned to the plant for treatment. Thanks to the staff at Redondo for their extraordinary efforts!

The Board of Commissioners is proud to serve you and is doing all it can to keep all our systems in good operating condition while maintaining rates at the lowest levels that prudent financial management will allow.

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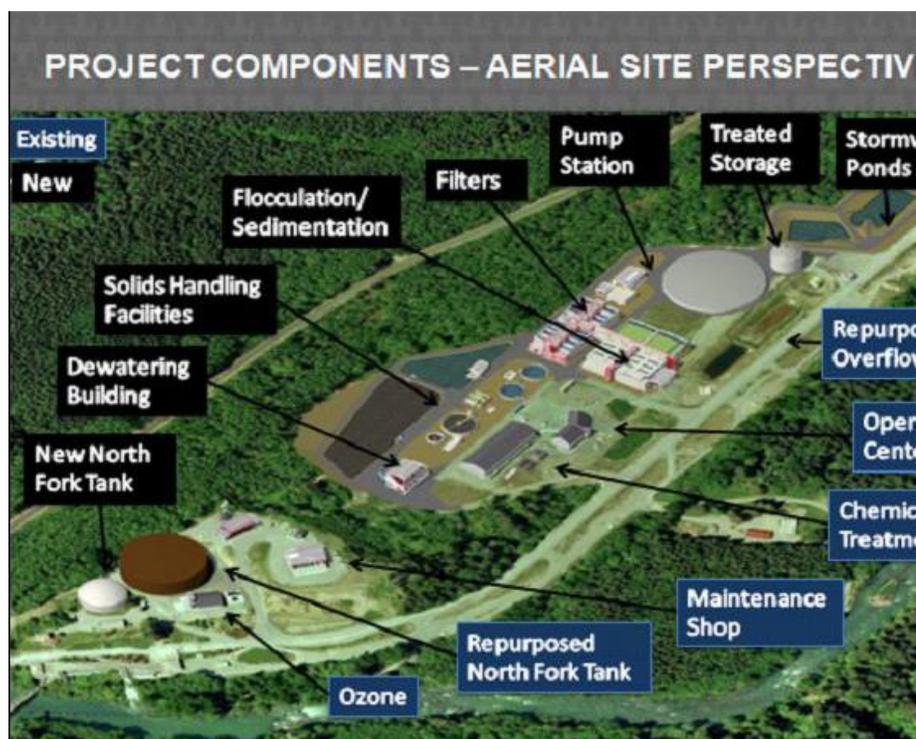


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## GREEN RIVER FILTRATION FACILITY PROJECT

The Green River Filtration Facility, currently under construction for the City of Tacoma, Kent, Covington Water District and Lakehaven Utility District (Second Supply Project Partners), has passed the halfway point of project completion. As of the end of September 2013, over 317,000 construction man-hours of work (190 laborers) have been expended on the construction of the new water treatment plant. Approximately 23,750 cubic yards of concrete have been poured (out of 27,000 cubic yards total for the project), and 90% of the large buried pipe has been installed. The new plant is scheduled to begin full operational tests near the end of 2014. The Green River Filtration Facility is being constructed to meet federal surface water treatment rules to protect against (and remove) cryptosporidium, but it will also remove turbidity and potential algae that can degrade the reliability and aesthetic quality of the water from the Green River. Upon completion, the new Green River Filtration Plant will be the largest in Washington and Oregon. We are pleased to report the \$200 million dollar project continues to be on schedule and within budget!



## CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Lakehaven Utility District's Customer Assistance Program (CAP) is helping those customers in our community who find themselves unable to pay their water/sewer bills. Funding for this program comes from voluntary contributions from our employees, commissioners and customers wishing to help their neighbors in need. The Multi-Service Center in Federal Way has been administering this program since it

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started and carefully screens fund recipients to determine eligibility and need. Since 1994 this fund has helped 35 - 60 families per year. In recent years, the need for assistance in our community has been extremely high. There are several ways that YOU can contribute:

- YOU can make a donation when you pay your bill.
- YOU can drop off a sock/hat/glove donation or a non-perishable food item donation at 31627 1st Ave S, Federal Way, WA 98003.
- YOU can donate gift cards or merchandise to the employee gift basket auction.\*

\*Lakehaven employees, commissioners and local merchants participate in an annual holiday gift basket fundraiser for CAP in December. Last year we raised over \$1,000.00 at this event. If you are interested in making a donation to this event, please contact us at 253-941-1516. We appreciate any assistance you can provide!

## **BOND REFINANCING**

This last summer the District issued \$6,350,000 of revenue bonds to take advantage of the historic low interest rates. This was done in order to refinance bonds issued in 2005, themselves a refinancing of the District's 1998 revenue bonds. The proceeds of the original bonds were used for the District's share of the construction costs of the Second Supply Project, which became operational in 2005.

As part of the refinancing process, Moody's Investors Service reviewed the District's financial operations. Moody's affirmed the District's "Aa2" rating, citing the District's strong debt service coverage levels, availability of additional capacity, and low indebtedness compared to similar water and sewer districts in the area. A favorable rating by Moody's translates directly into a lower interest rate paid by the District when it issues debt.

As a result of refunding these bonds at an average interest rate of 1.64% the District will save \$214,000 in interest expenses through 2017.

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## ***KIDS' CORNER - FUN HOLIDAY TREATS***



### ***SNOWMAN CUPCAKE HOW-TO***

This snowman wears a fine winter hat: a chocolate-covered mint beret. His plump figure is two marshmallows -- cut a slice off the top one and squish to make it smaller. Dabs of icing hold parts together. His eyes are chocolate sprinkles (poke holes first with a wet toothpick), and his nose is cut from a gummy fish.

### **Your Board of Commissioners**

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