



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

July - August 2004

Commissioner's Corner

Dick Mayer



I hope the occasion of perusing this Newsletter finds you enjoying a wonderful summer!

This is a favorite time of year for me. Having been raised in the eastern part of the U.S. and traveling regularly through much of the remainder of the country during my work career, I am very appreciative of the moderate heat and low humidity that we experience during our summers in the Northwest. As many of you know from your own experiences, spending summer days outdoors is not always an easy option in other parts of the country.

Although many of our employees take family vacations during this time of year, summer is business as usual at the District. This means delivering clean water to homes and business and collecting and treating domestic and industrial wastewater for safe discharge to the Puget Sound. I hear customers comment from time to time that they appreciate our low rates. The awareness of our rates is gratifying, of course, but I sometimes wonder what else is known about how the District, or other water/sewer districts in this state, operates.

Water/sewer districts are special purpose municipal corporations formed under laws set out in Chapter 57 of the Revised Code of Washington. Once formed, a district's boundaries can be expanded through annexations or mergers with other districts. These changes in boundaries must typically be approved by a boundary review board in the county in which the district is located. Water/sewer districts must adopt comprehensive plans to guide the development of infrastructure. These plans must be approved by the cities and counties in which the district is located and state agencies with jurisdiction over the service (e.g. the Department of Ecology approves sewer plans).

Water/sewer districts do not possess general taxing authority. Revenues come primarily from monthly rates and connection charges. The methodology for calculating rates and connection charges is governed by specific statutes for each. A district may levy an assessment against property included in a utility local improvement district ("ULID"), formed typically by petitions of property owners requesting service, but only to the extent of the properties' share of the cost of the water and/or sewer improvement financed by the ULID. A further limit requires that the assessment not exceed the increase in property value attributable to the availability of the service.

The governing body of a water/sewer district is a board of commissioners. The business of the district is conducted through the board's adoption of resolutions. Like the meetings of other state and local legislative bodies, meetings of the board of commissioners are subject to the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act. Boards may consist of either three, five or seven members, elected to serve staggered six-year terms. In order for a district to elect to have five members on the board, it must serve a population of at least ten thousand customers. In order to retain a seven-member board, the district must serve a population of no less than twenty-five thousand. While Lakehaven sticks to the core function of providing water and sewer service, districts are provided authority to perform a number of functions and services beyond water and sewer service. A water/sewer district may produce and sell electricity generated as a byproduct of the water supply or sewage systems. Districts may operate storm drainage utilities within and without their boundaries. The law also allows districts to manage septic systems and

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provide other pollution abatement services necessary to the protection of the public water supply. Additionally, a district may operate street lighting systems within its service area (Lakehaven establishes street light systems, but does not own the facilities and collects the cost of the street lights for payment to Puget Sound Energy).

There is much more to a complete description of how water/sewer districts function than can be included in this article. I encourage you to visit our website at www.lakehaven.org to learn more about the District. Needless to say, we are always looking to learn more about how to serve you better and I thank you for your interest in the District.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES SUPERVISOR RETIRES

The District's Development Services Supervisor, Mary Young, retired at the end of June after 25 years of service. Board President Dick Mayer is shown here presenting a resolution to Mary commending Mary for her years of dedicated service to the District.



Mary began her long career with Lakehaven in 1979. In 1998 she was promoted to Development Services Supervisor. Mary's proudest accomplishment is the design and implementation of the permitting and connection charge databases. She also streamlined processes by standardizing and formatting template documents forms and letters used to communicate with developers on project status. Mary's plans for the future include spending time with her husband, riding horses, and generally relaxing.

The Board of Commissioners and staff would like to extend best wishes to Mary and her family for a joyous and rewarding retirement.

STATUS OF LOCAL AQUIFERS

As of early 2004, the water level in our largest aquifer, known as the Redondo-Milton Channel Aquifer (RMC), has declined about two feet from the previous year. Although precipitation during the last three winter periods has been normal to above normal, higher water production from this aquifer source contributed to the decline. The District produced 11.4 million gallons per day (mgd) of groundwater in 2003 which exceeded the previous highest annual production total of 11.1 mgd in 2002. With lower than normal spring rainfall patterns expected, we project that the RMC aquifer will remain approximately two feet below last year's levels as we approach the summer months. The District has already begun increasing water production from its other deeper aquifer sources, as it did last year. The Mirror Lake Aquifer is down about 9 feet as a result of last year's production, while the Federal Way Deep Aquifer is currently up about two feet from last year's levels. Lakehaven will continue to use three small pocket aquifers that are part of the Eastern Upland Aquifers system located east of Interstate 5. Wells in this aquifer system will again be used to help offset usage from the RMC. From last year, the pocket aquifers are down to expected levels.

Lakehaven also maintains water connections with the City of Tacoma and can purchase water from the City to supplement our existing supplies if needed.

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WELL SITE PUMP

The picture to the right is of District staff performing last minute details before "test" starting a new pump and motor assembly at a District well site. The project included removal of an old pump and motor assembly, cleaning the interior of the well, and installation of a more efficient pump and motor assembly. The new pump and motor is designed to pump more water (about 3000 gallons per minute) year-round and should operate for many years without any additional maintenance.



KIDS CORNER – POSTER CONTEST WINNERS

Lakehaven Utility District, in partnership with elementary schools in the Federal Way School District and participants from the local business community, sponsored its 7th Annual Water Conservation Poster Contest. The purpose of the contest is to help children understand the importance of water conservation. The children's artwork is then featured each year in the District's water conservation calendar.



On June 10, 2004, the District's Board of Commissioners was pleased to announce the contest winners for the 2005 Water Conservation Calendar and their schools as follows: Anna Biryukova, Nautilus; Jordan Coffee, Silver Lake; Megan Elliott, Enterprise; Chris Jellum, Silver Lake; Desiree Johnson, Silver Lake; Jane Koh, Silver Lake; Karissa Kolman, Lake Grove; Joy Lintemann, Silver Lake; Lonzo Murphy, Green Gables; Kathryn Ouellette, Wildwood; Logan Tillery, Panther Lake; Maggie Victor, Adelaide; Jocelyn Weinberger, Wildwood.

A special thank you to the businesses who contributed prizes to the winners: Enchanted Parks/Wild Waves, Shirtz to Go, The Commons at Federal Way, GI Joe's, TAK, Inc., Twin Lakes Dairy Queen, and Bally's.

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CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Our Customer Assistance Program helps customers in financial need with their water/sewer payments. The need is great! Please consider donating when you pay your bill. Thank you!

WATER CONSERVATION ACTIVITY

The District will participate in the event listed below:

Federal Way Festival Days
August 27-29, 2004

Your Board of Commissioners

Dick Mayer - President

Ed Stewart - Vice President

Beverly J. Tweddle - Secretary

Tom Jovanovich - Commissioner

Donald L. P. Miller - Commissioner

Regular Board of Commissioners meetings are held at:
Lakehaven Center
31531 First Ave. S.
Federal Way at 6 p.m.

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