

WESTHAVEN COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

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WCSD NEWS

APRIL 2010

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APRIL 2014

TO: Westhaven CSD Customers

FROM: Westhaven CSD Board of Directors:

Greg Smith - President
Bill Verick - Vice President
David Hankin - Finance Officer
Michael Moon - Safety Officer
Steven Phipps - Board Member

Westhaven CSD Staff:

Richard Swisher - Manager / Operator
Jamie Vincent - Operator
Sarah Jordan - Secretary / Bookkeeper

Dear Westhaven Neighbors and Friends,

This newsletter accompanies our Annual Water Quality Report and provides an opportunity for us to share other information about WCSD activities over the past year.

2014-2015 Operating Budget and Water Rates

The District's operating budget for the upcoming fiscal year is scheduled for public comment at the May 21 Board meeting and final approval in a public hearing at the June 18 Board meeting. The budget is written to provide for the estimated costs of operating the water system, including reserve funds for short-term emergencies as well as long-term water system infrastructure replacement.

At the April 16 meeting the Board approved a draft budget that included an increase of \$0.87 in the monthly Base Rate and an average increase of \$0.47 in the monthly water use (commodity) charge for a total \$1.34 (1.75%) increase in average monthly expense per customer.

A summary of the proposed rate increase is as follows:

Base Rate Increases from **\$45.50** to **\$46.37** per month, billed in advance.

Commodity Rates Range from **\$11.01** to **\$14.57** per 1,000 gallons per month in 3 steps.

Some examples of how bills would increase for selected gallons per month (gpmo):

1,000 gpmo	rate increases from \$10.85 to \$11.01 per 1,000 gal. - bill increases from \$56.35 to \$57.38
3,000 gpmo	rate increases from \$12.45 to \$12.64 per 1,000 gal. - bill increases from \$78.05 to \$79.40
6,000 gpmo	rate increases from \$14.35 to \$14.57 per 1,000 gal. - bill increases from \$115.40 to \$117.32
9,000 gpmo	rate stays at 14.57 per 1,000 gal. - bill increases from \$158.45 to \$161.03

For specific information about your bill and how it could change**call WCSD Manager Richard Swisher at 677-0798**

The proposed budget will be discussed again at the May 21 and June 18, 2014 meetings.

Both meetings are scheduled to begin at 7:30 PM at the Fire Hall on 6th Avenue.

Your questions and comments are always most welcome.

WCSD billing regulations also include provisions for bill adjustments following unavoidable leaks on customer's property.

The leak adjustments essentially return to the customer some of the water use income that would otherwise go to the District. *If you are opposed to this policy, please file a written protest with the WCSD. If you would like more information about leak adjustments call the WCSD office.*

California State law provides water service customers the right to protest water rate increases.

***If more than 50% of the District's water customers submit a written protest,
the increases cannot be implemented.***

Please plan to attend the June 20 Board meeting and participate in the public hearing.

JUNE 18, 2014—WESTHAVEN FIRE HALL—446 6TH AVENUE—7:30 PM

WCSD 2014-2015 DRAFT BUDGET AT A GLANCE (= decrease)

EXPENSES BY CATEGORY	13-14	14-15	Change	% of total
\$45,161 - Waterworks Payroll	44,115	45,161	1,045	20.9%
\$33,520 - Management Payroll	32,746	33,520	774	15.5%
\$26,402 - Debt Service	26,402	26,402	(0)	12.2%
\$20,000 - Capital Reserve	20,000	20,000	0	9.2%
\$16,363 - Clerical Payroll	15,983	16,363	380	7.6%
\$10,000 - Operating Reserve	10,000	10,000	0	4.6%
\$9,870 - Office Expense	9,370	9,870	500	4.6%
\$9,250 - Treatment	9,250	9,250	0	4.3%
\$8,671 - Employee Benefits	8,057	8,671	614	4.0%
\$6,925 - Administrative and General	6,725	6,925	200	3.2%

\$6,575 - Accounting & Legal	6,575	6,575	0	3.0%
\$5,374 - Insurance (Liability & WC)	5,791	5,374	(417)	2.5%
\$5,240 - Pumping	5,015	5,240	225	2.4%
\$5,000 - Distribution	4,900	5,000	100	2.3%
\$2,475 - Billing	2,315	2,475	160	1.1%
\$2,087 - Meter Reading	2,035	2,087	52	1.0%
\$2,000 - Engineering, Consultants	2,000	2,000	0	0.9%
\$1,200 - Customer Leak Adjustments	1,100	1,200	100	0.6%
\$200 - Water Source	200	200	0	0.1%

<u>TOTAL EXPENSE</u>	212,580	216,312	3,732
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This next year's operating budget proposes a total increase in expenses of \$3,732 which includes \$1,047 for a 2.5% cost of living increase for the District's three employees (one full time, two part time).

DISINFECTION BY-PRODUCTS - UPDATE

Since April 15, 2010 you have been receiving quarterly Notices of Violation of the Maximum Contaminant Level standard (MCL) for the Disinfection By-Product (DBP) Haloacetic Acids (HAAs) in the drinking water. These are Tier 2 violations, less severe than a Tier 1 violation and do not constitute an emergency but do indicate a problem that we must address.

At our surface water treatment plant the water is first filtered and then disinfected with chlorine to inactivate disease-causing pathogens that may be present in untreated surface water. The chlorine can also react with organic compounds from the natural vegetative litter and stream biota, referred to as DBP precursors, to form DBPs. These precursors are often grouped for reference as Total Organic Carbons (TOCs), and they are dissolved in the water at higher levels when it is raining.

Quoting from the CDPH-mandated language in the notice of violation:

Total organic carbon (TOC) has no health effects. However, TOC provides a medium for the formation of disinfection byproducts. These byproducts include Trihalomethanes and Haloacetic acids. Drinking water containing these byproducts may lead to adverse health effects, liver or kidney problems or nervous system effects, and may lead to an increased risk of getting cancer.

DBPs continued

In November of 2006 we began quarterly sampling for two groups of DBPs, Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs) and Haloacetic Acids (HAAs) at a point thought likely to represent the longest residence time in the distribution system. Since 2006 our running average (the average of the most recent four quarters' results) for TTHMs has exceeded the MCL (80 parts per billion (ppb)) about 20% of the time, and the running annual average for HAAs has exceeded the MCL (60 ppb) about 90% of the time.

In the Fall of 2010 we applied for funding to address the DBP problem through the Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF). SRF funding is awarded in two phases. The first phase provides funding for planning the project, and in December 2010 we completed the application process with a request for \$130,000. In September 2012 we were informed that our application had been approved, and we expect the funding to be 20% loan and 80% grant. However, this year we have secured a grant from California Department of Water Resources Proposition 84 funds to construct a new 85,000 gallon storage tank and build a new roof on our existing 100,000 gallon tank. We hope to construct the new tank this year, but because operating with two tanks is likely to change the chlorine disinfection chemistry we have been advised to wait on the DBP study until we see what changes occur with using the new tank. So, at this time it is still unknown when we will be able to begin work to correct the DBP problem. After the planning phase is completed we will apply for funding for construction of the chosen treatment facility.

For source water conditions such as ours, there are two generally accepted approaches to reducing or eliminating DBPs.

One approach is to change from chlorine disinfectant (in our case sodium hypochlorite) to chlorine dioxide or to chloramines (a mixture of chlorine and ammonia). Chlorine dioxide is applied as a compressed gas, and while it tends to produce lower levels of DBPs, it is unstable, hazardous to work with and may produce other DBPs. Disinfection with chloramines has drawbacks as well, including deterioration of both water quality and disinfectant residuals in the distribution system and the possibility of forming other DBPs.

A second approach focuses on reducing TOCs before adding chlorine to the water. This would have the added benefit of reducing the overall amount of chlorine required. One way to reduce TOCs is by using an ion exchange process. A more common and initially less costly process used for TOC removal is filtration through activated carbon. While the activated carbon process is expected to have operation and maintenance costs higher than those of the ion exchange process, mainly due to the costs of re-activating the carbon, the initial construction and installation costs of carbon filters would be much less than that of the ion exchange process.

If you are concerned about DBPs in your tap water, you can greatly reduce or eliminate them using any of a variety of household carbon filters at a cost many times less than that of bottled water. Please call WCSD Manager Richard Swisher at 677-0798 with your questions about DBPs or any other aspect of the WCSD water system.

WATER STORAGE TANK REPAIR / CONSTRUCTION

In December of 2012 a large redwood tree fell on the corner of our 100,000 gallon water storage tank roof, damaging the roof and the roof's end wall. The damage was repaired in the spring of 2013.

A longer term issue with the tank is the continuing deterioration, due to constant dampness, of the wooden truss structure supporting the metal roof. As a proposed solution we submitted a grant application for \$360,000 to construct a new 85,000 gallon tank to serve the water system while we construct a new, non-wooden roof on the existing tank, ending with two tanks in service and an 85% increase in storage capacity. In the fall of 2013 we learned that our project was included in a slate of thirteen projects from throughout the north coast region that were recommended for funding. We are currently in the planning and engineering phase and hope to complete construction of the new tank in 2014.

DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

You may have often seen WCSD employees down in a muddy hole repairing one of many leaks in our old distribution system. On average we lose 30% of the water we produce through unfound leaks, and we are constantly searching for and repairing the leaks we can find. Much of the distribution system was installed in 1968 by the Westhaven Mutual Water Company. With an original life expectancy of 20 years for polyethylene pipe, we are now at 46 years and counting, and most of the pipe is undersized to boot. Bringing this distribution system up to modern standards could cost up to \$2,000,000 - a daunting sum for a district with only 232 customer accounts and approximately \$205,000 in capital reserves. Recently we have become aware of potential grants for distribution system replacement, and we are currently gathering documentation and other resources needed to pursue funding. There may also be funding coming available due to the statewide drought.

DROUGHT

Unless you have been under a rock, you probably know that California is in the midst of an extreme drought. Here on the North Coast the situation is not as dire as in the central and southern portions of the state, but as we approach the end of the wet season having received only 54% of normal rainfall we are expecting the water supply to be significantly diminished by late summer / early fall. The WCSD is currently formulating policy that will allow for enforcement of water conservation measures, should that unpleasant task become necessary. The draft conservation ordinance was introduced at the April 16 Board meeting and will be discussed again at the May 15 Board meeting.

WATER SHARES

Twenty-six years ago the WCSD, a public agency, took over operation of the water system from the Westhaven Mutual Water Company (WMWC), a private, non-profit shareholder corporation formed in 1968. Parcel owners in the community established water service by purchasing a share in the WMWC – one share per dwelling served. The shares cost \$175 each. From time to time someone whose water service dates back to the WMWC will ask “What happened to my share?”.

This is what happened. In 1987 the shareholders of the WMWC voted to dissolve the corporation and transfer all of the assets to the WCSD. The WCSD is a publicly owned entity, so there are no shares. All parcel owners and residents of the District have equal interest, whether or not water service is provided to their property. A WMWC share is a share in a corporation that no longer exists. However, in establishing the terms for provision of water service, the WCSD guaranteed service in kind and in perpetuity to all parcels originally holding shares in the WMWC. Now, instead of a “share” in the WMWC you have a “water service allotment” with the WCSD.

Water service allotments were meticulously researched and documented during the period of transition from the WMWC to the WCSD, and those records, organized by Assessor’s Parcel Number, are maintained in the WCSD’s permanent files. If you have any questions about the history of your allotment please feel free to contact the WCSD office. We will be glad to provide that information.

IN CONCLUSION

In spite of the continuing challenges the good news is that here in Westhaven we are fortunate to have high-quality water sources that, with the appropriate treatment, are able to provide the basis for excellent drinking water.

Federal and State regulations require sampling for more than 80 contaminants generally known to be found in drinking water, with another 30 contaminants currently under review. As you can see in the water quality report, we have very few contaminants of any kind and, with the exception of DBPs, none of the contaminants are found in excess of levels currently considered to be safe.

Ongoing discussion of these issues and other operational aspects of the District will continue at the WCSD’s regular monthly meetings, usually on the third Wednesday of each month, at 7:30 pm at the Westhaven Fire Hall at 446 6th Avenue. All meetings are open to the public, and we encourage you to attend.

If you would like to receive meeting agendas, newsletters, annual water quality reports and other public notifications

via email, just send an email to us at wcsd@suddenlinkmail.com

Thank you!