WESTHAVEN COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

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WCSD NEWS APRIL 2015

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.

2015-2016 Operating Budget and Water Rates

The District's operating budget for the upcoming fiscal year is scheduled for public comment at the May 20 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 both short-term emergencies and long-term water system infrastructure replacement.

At the April 22 meeting the Board approved a draft budget that included an increase of $0.54 in the monthly Base Rate and an average increase of $1.04 in the monthly water use (commodity) charge for a total $1.58 (1.93%) increase in average monthly expense per customer.

A summary of the proposed rate increase is as follows:

Base Rate Increases from **$46.37** to **$46.91** per month, billed in advance.

Commodity Rates Range from **$11.47 TO $15.18** 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 $11.01 to $11.47 per 1,000 gal.	- bill increases from $57.38 to $58.38
3,000 gpmo	- rate increases from $12.64 to $13.17 per 1,000 gal.	- bill increases from $79.40 to $81.32
6,000 gpmo	- rate increases from $14.57 to $15.18 per 1,000 gal.	- bill increases from $117.32 to $120.83
9,000 gpmo	- rate stays at 15.18 per 1,000 gal.	- bill increases from $161.03 to $166.37

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 20 and June 17, 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 water bill adjustments following unavoidable leaks on customer's property. The leak adjustments 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, then the increases cannot be implemented.

Please plan to attend the June 17 Board meeting and participate in the public hearing.

JUNE 17, 2015—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**
$46,240 - Waterworks Payroll	45,162	46,240	*1,078*	21.0%
$34,318 - Management Payroll	33,521	34,318	*797*	15.6%
$26,402 - Debt Service	26,402	26,402	*0*	12.0%
$20,000 - Capital Reserve	20,000	20,000	*0*	9.1%
$16,752 - Clerical Payroll	16,363	16,752	*388*	7.6%
$10,000 - Operating Reserve	10,000	10,000	*0*	4.5%
$9,670 - Office Expense	9,870	9,670	*(200)*	4.4%
$9,920 - Treatment	9,250	9,920	*670*	4.5%
$8,769 - Employee Benefits	8,671	8,769	*98*	4.0%
$7,395 - Administrative and General	6,925	7,395	*470*	3.4%
$6,575 - Accounting & Legal	6,575	6,575	*0*	3.0%
$6,055 - Insurance (Liability & WC)	5,374	6,055	*681*	2.7%
$5,100 - Pumping	5,240	5,100	*(140)*	2.3%
$5,000 - Distribution	5,000	5,000	*0*	2.3%
$2,500 - Billing	2,475	2,500	*25*	1.1%
$2,131 - Meter Reading	2,087	2,131	*44*	1.0%
$2,000 - Engineering, Consultants	2,000	2,000	*0*	0.9%
$1,340 - Customer Leak Adjustments	1,200	1,340	*140*	0.6%
$200 - Water Source	200	200	*0*	0.1%
TOTAL EXPENSE	**216,315**	**220,365**	**4,050**	

This next year's operating budget proposes a total increase in expenses of $4,050 which includes $3,025 for a 2.1% cost of living increase for the District's three employees (one full time, two part time). The increase breaks down as $2,163 in total wages, $98 in benefits, and $764 in other payroll expenses (taxes, insurance, etc.). This equals an average of $1.09 per customer per month.

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.

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 25% of the time, and the running annual average for HAAs has exceeded the MCL (60 ppb) about 95% of the time.

In 2010 we applied for funding through the Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) to address the DBP problem. 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 for 20% low-interest loan and 80% grant. However, it was not until December 2014 that we received the actual funding agreement, allowing us to proceed with the project. We are now actively conducting the investigations needed to identify the best treatment technique.

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.

NEW WATER STORAGE TANK CONSTRUCTION AND OLD TANK REPAIR

In 2014 we were approved for $360,000 in grant funding to construct a new 85,000 gallon tank to serve the water system while we replace the deteriorating roof on the existing tank, ultimately ending with two tanks in service and an 85% increase in storage capacity. Over the course of the past year plans and specifications for the new tank were prepared, and the project was put out to bid in February 2015. Unfortunately, the two bids we received greatly exceeded the amount of funding available and so had to be rejected. Currently we are revising the bid documents and also seeking additional funding sources in the hope of getting to construction in 2016.

DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM UPGRADE

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 in excess of 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 47 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.

The good news is that in 2014 we were approved for $493,500 in drought-related grant funding with which, in combination with an $112,000 match from the District, we are planning to replace approximately half of our most troublesome water mains. We are aiming for construction this coming summer. The new mains will be installed on all of the streets west of US 101, 5th Avenue, portions of 1st, 2nd. And Transit Avenues, and Metsko Lane. Updates will be provided to residents directly affected by the construction as new information becomes available. If you have any questions about the water main project please call District Manager Richard Swisher at 677-0798.

DROUGHT

This year Westhaven has had significantly more rain than last year and is in fairly good shape water-wise as compared to most of California. Nevertheless, at this point the State Water Board is proposing one-size-fits-all conservation regulations that will require the District to mandate water use restrictions including but not limited to those we established last year.

According to the State Board the following uses are prohibited until further notice:

1. Allowing potable water to flow beyond the limits of your yard, landscaping, or over a hard surface when watering;
2. Letting the water run while washing a motor vehicle;
3. Using potable water to wash driveways and sidewalks;
4. Using potable water to operate a decorative fountain or other water feature where the water is not recirculated.
5. Outdoor irrigation of ornamental landscapes or turf more than 2 days per week.

In May of 2014 the District adopted a Water Conservation Program and Water Supply Emergency Ordinance that provides procedures for managing water consumption should that become necessary.

Your average daily consumption for each meter reading period is displayed at the lower left corner of your water bill. If you have questions about how your average consumption compares to District wide or State wide averages, or any other questions, call Richard at 677-0798.

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!