

WESTHAVEN COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT



P.O. Box 2015 (446 B 6th Ave. Westhaven) Trinidad CA 95570 (707) 677-0798 wcsd@suddenlinkmail.com

WCSD NEWS

JUNE 2020

TO: Westhaven CSD Customers

FROM: Westhaven CSD Board of Directors:

David Hankin - President
 Bill Verick - Vice President
 Barbara Cline - Finance Officer
 Richard Swisher - Safety Officer
 Steven Phipps - Board Member

Westhaven CSD Staff:

Paul Rosenblatt General Manager / Operator T2/D2
 Charles (Milo) Butterworth I Operator T2/D2
 Roxanne Levang - Secretary / Bookkeeper
 Sean Thomas Weekend/ Relief Operator T2/D1

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.

2020-2021 Operating Budget and Water Rates

The District's operating budget for the upcoming fiscal year is scheduled for public comment at the June 17th Board meeting and final approval in a *public hearing at the July 15th Board meeting.*

At the May 20th Board meeting the Board approved a draft budget that included an increase of \$3.68 (+7.30%) in the monthly Base Rate, a decrease in the commodity rate of \$0.14/1,000 gallons (-0.94%), resulting in an average monthly water bill increase of \$2.95

A summary of the proposed rate increase is as follows:

Base Rate Increases from **\$50.46** to **\$54.14** per month, billed in advance.

Single Commodity Rate Decreases from **\$14.88** to **\$14.74** per 1,000 gallons per month

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

EXAMPLES OF MONTHLY BILLS	CURRENT	2020 - 2021	INCREASE (DECREASE)
BASE	\$50.46	\$54.14	3.68
NO WATER INCLUDED IN BASE CHARGE		TOTAL / MO	
0 gallons per month	50.46	54.14	3.68
50 gallons per day = 1,500 gallons per month	72.78	76.25	3.47
100 gallons per day = 3,000 gallons per month	95.10	98.36	3.26
150 gallons per day = 4,500 gallons per month	117.42	120.47	3.05
200 gallons per day = 6,000 gallons per month	139.74	142.58	2.84
250 gallons per day = 7,500 gallons per month	162.06	164.69	2.63
300 gallons per day = 9,000 gallons per month	184.38	186.80	2.42
Avg. monthly bill increase for active accounts (204)			2.95

For specific information about your bill and how it could change call WCSD Manager Paul Rosenblatt at 677-0798

This next year's operating budget proposes a total increase in expenses of \$7,862 in an annual total budget of \$240,498. This year there is a 1.7% cost of living increase for the District's four employees (one full time, three part time). The biggest cost this year is compliance with the state's minimum wage regulations which state that exempt salaried administrative employees must make twice the current state minimum wage (\$12/hr in 2020) thus \$24/hr. A similar increase will be experienced in 2021 (minimum of \$13/hr, thus \$26/hr). **Please note that the recent leak will not affect rates in any way!**

The proposed budget will be discussed again at the June 17th and July 19th, 2020 WCSD meetings. The budget will be adopted at a special meeting held on July 29th. These Zoom meetings are scheduled to begin at 6:30 PM and will be posted in advance of meetings on the District Office and Fire Hall Bulletin boards. Your questions and comments are always most welcome.

*WCSD billing regulations also include provisions for water bill adjustments following unavoidable leaks on a customer's property IF the leak is promptly repaired. The leak adjustments reduce some of the water use income that would otherwise go to the District, but this income would be an "unexpected windfall" (due to the leak) rather than typical revenue from water sales. **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. Protests are tallied as one protest per assessor's parcel.

MAY 16th to May 19th water leak: in the afternoon of May 16th we had the first reports of reduced water pressure. Staff started searching the water system and reading all the meters. By Saturday evening we realized it was a serious leak and searched until midnight. We called for mutual aid from Trinidad Public Works, The Humboldt Bay Municipal Water Utility District for leak detection, and McKinleyville Community Services District for their Vactor-truck. We isolated many parts of the system and still found no leak. Residents searched for the leak also to try and help us. There were over 4 inches of rain that weekend which considerably delayed our finding the leak. We had almost 100,000 gallons of water trucked in to keep customers supplied with water and maintain pressure in the system. Ultimately, when the rain subsided, neighbors Allan and Becky Woodworth found the leak on Sixth avenue on one of their daily walks. We brought in GRS on the night of the 19th to get this leak repaired as quickly as possible. We appreciate the patience and support of the community and our customers in conserving water as we all worked around the clock to find and repair the leak. **Please note that the recent leak will not affect rates in any way.** The district sets aside about 5% of its funds every year for Capital and Operating reserves to fund unexpected costs such as emergencies, repairs, and for long term Capital improvements. Annual rate increases are driven by increases in electricity costs, testing costs, insurance costs, and staff costs such as the state minimum wage law.



COVID-19 response: As we all try to navigate the COVID-19 situation and learn to live with this “new reality”, District has made some changes: (1) The WCSD Office is currently closed to the public, but we are taking payments through the slot. We are in the office at times during the week and look forward to responding to your calls and questions. We look forward to reopening the office as the State and County restrictions are relaxed and will most likely time our reopening with that of other water utilities in the region. (2) The WCSD Board voted to temporarily suspend shutoffs of water service during the COVID-19 situation a month before the State Mandate to do so. We are your neighbors and are committed to working with you. While this is a temporary relief, it is not a debt forgiveness program. If you receive a late notice and/or a 48 hour notice please call the general manager (Paul Rosenblatt) at 707-677-0798 to talk about your situation and work out a payment plan based on your needs and future income. (3) As a way to enhance flexibility in payment options we are doing a trial of credit and debit card payments during this Covid19 situation. To make a credit card payment, call us and leave a message and we will call back to get your information and process your payment. There is a 4% service charge to cover the bank charges and our costs. (4) At the June meeting, the WCSD Board agreed to makes its draft web pages public. Within the next month, we hope to make our web pages available for public viewing.

DISINFECTION BY-PRODUCTS - UPDATE

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 30% 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% interest-free loan and 80% grant.

Unfortunately, our source water has proven to be very difficult to treat for DBP precursors, and a simple and/or economically feasible solution has eluded us thus far. We requested and received a year's extension of the study funding and planned to continue testing on through the winter of 2017 - 2018. However, dissatisfied with our lack of progress toward a solution, the State Water Board Department of Financial Assistance terminated our access to the funding in December 2017 and served us with a Compliance Order requiring that a solution be identified by March 31, 2018 and implemented by December 31, 2018. Following our request for an extension, the March deadline was extended to June 30, 2018. In June of 2018 a request was made for a second extension of the compliance order which was granted giving us until December 31st 2019 to return to compliance. In August of 2018 we started the long process of working on another SRF planning grant application to dig test wells on our existing well property and two adjacent parcels that were generously donated to the district by Tim Crowley (owner of North Coast Fabricators). The district has been working with engineers and the California Department of Drinking water and California Department of Water Resources to complete this. It is hoped that we will find additional ground water to blend with the surface water from Two Creeks, thereby greatly lowering the amount of Disinfection By-Products and bringing our numbers into compliance. This is the least expensive most straightforward way for the district to achieve compliance. Thus we have been focusing our efforts on developing additional sources of groundwater to augment our supply from the 4th Ave. well, which is free from the dissolved carbon compounds that produce DBPs. The District requested an extension of the compliance order which was granted on February 3rd 2020 extending our deadline for compliance to December 31st 2022. As of writing of this newsletter, the District is currently in the application and review process for a Coastal Development Permit for drilling 2 test wells at our Fourth avenue properties.

Technical Assistance Grant

In January of 2020 the District applied for a technical assistance grant through the State Water Resources Control Board Department of Financial Assistance for up to \$500,000. The purpose of this grant is to provide the district with prefunded engineering services for investigations into the following: (a) Surface water and groundwater blending for DBP reduction using the existing 4th Ave. groundwater well source (not currently used for blending) and considering additional groundwater supplies that may be available upon completion of the concurrent groundwater well pilot testing project; and (b) Treatment and filtration enhancements for TOC/DBP precursor reduction. These studies should result in long-term improvements in treatment and use of all existing and potential water supplies to give the community of Westhaven drinking water which reliably complies with the drinking water standards.

DEFENSIBLE SPACE / FUELS REDUCTION at the WATER TREATMENT PLANT: in 2019 the District partnered with Cal-Fire to create the minimum 30 foot defensible space around all critical facilities and a 100' foot reduced fuel zone beyond that as well as clearing the access roads on site to create a fuel break. District staff has continued to enhance fire resiliency should a wildfire should occur in our community. Although rare, there have been at least three historically significant wind driven fires burning thousands of acres in the Trinidad and Westhaven area. Please join us in enhancing your defensible space on your property, around your home and on access roads.

!

N CONCLUSION

We are having busy times, working on overdue upgrades to our infrastructure and treatment systems. 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. Furthermore, our recent accomplishments have produced significant improvements in the water system. The upgrade to the distribution system has resulted in major decreases in water loss as well as maintenance and repair expenses. The new storage tank and repairs to the old tank have doubled our storage capacity and added many years to the life expectancy of the old tank. The additional storage capacity has allowed us to stop treating turbid storm water from the springs during most heavy rain events. **This has led to a measurable decrease in disinfection by products and has reduced the number of quarters in which the district was in violation of the maximum contaminant levels for DBP's**

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 6:30 pm. Currently these meetings are held via Zoom, but normally they are held 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 or emergency notifications via text message and or email just send an email to us at wcsd@suddenlinkmail.com and provide us with a cell phone number and email address.

Thank you!

WESTHAVEN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Westhaven Volunteer Fire Department has immediate openings for new members. Joining the WVFD is a great way to support the community and get to know your neighbors. Training is provided!

Contact them at WesthavenFire@gmail.com. Or connect on Facebook – [Westhaven Volunteer Fire Department](#)

Trinidad Bay Watershed Council

Are you interested in learning more about what you can do to improve and protect our local watersheds and related resources? The mission of the Trinidad Bay Watershed Council (TBWC) is to work collaboratively to improve and maintain the watersheds, coastal waters, communities in the Trinidad and Westhaven area for the benefit of all community members. Visit them on the web at www.trinidadwatersheds.org or contact Becky Price- at rpricehall@trinidad.ca.gov to sign up for the TBWC email list.