

# WESTHAVEN COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT



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## WCSD NEWS

## MAY 2023

**TO: Westhaven CSD Customers**

**FROM: Westhaven CSD Board of Directors:**

**Westhaven CSD Staff:**

Bill Verick            President  
 Barbara Cline       Vice President  
 David Hankin       Finance Officer  
 Richard Swisher   Safety Officer  
 Antonio Llanos      Board Member

Paul Rosenblatt      General Manager / Operator T2/D2  
 Katrina Martin       Operator T2/D1  
 Madison Whitlow-Hewitt   Operator T2  
 Roxanne Levang     Secretary / Bookkeeper  
 Christy Chandler     Secretary

**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.

WCSD is excited to have an active web presence. Please check it out at [westhavencsd.org](http://westhavencsd.org)

As a way to enhance flexibility in payment options, we are now accepting credit and debit card payments. Go to [westhavencsd.org](http://westhavencsd.org) and click on Bill Pay. Customers can also call us and leave a message and we will call back to get your card information and process your payment. There is a 3% service charge to cover the bank charges, or a fixed \$1.83 fee if you use an electronic check.

**Low Income Home Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)**

WCSD is participating in the Low Income Home Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP). If you are more than 2 months behind on your bill and are low income, call the Redwood Community Action Agency (707-444-3831, extension 201) to get signed up.

**2023-2024 Operating Budget and Water Rates**

The District’s operating budget for the upcoming fiscal year is scheduled for public comment at the June 21<sup>st</sup> Board meeting, *with final approval in a public hearing at the July 12<sup>th</sup> special Board meeting.*

At the May 17th Board meeting, the Board approved a draft Fiscal year 2023-24 (July 12<sup>th</sup> 2023 – June 30th 2024) budget that includes an increase of \$4.29 (+6.95%) in the monthly Base Rate and an increase of \$1.10 /1,000 gallons (+6.9%) in the commodity rate, resulting in an average monthly water bill increase of \$10.06.

*A summary of the proposed rate increase is as follows:*

EXAMPLES OF MONTHLY BILLS	CURRENT	2023-2024	INCREASE
<b>BASE</b>	<b>\$61.71</b>	<b>\$66.00</b>	<b>\$4.29</b>
<b>NO WATER INCLUDED IN BASE CHARGE</b>	<b>TOTAL / MO</b>		
0 gallons per month	\$61.71	\$66.00	\$4.29
50 gallons per day = 1,500 gallons per month	\$85.70	\$91.64	\$5.94
100 gallons per day = 3,000 gallons per month	\$109.69	\$117.28	\$7.59
150 gallons per day = 4,500 gallons per month	\$133.69	\$142.92	\$9.23
200 gallons per day = 6,000 gallons per month	\$157.68	\$168.56	\$10.88
250 gallons per day = 7,500 gallons per month	\$181.67	\$194.21	\$12.54
300 gallons per day = 9,000 gallons per month	\$205.66	\$219.85	\$14.19
Avg. monthly bill increase for active accounts (204)			\$10.06

The operating budget for 2023/24 proposes a total increase in expenses of \$8,946 in an annual total budget of \$295,648. This year there is a 2.0% cost of living increase for the District's five employees (one full-time, four part-time). This year's annual rate increases are driven by increases in electricity costs, testing costs, insurance costs, and staff costs such as workers compensation insurance and wages. These increases, and a more accurate projection of water sales for 2023/24, have been budgeted into the overall rate increases.

The proposed budget will be discussed again at the June 15<sup>th</sup> 2022 WCSD Board meetings. The budget will be formally adopted at the July 12<sup>th</sup> special Board meeting. Meetings are scheduled to begin at 6:30 PM and agendas will be posted in advance of meetings at the District Office and Fire Hall Bulletin boards, and on the District's website at [westhavencsd.org](http://westhavencsd.org) 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.**

### **System Leaks and Water Lines Replacement**

Fiscal Year 2022-2023 brought many leaks which kept us busy. Most leaks were in lines installed in 1968 by the Westhaven Mutual Water Company. (Please note that these leaks have **not** affected rates for water service.) We have secured \$4,133,832 in Department of Water Resources (DWR) small community drought relief grant funding for replacement of about one mile of this 1968 era water pipe, and to drill three new wells that we have been working on since 2018. WCSD will use this funding to install new 6 inch diameter water lines and 9 new fire hydrants. We hope to be installing these new water lines in the summer and fall of 2023 with completion no later than the end of 2024. The new lines will be on Haven Way, Driver Road to Westhaven Drive, Sixth Avenue from Westhaven Drive to Kahlstrom Avenue to 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue (including Spring Lane) and North Highland Avenue, and also potentially the very end of Kay Avenue where it goes to Tepona Lane These new lines are a long-needed upgrade to our distribution system and should reduce system water loss due to leaks.

### **Disinfection By-Products (DBPs) Update & Technical Assistance Grant**

In November of 2006, following new EPA and State regulations, 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 *maximum allowable contaminant level*, 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. On December 12, 2017, WCSD was issued a Compliance Order requiring that a solution for reduction of DBPs be identified by March 31, 2018, and the solution implemented by December 31, 2018. WCSD has made four separate requests for extension of the compliance date, and we are now on a solid path for return to compliance. (Note that DBPs can be removed by use of an activated charcoal water filter like a Multi-Pure brand filter.)

Our source water has proven to be very difficult to treat for DBP precursors, and a simple and/or economically feasible solution for reduction eluded us for a decade. But in January of 2020, the District applied for a technical assistance grant (\$440,000) through the State Water Resources Control Board Department of Financial Assistance (DFA). We partnered with Pace Engineering (out of Redding) to work on pilot water treatment studies as well as testing blending of groundwater (from our well) with surface water (from our springs). We conducted dry weather tests in October of 2020 and wet weather tests in the end of January and beginning of February 2021. Both pilot tests resulted in substantial reduction in DBP's. Based on these studies, a new treatment process has been established that is effective, a new water treatment plant has been designed, and a preliminary funding agreement for construction of a new treatment plant has been awarded. Because the geographic area within the WCSD boundaries is considered an economically disadvantaged community by the state, the multi-million dollar water treatment plant project will be eligible for grant funding from DFA, with no cost to WCSD water customers. The new water treatment plant will result in long-term improvements in treatment, will allow use of all existing and potential

water supplies, and will deliver the community of Westhaven a greater supply of drinking water which will reliably comply with drinking water standards. Other improvements associated with the treatment plant will increase water storage and enhance water system resiliency, thereby allowing us to live within the water supply provided by our Two Creek's watershed and groundwater wells within WCSD boundaries. The new water plant will also have a 32kv solar array and a Tesla type battery bank to help offset its energy needs. Chlorine for water treatment will be produced on-site from pool salt through electrolysis, also helping with resiliency.



### **New Groundwater Supplies**

Pump-testing of the three wells drilled with funding from our small community drought relief grant showed that two of these wells are productive and could augment our existing groundwater supply. Proposals for developing facilities at the locations of these two new wells, and for upgrading facilities at our existing groundwater well at the west end of 4<sup>th</sup> avenue are out to bid. We hope to complete development of facilities for these wells no later than the end of 2024. These new groundwater wells will improve our system supply during periods of drought and should reduce our reliance on surface water during winter storms, resulting in better water quality during winter months. **City of Trinidad DWR Multi benefit Emergency Intertie grant partnership**

In the winter of 2021-22, the City of Trinidad applied for and received funding for a Department of Water Resources multi-benefit grant. One component of this grant is a collaborative Emergency Intertie project between the City of Trinidad and WCSD. The Emergency Intertie project will build approximately seven tenths of a mile of pipe to

connect the water systems of Trinidad and WCSD, with several fire hydrants for flushing purposes, and a small pump station to convey water to the higher elevation WCSD tanks. We are currently working on design and obtaining necessary permits with a target of completion by the end of 2024. The Emergency Intertie would be used to transfer water between systems in the event of serious emergencies (catastrophic leaks, equipment failure, etc.) in either system, and will enhance resiliency of both water systems.

### **Defensible space / fuels reduction at the Water Treatment Plant**

In 2019 WCSD began to partner with Cal-Fire to create the required minimum 30 foot defensible space and a 100' foot reduced fuel zone around all critical facilities. Fuel breaks on the access roads at the water plant as well as around the slow sand filter have also been created. We continue to partner with Cal-Fire to enhance and improve fire safety around District facilities. Although rare, there were at least three significant wind-driven fires burning thousands of acres in the Trinidad and Westhaven area in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Please join us in enhancing the defensible space around your home, on your property, and on access roads.

### **In Conclusion**

We are having busy times, securing and administering grant funds, and continuing work on overdue upgrades to our distribution 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 included 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, the past seven years' accomplishments have produced significant improvements in the water system. The replacement of almost a mile of the distribution system in 2016 helped reduce water loss as well as maintenance and repair expenses. The 100,000 gallon storage tank installed in 2017 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 reduce the amount of turbid storm water we treat from the springs during most heavy rain events. This has helped to reduce 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. These meetings are now held "in person" at the Westhaven Fire Hall at 446 6<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:wcsd@suddenlinkmail.com) and provide us with a cell phone number and email address.**

**Be sure to check out our web site at [westhavencsd.org](http://westhavencsd.org) and consider trying online bill pay there too.**

**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](mailto:WesthavenFire@gmail.com). Or connect on Facebook – Westhaven Volunteer Fire Department

Donations or correspondence can be sent to the Westhaven Volunteer Fire Dept. Po Box 2143, Trinidad, Ca 95570

### **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](http://www.trinidadwatersheds.org) or contact Becky Price- at [rpricehall@trinidad.ca.gov](mailto:rpricehall@trinidad.ca.gov) to sign up for the TBWC email list.