



THE PIPELINE

Winter, 2016
Issue 82

Serving this Community
since 1943.

Keeping Lakewood Water District
Customers Informed

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*Click on:

⇒ About Us

⇒ Commissioner

Matters

⇒ Minutes

⇒ Resolutions

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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Vice President:

John S. Korsmo, Jr.

Secretary:

Gregory J. Rediske

General Manager:

Randall M. Black

The Board of Commissioners meets
the 3rd Thursday of each month
at the District
office - 3:30 pm.
Public Welcome



*www.lakewood-water-dist.org

Commissioner Meeting Highlights

October

Board adoption of Resolution No. B-1424, Annual Board Authorization to Close District Office one day at 1 p.m. for Holiday/Winter Employee Luncheon

November

Board adoption of Resolution No. B-1425, Authorization for General Manager to submit District proposal to acquire JBLM privatized water systems
Board Approval of January 1 Renewal of Employee Medical and Dental Insurance Plans
Presentation of 2016 Draft Budget
20th Annual Clean Audit from State Auditor's Office

December

Board adoption of 2016 Final Budget
Board adoption of Resolution No. B-1426, 2016 Rate Increase
Board Acceptance of Cross Connection/Backflow Testing
Low Bid from Backflows Northwest, Inc.

For more information, please visit our website. *

To our Customers,

The District is over 70 years old and, like our aging bodies, has parts that are beginning to wear out, needing extensive replacement or rehabilitation (R&R). This process began this year as we commenced our 50-year R&R Program to repair or replace our transmission water main lines.

During the current budgeting process, we not only have directed our planning to next year's operations, maintenance, and capital projects, but also to our R&R and capital project needs over the next five and ten years. Folks, these needs are extensive and expensive. Just one example...we estimate the cost of replacing one of our older water tanks at \$2.5 million in today's dollars.

Where do we get the money to do this? We have no taxing powers, so our only sources of significant revenue are from our rate payers and borrowed money. But, then again, our only significant source to repay borrowed money is from our rate payers. You can see where this is heading...a foreseeable series of rate increases to cover not only the cost of our R&R and capital projects but also the normal and expected increase in our costs of doing business, a large part of which is the expense of maintaining and retaining our highly trained and excellent staff.

We are proud of our history of rates lower than our fellow water purveyors and intend to do our best to continue that history. Rest assured that each year as we go through the budgeting process and planning for upcoming R&R and capital projects, we do so with a watchful eye on the burden any rate increase may place on our customers and will continue to keep them at the lowest level we can while fulfilling the mission of the District.

We do wish you a Merry Christmas and a new year of health, joy, and prosperity.

Your Board of Commissioners



Warm Wishes for a Safe, Prosperous
2016 from the Staff of
Lakewood Water District



Introducing the Customer Portal

Customer satisfaction is of utmost importance every day at Lakewood Water District, including when it comes to your water usage. We believe the more aware you are of your water usage, the more satisfied you will be. As noted in the Spring 2014 issue of "The Pipeline," the Customer Portal is an online service that will provide you with account status, usage details, plus a way to alert you (via email or text message) of high usage, potential leaks, usage when you are away from town, and other pre-selected notifications.

With the successful completion of the AMI Meter Replacement Program we can now offer you the Customer Portal. The Customer Portal can be a great support for your "Water-Wise Usage." This web-based, interactive application affords you easier access to more information, helping you to manage current water usage and any associated issues and make more informed decisions about future usage. With this information is at your fingertips, you will have greater control to better manage and adjust your water usage.

The District is starting out this program with a limited number of licenses that will be assigned on a first come, first serve basis. The Customer Portal will be available for use by the end of January. At that time, please visit our website at www.lakewood-water-dist.org for updates and more information about gaining access to the Customer Portal.

Employee Spotlights— Chris Bullard and Eric Schwind

October 13, 2014 was a good day for LWD. We hit the bullseye, won the lottery, and won the draft all in one day. What did we win? Two new stars to our all-star lineup—**Chris Bullard (right) and Eric Schwind (left)**.

As our Crew Leader, **Chris Bullard** walked into some very big shoes...those of our beloved Rich Daniels whom we lost the previous August...and Chris did it with grace, style, and a much-needed quiet confidence...and contagious sense of humor. Chris oversees the operations of the Service Crew in the field and performs repairs and maintenance on the District's distribution system. He comes to us with a strong background in heavy civil construction (road work and underground utilities) where he served as a foreman and/or project superintendent for many years. When asked what aspect(s) of his job he enjoys most here at the District, he replied, "The people here."

Chris is an avid outdoorsman. He enjoys fishing, hunting, hiking, and taking his three dogs to the dog park—Riddick, a Boxer-Lab; Raya, a Boxer-Shepherd; and Maggie, a miniature Dachshund-Maltese. Chris grew up in East Tacoma and graduated from Lincoln High School. He and his wife, Brandie, and 19-year-old stepson Austen, live in South Tacoma, not far from the District boundary.

Chris hit the ground running and continues to be one of the stars of our very important "show"...delivering safe, reliable, high-quality drinking water to your tap 24/7/365. Like we said, October 13, 2014 was a good day.

Eric Schwind joined forces with Chris on our Service Crew as an ace equipment operator and seasoned Water Utility Worker III. When asked what his current job responsibilities were, he simply and quickly replied, "Everything!"...which exemplifies the light-hearted willingness with which he approaches "everything." Besides operating equipment, this "everything" list includes locating, ons and offs, installing new water services and fire hydrants, any and all repairs, and anything that has to do with the water system.

Eric came to us from the City of Renton's Water Department where he again did "everything" as a Crew Lead for 15 years. When asked what aspect(s) of his job he enjoys most at LWD, he replied, "Interaction with my coworkers and providing a service that people need; one can do without a lot of things, but no one can do without water."

When not working at LWD, Eric enjoys fishing, working in his shop, and spending time with his family...his wife, Judy; his three sons, Brian (23), Nicholas (21), and Alex (19); and Lucy, the family dog (Shiatzu). Eric grew up in the Bay Area and graduated from Mount Diablo High School in Concord, California. Moving to this area in 2000, Eric and his family currently live in Lakewood; so he's a fellow customer as well as a very valued and highly-respected employee.

Again...October 13, 2014 was a good day for LWD.

New changes to our ACH program



Currently, our ACH program is scheduled to withdraw your payment approximately ten days from your billing date. In an effort to make this program more convenient to our customers, beginning March 1, 2016, your payment will be taken approximately 25 days from the billing date which is approximately the same day as the due date. For those of you who wish to sign up to have your payment automatically taken from your savings or checking account, please contact our office for an application or visit our web-site: www.lakewood-water-dist.org and click on Forms/Automatic Withdrawal Authorization Form.

