

The Pipeline



Issue 41

Keeping Lakewood Water District Customers Informed

SUMMER, 2005

"SERVING THIS COMMUNITY SINCE 1943"

From Your Commissioners

Dear Lakewood Water District Customer,

By the time you get this newsletter, we trust you have long since received our letter informing you of our May 19, 2005 decision to not fluoridate our water supply. In this writing, we want to address in a little more detail the 6 percent of this year's rate increase that was originally scheduled for fluoridation costs.

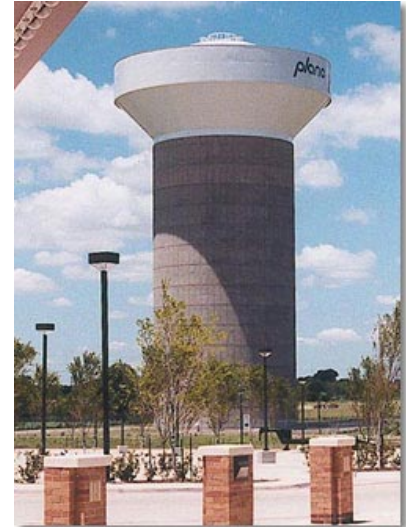
The District's initial financial analyses in the fall of 2004 showed a need for a 6-9 percent rate increase before any additional increase for the costs of fluoridation. The Fall 2004 edition of the District's newsletter reported to our customers the need for an increase of "at least 6 percent...separate from...any additional increases necessary to cover the costs of implementing fluoride." Fluoridation cost analyses showed a need for an additional 6 percent increase for 2005. This would have brought the total rate increase to 12-15 percent.

We simply did not want to impact you with a double-digit increase, as you have made it known to us in the past that smaller, more frequent increases are easier to manage than larger, less frequent ones. So we deferred some necessary but not yet critical capital projects, and decided to dip into District reserves to reduce the initial 6-9 percent increase to 3.5 percent, bringing the total increase with fluoridation to 9.5 percent. At this point, if we were to reverse the 6 percent added for fluoride, it would result in a large rate increase in 2006. Keeping the current rates in place will allow us to move ahead with some of these deferred projects, replenish our reserves, and help us avoid large increases in the future.

An additional component is the increased costs of a couple of projects currently in motion, namely, our new Hemlock Hill half-million gallon tank needed for adequate fire flow in that area of the District, as well as our shop remodel and office addition project, upgrading our 40-year-old field staff facilities. The shop remodel/office addition project will include an Emergency Operations Center in keeping with our enhanced security plans. Increased steel prices and building materials costs have raised the overall price tags for these projects. Keeping our current rates in place will help the District absorb these elevated costs.

We continue to keep a close and watchful eye on our budget, looking for every savings and spending every cent with diligence and care. We remain committed to our mission to provide our community with a safe, clean, reliable water supply as efficiently and cost effectively as possible.

Sincerely,
Your Board of Commissioners



An example of the type of tank that will be built at the Hemlock Hill site.

NEW TANK AT HEMLOCK HILL FACILITY:

Bids for the new .5-million gallon tank at the District's Hemlock Hill facility were opened on June 8 at the District Office. At the June 16 Commissioners' meeting, the Board awarded the \$2+M project to low bidder Morse Construction Group, Inc. out of Everett, Washington. Morse is a subsidiary of Chicago Bridge & Iron. We plan to begin construction in early August 2005, with the intent of having the tank on-line by the spring of 2006.

SEVERE PENALTIES FOR TRESPASSING ON DISTRICT FACILITIES

Please be aware that severe penalties may be imposed by the Federal Government upon those who trespass on District properties. The Federal Bioterrorism Law of 2002

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IMPORTANT BACKFLOW NEWS:

Installing an Underground Sprinkler System this Summer?

If you are planning to install an underground sprinkler system in your yard this summer, there are some important things to keep in mind—whether you do the job yourself or hire a contractor.

All irrigation systems are required by law to have the appropriate backflow assembly installed. A backflow assembly permit must be obtained at the Lakewood Water District office. This permit allows the District to track and record backflow assemblies.

All backflow assemblies are required by law to be tested by a state certified backflow assembly tester upon installation and are required to be tested every year thereafter. The District will provide a list of testers you may contact. The Lakewood Water District must also visually inspect the assembly upon installation.

Atmospheric vacuum breakers (AVBs) are allowed if properly installed and monitored. If you wish to have an atmospheric vacuum breaker device installed, you will need to obtain a permit from the District and schedule a time for the District to visually inspect the installation.

For do-it-yourselfers, we recommend you contact the District before starting your project. We will be happy to answer any questions and assist you in planning your project.

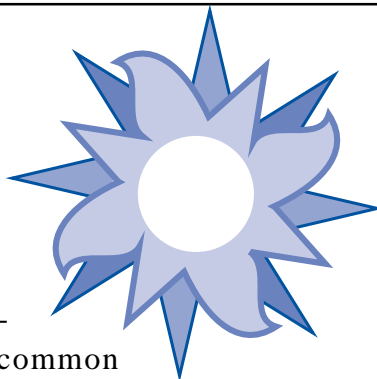
For those of you hiring contractors, let them know that you expect them to obtain the permit, contact the District, and arrange for the backflow test with a certified tester. If your contractor is unable to do so, we can provide a list of certified testers you may contact.

Not obtaining a permit or testing is a violation of the law and could result in problems for your system.

If you have any questions, please contact our Cross Connection Department at 588-4423.

IS YOUR LAWN READY FOR SUMMER?

With summer approaching, proper lawn care and water-wise usage are important. Over-watering is the most common plant problem. Too much water is not only wasteful but also increases fertilizer needs and the likelihood of lawn and garden insect and disease infestations.



Here are a few tips for a healthier lawn.

- Water before 10:00 a.m. or after 9:00 p.m.
- Grass is best watered with sprinklers; trees, shrubs, garden flowers, and ground covers should be watered with drip irrigation.
- 85% of all landscape problems are directly related to over-watering.
- Healthy lawns usually need only 1" inch of water per week.
- We have free rain/watering gauges available at the District Office.

No Trespassing

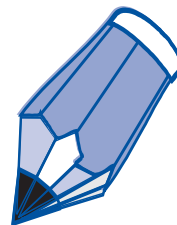
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declares that there are no excusable unauthorized entries onto public utility property and intruders will be prosecuted. Unauthorized intrusions immediately become the jurisdiction of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and are outside of the District's control. Therefore, District facilities, tanks, and yards are not suitable places to play, explore, or go adventuring or sight-seeing. We ask our customers—especially those who live next to or near our facilities—for your continued vigilance in keeping a watchful eye out for any unauthorized visitors.

If you see what appears to be an unauthorized entry or personnel at a District facility, please contact the local authorities.

Automatic Bill Payment:



If you are looking for a convenient way to pay your water bill, remember our Automatic Bill Payment Service. If you would like to sign up for this service, you can obtain an application at the District Office or on the District website, www.lakewood-water-dist.org.



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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

President: Lawrence R Ghilarducci, Jr.
Vice President: William W. Philip
Secretary: John S. Korsmo, Jr.
General Manager: Randy Black

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

