

The Pipeline



Issue 36

Keeping Lakewood Water District Customers Informed

Spring, 2004

"SERVING THIS COMMUNITY SINCE 1943"

FROM YOUR COMMISSIONERS

Dear Lakewood Water District Customer,

Your Board of Commissioners would like to encourage you to think "wise water use" when planning new landscape and green lawn maintenance this spring and summer.

If you are planning to add or change any landscaping this spring, plant selection and placement are key elements of wise water use landscaping. Plants requiring medium to high amounts of water can be maintained with less water if they are grouped together and watered by area. Some tips to keep in mind when you are planning landscaping are:

- **Full irrigation areas** are usually expanses of grass. Grass needs more water than other plants and should be placed only in areas that get a lot of use or are highly visible.

- **Moderate irrigation areas** – take advantage of some natural runoff from downspouts, driveways, and patios. For example, an entryway using ground covers and plants using low to moderate amounts of water will require little watering.

- **Low irrigation areas** can include border areas containing shrubs, trees, and flowers requiring low to moderate amounts of water. By using bubble or drip irrigation, which applies water directly to individual plant roots via small tubing or emitter, very little water is lost to evaporation.

As you prepare your lawns for the spring and summer, here are some tips we obtained from the Master Gardeners at the Washington State University Agriculture Department in Puyallup:

- **Moss removal**—it is good to apply moss killers in the early spring and fall. Because moss is "opportunistic" (grows where other things won't), once you kill moss and rake it up, it is important to reseed the area. Applying a 1/2-inch top dressing of fresh top soil before the reseeding is also helpful.

- **De-thatching/aerating your lawn**—The spring is an excellent time to de-thatch and aerate your lawns, as a layer of thatching formed over the winter may prevent water from getting down into the soil. De-thatching is also an effective means to "rake up" dead moss.

- **Building a good soil base**—As most of you know, this area has poor quality soil. However, you can systematically build a good soil base over a few years by applying a 1/2-inch top dressing of top soil to your lawn in the spring and in the fall. Then apply a supplementary reseeding and fertilizer.

- **Fertilizing**—The experts recommend fertilizing your lawns four times a year, basically one time each season; except, you do not want to fertilize in the heat of the summer.

- **Watering**—Only one inch of water a week is required to maintain most lawns. To know what amount of watering time equals one inch of water, place an empty tuna can (or other shallow container) in the lawn while you are watering. Make a note of the time you start the sprinkler and the time the can becomes full (about an inch). This will give you your basic watering time. And remember, it is better to abundantly saturate your lawn once or twice a week than to do cursory 15-minute waterings more often.

In following these tips, it is possible to maintain a green lawn through the spring and summer without excessive water use. The WSU Master Gardeners, as one valuable resource, have a number of lawn maintenance and landscaping programs available. You can learn more about these programs at their website: pierce.wsu.edu/master_gardeners/index.htm. There you will also find garden calendars and a schedule of clinics, one held each Saturday beginning April 3, 2004. If you have questions, you are welcome to call their office Monday through Friday at 253-798-7170.

We trust you will enjoy a "water wise use" spring and summer.

Sincerely,
Your Board of Commissioners

STATE AUDIT RESULTS ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The State Auditor's Office has concluded the District's 2002 audit. The yearly audit includes financial and compliance tests, reviewing high-risk areas, state and local compliance, and financial statements. The auditors have cited no deficiencies in this year's audit, and the District is proud of its history of clean reviews. Our elected Commissioners and District management continue to guide the District in maintaining our financial stability so we can continue to serve you effectively.

SEASONAL FLUSHING UNDERWAY

It is once again the time of year for the District to be out flushing its water mains. Flushing is a maintenance task completed by the District each year beginning the first week of March and continuing through the first week of July. This particular time of year is chosen for flushing when the warmer temperatures prevent the water flushed onto the streets from freezing, and it allows for the flushing to be completed before our peak demand pumping season arrives.

Natural mineral deposits of iron and manganese get built up around the inside of the four-inch and larger water mains. There are no health risks associated with these deposits. Annually we flush the system by pulling water from a storage tank or reservoir and proceed from hydrant to hydrant with high-velocity flows of water. This is called high-velocity flushing. The hydrants are turned on full speed out of the front pumper port. This action causes a scouring of the inside of the water mains.

If you experience **DARK OR CLOUDY WATER**, we suggest that you do not drink the water until it is clear again. You may want to store extra drinking water before this time period, and we recommend you refrain from doing laundry during this time. You may want to use the water only for toilet flushing, lawn watering, etc. If the water remains dark and cloudy, **RUNNING YOUR OUTSIDE FAUCET** for 5 to 10 minutes should clear up this problem.

Flushing occurs between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Be sure

to watch for our blue-and-white street notification signs giving you a 48-hour advanced notice of Lakewood Water District's flushing crew coming to your neighborhood.

If you have any questions, please call 588-4423. If you need assistance after hours, please call 588-2296.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.



IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS UPDATE

The District is in the final beautification stages of completing the last of four iron and manganese filtration plants. We are proud to inform you the iron and manganese mineral removal rates for all four plants are at or above 97 percent. This means cleaner water, less water loss due to flushing, and a monetary savings to you.

The District has started the design phase of its new tank for Hemlock Hill. There will be a public meeting in the near future to solicit input from the District's customers regarding the final design. The District is progressing with a number of additional improvement projects, including enhancing the security of its storage and production facilities, upgrading software controls, and installing additional monitoring systems to name a few. We are also in the early stages of an extension and remodel of the District's facilities on Gravelly Lake Drive. We will continue to provide you with status reports on these projects as they progress toward final completion.

NEW CUSTOMER NUMBERS ON WATER BILLS



The District has implemented new Utility Billing software to better serve the District and its customers. As of March 1, 2004, your billings will reflect a **new customer number**. Please make a note of your new number for future reference to your account. If you utilize on-line banking to pay your water bill, please notify your financial institution of your new account number. In the future, your bills will include a graph reflecting your annual consumption. If you have any questions about your new bill, please call our Customer Service staff at 588-4423.

DISTRICT TO DISTRIBUTE ANNUAL REPORT IN JUNE 2004

The District's 2003 Water Quality and Annual Business Report will be ready for mailing in June. The report will provide our customers with information regarding all aspects of water quality, testing, and treatment of our water supply. It will also include an overview from the Board of Commissioners; information on current resources, supply, and facilities; financial statements; and an update on the District's current capital and renovation and replacement projects. For more information, call Christie Butler at the District office at 588-4423.



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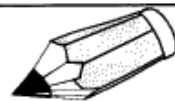
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

President: Lawrence Ghilarducci, Jr.
Vice President: William Philip
Secretary: Mark Hullinger
General Manager: Randy Black

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



AUTOMATIC BILL PAYMENT:



If you are looking for a convenient way to pay your water bill, the Lakewood Water District is accepting applications for our Automatic Bill Payment Service. We are pleased to announce we are now servicing about 1,600 customers in the District with this program. If you would like to sign up for the Automatic Bill Payment Service, either contact the District Office at 588-4423 or you can obtain an application form at the Lakewood District website,

www.lakewood-water-dist.org