



Three Lakes Water Association Newsletter

April 2024

Our Membership

Three Lakes Water continues to perform as a non-profit, member owned Association. Within the past year, the Board of Trustees and Association Staff have achieved many accomplishments. As part of our long-range plan within our CWSP, asbestos cement main along 171st Ave SE from 48th St SE to Booster Pump Station One is in process for replacement and construction began in January. This infrastructure continues to show evidence of its age and wear, and is predicted to be near the end of its lifespan. This segment is the first of three phases which will replace approximately 14,000 linear feet of 6" asbestos cement main with 8" ductile iron main over several years. The second phase of replacement has been initiated for design and approval with the hope to construct within this next fiscal year. This next phase will encompass the replacement of AC main along 171st Ave SE from 48th St SE to Three Lakes Rd providing greater reliability between both of our booster pump station sources. Fortunately, the Board was proactive and the Association was approved for a Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan through the Washington State Department of Health for these particular projects.

Electrical upgrades were completed at our oldest booster pump station to further its useful life. A generator was installed at this station in order to provide continuous operations during power outages. The pump motor at booster pump station two which was installed in 2005, was replaced with a new unit, leaving a spare available if necessary. Our updated Comprehensive Water System Plan has been submitted to DOH and is in the review process for approval. This document will be used for future planning and establishes goals for water use efficiency for the next ten years and beyond, as well as future capital projects to enhance the system. Based on member input, we are exploring the option of offering our members an automated payment option through our online bill payment portal. As of April 2024, the Association has a total of 878 members which consists of 872 full-time users, 2 charter members, and 4 non-users. The system continues to grow as extensions are completed and new services are installed. As our water system contains older asbestos cement water main primarily installed in the 1960s, there are more leaks that are difficult to locate. If you see any suspicious or unusual surface water, please call the office at (360) 568-8022 or the emergency line after hours at (425) 903-1601 as it could be a leak.

Consumer Confidence Report

The Association completed its 26th annual water quality report in March of this year, which includes the details of the water quality monitoring results for 2023. Its purpose is to help our members understand where their drinking water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to stringent state and federal water quality standards. These results come from the City of Everett as they supply our drinking water. Of the more than 175 substances the City tested for this past year, most were not detected and those that were detected were found at levels far below the most stringent drinking water standards.

This report also relays information about the Association's water use efficiency goals and water consumption savings. It is available for download from our website and can be found at: <https://tinyurl.com/AnnualQualityReport23>. If you would prefer a paper version mailed to you, please let us know by calling and leaving a message at the office stating you would like to request a copy of the Consumer Confidence Report. You may also send us a note enclosed with your next payment with this request. Please take the time to read and understand this report. If you have any questions about your water, please let us know and we will do our best to help answer them.

Monthly Board Meetings

In order for the Association to exist, we need interested Board Trustees. Monthly board meetings are currently held virtually on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. to discuss Association business.

If you would like to attend a meeting to find out more about becoming a Board Trustee, contact the office for a virtual meeting link. Your input is appreciated and volunteering will help you and your fellow neighbors.

Protecting your Water Supply

Washington State regulations require the Association to implement a cross-connection control program to protect the water system from any contamination. Auxiliary water supplies on or available to your premises are a potential source of contamination. The program is operated by our staff, as we are certified cross-connection control specialists by the Department of Health. We may require you to complete a cross-connection control survey, which may lead to an on-site inspection. The Association has had several requests from members who would like to install an irrigation system which ties into their existing service connection. As part of our program, documentation of the installation and an inspection to approve your connection is required. We understand this is a complicated subject so please feel free to call us if you have any questions.

The Association recommends the installation of a pressure regulating valve on all of our member's private residential water service lines. A properly installed and maintained PRV helps to isolate all of your plumbing and fixtures downstream of the point of installation. This helps to ensure that your house plumbing is protected when there is higher pressure or when we are performing other activities on the water distribution system. The installation and maintenance of all member's pressure regulating valves are the responsibility of the member, per the Association By-Laws. As of February 14, 2017, the Board of Trustees has approved an in-home fire suppression sprinkler policy. This policy affects both existing and future members. Please contact the office if you have an existing in-home fire suppression sprinkler or are planning on installing one in the future for policy information.

System Maintenance

We will begin our flushing and valve maintenance this spring as per standard operations each year. You may experience cloudy water after a hydrant valve has been exercised as part of our flushing process. To help clear up the water and evacuate the air, we recommend running your outside hose bib. After a few minutes, the cloudiness should subside. As part of our facility maintenance, we are also rebuilding approximately four hydrants or blow-offs per year. The goal is to extend the useful life of the facility at a lesser cost, rather than replacing the full unit. In the process of completing capital improvement projects, additional fire hydrants have been installed to increase fire suppression capabilities for our members.

If Three Lakes Water Association has been granted an easement within the bounds of your property, we ask you to please keep the easement area clear of fences, shrubs, debris, trees or any other structures. The Association must have access to repair or replace water mains and services at all times. If you plan on any clearing, digging or construction within the easement area, please call Utilities Underground Location Center at (800) 424-5555 two business days prior to your work. This will allow the Association to mark any and all locations of our facilities to help prevent potential damage to our infrastructure. We have focused more of our efforts towards specific maintenance as our facilities are aging and require additional care.

Emergencies

If you witness anyone drawing water from hydrants, please contact the office to report it. Please get as much information as possible such as the license plate number on the vehicle, company name, time, date and location. This will help us in controlling unauthorized use of our water and reduce the potential of contamination to the water you drink.

For water system emergencies, contact the Association's General Manager, Donald Kemmis, at (425) 903-1601. If you have any questions about your bill, contact the office at (360) 568-8022. If our staff is unavailable, please leave a detailed message with your name, service address, account number and the reason you are calling, and we will return your call as soon as possible.

Communicating with our Membership

Our website can be found at www.3lwa.org. Members can find Association news updates, board meeting information, billing information, and water quality data, as well as online bill payment options.

Members can find Association news updates on our Facebook page. To stay informed about Association events, like our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ThreeLakesWaterAssociation>.

Policies and Procedures

On November 11, 2014, the Board of Trustees approved changing the Water Users Agreement to a Water Users Policy. This document applies to all members and describes the relationship and requirements between the member and the Association, as required by the By-Laws. Shutoff notices are mailed to all members with a balance above the Revenue Policy shutoff threshold on the first business day of each even month. If it becomes necessary for staff to be dispatched for shutoff due to non-payment, a \$50.00 fee will be assessed. If water service restoration is requested outside of normal business hours and/or on a holiday, an additional \$45.00 fee will be assessed. Further details are listed on the shutoff notice.

As a long-standing policy, all of our members are required to keep their meter clear of dirt, debris and brush at all times. It is essential that we have access from the road as well as a three-foot diameter around your meter box. Proper access to your meter helps to ensure the safety of our staff and aids in keeping maintenance costs down. In emergency situations, especially at night, the ability for us to access your meter is crucial. It is also a benefit to you to know the location of your meter as it will help provide you the ability to preserve your water resource, should it become a necessity. A \$10.00 charge is assessed on your account for the first obstruction, \$50.00 for the second and \$50.00 for the third within one year. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the office.

Paying your Residential Water Bill

Members who elect to use our currently offered one-time payment option will need to enter their account number and water meter number to gain access, which can be found on your residential water bill. We are in the midst of investigating the potential for our members to have the ability to schedule automated payments through our online bill payment portal with the hope for implementation soon. Should you prefer to write checks, we ask you to mail your payment with enough processing time so it is received by the due date.

The Board of Trustees established our Revenue Policy which prohibits post-dated checks from being accepted by the Association. When writing your check, please use black or dark blue ink and identify the account number you would like the payment to be allocated to. If you are paying towards multiple accounts, please identify the amount you would like to be allocated to each account. If you are scheduling a payment through your own bill payment option or bank, keep in mind that this is not a direct deposit as a physical check is mailed to Association.

Your Board of Trustees

Your Board of Trustees conduct and approve Association business each month which allows the company to continue operations for the benefit of the Three Lakes community. The current Board of Trustees are:

- President-Jay Klicker
Term expires October 2024
- Vice President-Tyler Eshleman
Term expires October 2026
- Secretary-Terra Nicolle
Term expires October 2026
- Treasurer-Donald Kemmis
Term expires October 2025
- Trustee-Raymond Cox
Term expires October 2026
- Trustee-Heidi Mann
Term expires October 2024
- Trustee-Yvonne Craig
Term expires October 2024
- Alternate-Marek Jedrzewicz
Term expires October 2025

Your Association Staff

The present Association Staff consists of four employees. We operate and maintain office and business administration, repair and maintain water distribution main facilities, adhere to all federal, state and local regulations, and respond to any and all water emergencies. Most of us are certified by the Department of Health office of drinking water. We take pride in providing such an important resource to our community. Your current Association staff members are:

- Donald Kemmis-General Manager
WDM2, Cross-Connection Control Specialist
- Kaila Klicker-Assistant Manager
WDM2, Cross-Connection Control Specialist
- Seth Way-Field Technician/Office Assistant
WDM1, Cross-Connection Control Specialist
- Brittany Henning-Office Administrator/Field Technician

Shares

Shares are issued for an approved dwelling or place of use on a specific parcel. If you plan to subdivide a served parcel, please contact the Association to verify whether an additional share is needed.

If you sell your property, typically a final bill request is made by escrow to prepare your title documentation. Be sure to contact the office to verify that we have received communication from escrow for the transfer of your share.

Membership, Connection and Related Fees

The current meter installation fees are:

- 5/8" meter - \$3,900.00 per connection
- 1" meter - \$4,550.00 per connection
- 1 ½" meter - \$5,850.00 per connection
- 2" meter - \$7,800.00 per connection

The current general facilities charges are:

- 5/8" meter - \$13,200.00 per connection
- 1" meter - \$19,800.00 per connection
- 1 ½" meter - \$26,400.00 per connection
- 2" meter - \$46,200.00 per connection

Other membership, connection and related fees are:

- New share fee - \$500.00 per share
- Share transfer fee - \$100.00
- Developer Extension Manual - \$50.00
- Developer extension application and review - \$750.00
- Letter of water availability - \$100.00 per parcel
- Penalty fee for past due accounts - 10% assessed the 1st business day after the bill due date
- Insufficient funds - \$25.00 per occurrence
- Hydrant use permit - \$65.00
- Unauthorized use of water - \$500.00 per occurrence
- Penalty for failure to request a locate - \$50.00

Rates and Billing

The current rates are based on a study completed in the year 2024 and were adopted by the Board of Trustees on March 12, 2024. The Board of Trustees reviewed the information and weighed many factors in their decision regarding rates. The new rates will become effective starting July 1, 2024. This means you will see this change on your September bill, which encompasses July and August water consumption. The current Revenue Policy is available on our website at www.3lwa.org.

The newly adopted **bi-monthly** base rates are:

- \$50.00 for a share only which includes 0 cf
- \$171.00 for a 5/8" meter which includes 0-600 cf
- \$256.50 for a 1" meter which includes 0-900 cf
- \$342.00 for a 1 1/2" meter which includes 0-1,200 cf
- \$598.50 for a 2" meter which includes 0-2,100 cf

Each year, we work with our engineer to complete a review of our financial statements, the adopted budget for the current fiscal year, as well as the forecasted operating and capital expenses for the next several years. The review is used to determine whether future rate increases are appropriate to cover the anticipated operating costs and increase the capital funds available for system improvements. It also includes a long-range program for main replacement as referenced in our Comprehensive Water System Plan.

The new bi-monthly water use rates for a **5/8"** meter are:

- \$3.15 per 100 cubic feet for 601 cf to 1,200 cf
- \$3.40 per 100 cubic feet for 1,201 cf to 1,800 cf
- \$3.65 per 100 cubic feet for 1,801 cf to 2,400 cf
- \$3.90 per 100 cubic feet for 2,401 cf to 3,000 cf
- \$4.25 per 100 cubic feet for 3,001 cf to infinity