

Update On The Water Situation

As the cities of Seattle, Tacoma and Everett enact Voluntary Water Curtailment measures, North City Water District is grateful for single family residences in our District who are already lowering their water usage—to some of the lowest levels in Puget Sound!



Image courtesy of shorpy.com

Back in 1949, a full eighteen years after North City Water District began operations in 1931, our District experienced its first water shortage. Our Commissioners responded by instituting new water conservation rules regulating the sprinkling of customers' lawns: no

sprinkling was allowed between 4:30 and 7:30 pm, and none whatsoever was allowed on days when there was a fire within our District.

Fast forward to today, with this season's ongoing high temperatures on the heels of a winter with lower snowpack than usual, it is by far the worst drought our area has experienced in over a decade.

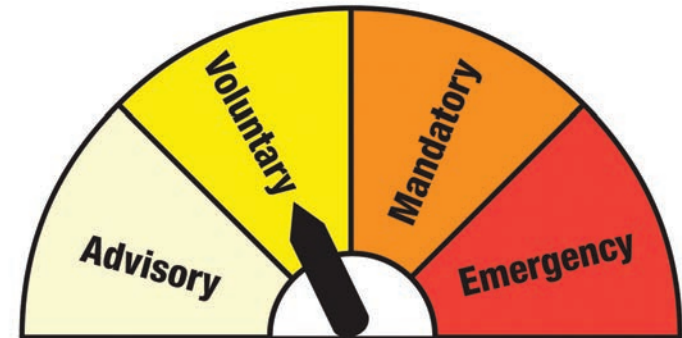
Thankfully however, we were well into August before the cities of Seattle, Everett and Tacoma needed to step up from "Advisory" to "Voluntary" water curtailment—due in large part to the early and proactive measures taken by our regional water supplier (Seattle Public Utilities).

We are likewise grateful for our customers, who were already doing an outstanding job of curtailing water use long before this announcement. Out of 28 water utilities in the region, our single family residents are one of the lowest water consumers on average in the Puget Sound!

How are they doing it? Installing low flow toilets, choosing new water efficient appliances, replacing landscape with more drought-tolerant options, repairing older irrigation systems, reducing the frequency of lawn watering... our hats are off to you for all of the ways you've helped our area maintain its water supply so late into the summer.

As our District moves to voluntary water restrictions, we are asking you to continue to use water wisely, if you haven't already begun doing so.

STAGES OF WATER SHORTAGE CONTINGENCY PLAN



Will Mandatory Water Restrictions Be Enacted?

Based on the data we're currently seeing, we don't believe mandatory water restriction will be requested. Sign up for updates via our website... simply look for the "Subscribe" button in the upper right area of www.northcitywater.org

Why Do We Run Water Through Fire Hydrants?

You may have observed our staff opening fire hydrants and allowing them to run for a period of time, and wondered why it was being done, particularly in light of the current drought. Like you, we always want to avoid wasting water. However our highest priority is assuring high water quality, which sometimes necessitates the flushing of pipes and hydrants. Line flushing can occur when new pipelines are being brought into service (fairly infrequently), whereas routine flushing of hydrants can occur as often as weekly.

10 Ways to Save Water

1. Let your lawn go dormant: water deeply **once a month** to keep roots alive.
2. Limit plant watering to **twice** a week; apply water directly by hand or drip irrigation where possible.
3. Water **early or late** in the day to reduce evaporation.
4. Save pressure washing jobs until Fall rains return.
5. Take **shorter** showers: every minute is 2.5 gallons!
6. **Fix** leaky faucets, hose bibs, sprinkler heads, and toilet gaskets (stop by for a free Toilet Dye Strip Test... leaky toilets are the #1 cause of higher water bills).
7. Wash cars **less**; choose locations that recycle water.
8. Wash **large** loads of laundry and **full** dishwashers.
9. Use a **broom** rather than a hose to clean sidewalks, driveways and patios.
10. **Turn off** the tap while shaving or brushing teeth.

NORTH CITY WAVES

A newsletter for water-related issues and info
Serving the communities of Shoreline and Lake Forest Park since 1931

Issue 3: July • August • September 2015

From Our Board...

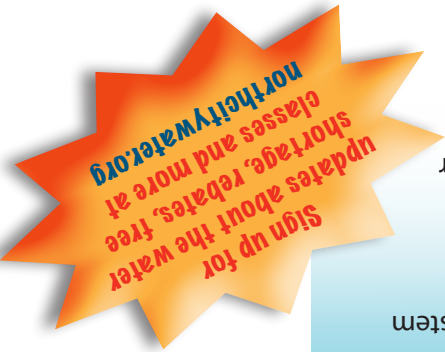
by Charlotte Haines, President

With the frequency and deadly severity of fires throughout our state, our region's water supply is weighing heavily on everyone's minds. Water shortages are not that common throughout our District's 84 year history—in fact it's been over 10 years since a drought of this magnitude affected our area. As our District and region move to the Voluntary stage of water restrictions, we want to thank our many customers who have already reduced their water consumption this season. Please continue to use water wisely. Do you need ideas for how to cut back just a little more this summer? We've included a list of recommendations on the back side of this newsletter, not to mention handy tips on our website, on our Facebook page, and printed recommendations at our office. You can also [sign up for monthly updates on our website](#) (covering topics like the water situation, free gardening classes, rebate notices, community events and more)—just look for the "Subscribe" button in the upper right area of our website at: www.northcitywater.org



Jacqueline Tabor Quartet performing in our main conference room during Jazz Walk 2015

North City Waves Newsletter ~ a publication by North City Water District



- Beyond Supply and Maintenance
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- 10 Ways to Save Water

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Beyond Supply and Maintenance...

As a Special Purpose Water District, we go beyond the basics of water supply and maintenance in order to participate, involve and educate our community about water... especially during this season's challenging drought conditions.

One of the most important missions of a Special Purpose District is education. This year, with the ongoing water shortages and resulting need to curtail consumption, we at North City Water District find it imperative to be as present as possible for our community to offer education, water usage insights, and specific solutions for water conservation. Here are the ways we've been doing this:

Educating Our Children

One of the programs we instituted four years ago has had a direct impact on both education and water conservation. Inspired by the Saving Water Partnership, we developed a fun 'Fix a Leak Week' contest for local elementary schools to enable kids to understand and learn first-hand about water conservation in the home.

Rules were simple: use a free toilet dye test strip to test home toilet(s) for leaks. Rewards were fun: classrooms with the most participation enjoyed a pizza party or were provided with much-needed school supplies.

Best of all, we didn't just teach kids about water conservation... we achieved it too: in just the past 2 years, over 330 toilet leaks were discovered during the program, and once repaired, resulted in lower water bills for the families and increased water conservation for all.

Educating Our Youth

We're always encouraged when our youth begin to seek out information about their environment, and love to demonstrate how water plays a key role. Our 'Water Taste Test' at local events like the Shoreline Science Fair / STEM Expo, and the 'Comparison of Tap Versus Bottled Water' table at a Girl Scout events helped challenge youth to recognize the importance of choosing tap water over bottled water for a healthy, sustainable environment.

Educating Families and Business Owners

A third way we love to connect with our community is through District-staffed booths at annual events. This gives us an invaluable chance to talk to individuals face to face... answering specific questions and providing advice about everything from water meters, toilets and irrigation systems, to water conservation tips. Hopefully you got a chance to stop by and see us this year at:

- Healthy Kids Day YMCA
- North City Jazz Walk
- Ridgecrest Ice Cream Social
- Celebrate Shoreline

Many families who stopped by our booths said that they had already tested their toilets thanks to our 'Fix a Leak Week' contest with schools; other families that overheard these conversations often took our free toilet dye strip test home to test their toilets. (Need one? Stop by! Repairs typically require replacing the toilet gasket.)

We also educate our community by hosting free Savvy Gardener Classes twice a year. Mark your calendar for our next class: "Wildlife Friendly Gardening" coming up on Tuesday September 29. More information and registration details will be forthcoming on our website and Facebook page.

Educating our Legislators

Last but certainly not least, North City Water District Commissioners and staff have met with both Legislators and legislative candidates to give them a tour of our operations, and help them understand the unique nature of water utilities managed by Special Purpose Districts... as we believe this educational effort is key to addressing the future of our state's infrastructure.

Project Updates and System-wide Improvements



Fire Hydrant Maintenance *Inspection, Repair, Flushing and Painting*

Maintaining the fire hydrants in our service area is some of the most visible work done North City Water District crews, to ensure that hydrants will operate appropriately in the event of a fire. All of our field staff are trained and carry at least a Water Distribution Manager Level II certification, with many others having additional training specific to the operation a water system.

Their work includes inspecting, maintaining and exercising the hydrants and associated valves to make sure they operate as expected. Worn parts are replaced, hydrants are washed, and may also be painted with different colored bonnets to reflect the amount of fire flow available. In some areas, crews may also be seen flushing hydrants to help with overall system water quality.



Ridgecrest Pressure Reducing Valves, Final Phase

Back in 2013, we began replacing the Pressure Reducing Valves (PRVs) throughout the Ridgecrest neighborhood, in anticipation of the completion of our new North City Pump Station. Once the new Pump Station comes online, water pressure within the Ridgecrest area will increase, creating a new pressure zone.

As a result, approximately 169 water services or residences require the installation of a PRV to prevent their water pressure from increasing beyond Uniform Plumbing Code maximums.

Phase 2 of NE 178th Street Roadway Improvements

Located near Brookside Elementary School in Lake Forest Park, this project entails a cost-sharing partnership between North City Water District and the City of Lake Forest Park.



The District's portion of work entails relocating the water main and several services to allow for the installation of a new guard rail piles and a more fish-friendly culvert under NE 178th Street for McAleer Creek. The City's portion of work entails safety improvements along the same roadways, including permeable cement concrete sidewalks, a new bicycle lane, pedestrian-activated crosswalk signals, and the McAleer Creek culvert.

By coordinating both the timing and cost of the project, the residents along this street will only have to be impacted by one construction effort, and the overall cost will be significantly less.

North City Pump Station

As detailed in previous newsletters, this project is underway: we are currently completing the underground work prior to starting the construction of the actual pump station, all of which is scheduled to be complete in June of 2016.

If you have questions about these or any other projects, feel free to contact us at 206.362.8100.