

Conserving Water with Local and Regional Programs

During 2014, North City Water District purchased 635 million gallons of water, with an unaccounted water rate of 9.0% throughout our distribution system.

As one of a group of 18 utilities participating in Seattle Public Utilities' Saving Water Partnership (SWP), North City Water District has been working to reduce per capita water use from 2013 through 2018 (despite forecasted population growth) so that the total average annual retail water use by all of the members of the Saving Water Partnership is less than 105 MGD.

We are pleased to report that SWP Members met this goal in 2014 by using only 93.8 mgd, due in no small part to our customers' participation in the following events and programs:

- 4 classroom presentations about water;
- 11 toilets replaced by one of our multi-family customers;
- 14 households within our district boundaries that took advantage of the single family toilet rebate program;
- Nearly 50 people learning water-wise gardening tips at our Savvy Gardener classes (held in Fall and Spring);
- Over 300 people visiting our Water Education Booth at Shoreline Science (STEM) Festival, YMCA's Healthy Kids Day, the Chamber of Commerce Business Fair, North City Jazz Walk, and the Celebrate Shoreline Festival.



Here's How You Can Conserve:

\$75 Rebate for Premium WaterSense Toilets



Thinking about replacing your toilet? Here's a great excuse: get a \$75 rebate from the Saving Water Partnership when you purchase a Premium WaterSense toilet.

These toilets use 1.06 gallons per flush (or less) compared to the 3.5 gallons (or more) used by toilets installed prior to 1994. That adds up to 20% less water usage! Learn all about it here:

<http://www.savingwater.org/Rebates/index.htm>

Let Us Know What You Think!

Take the Water Conservation Survey on the Saving Water Partnership website and enter to win a free home water and energy-saving kit!

Go to:
www.savingwater.org



Learn More About Water Quality

We at North City Water District encourage public interest and participation in the decisions that affect our drinking water. If you would like to learn more about our water, have questions about its quality, or would like to know what you can do to help keep our water supply clean, safe and abundant, please don't hesitate to contact us at 206.362.8100, or visit one of our Board of Commissioners meetings (every first and third Tuesday of each month at 3:00 pm) at our District office, or you can contact any one of the following organizations:

Seattle Public Utilities
Phone: 206.634.3000
Website: http://www.seattle.gov/util/MyServices/Water/Water_Quality/index.htm

United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Phone: 1.800.426.4791
Website: <http://www.epa.gov/safewater>

Washington State Department of Health (DOH):
Phone: 1.800.521.0323
Website: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/>

Safe Drinking Water Hotline: 1.800.426.4791

Protecting Your Freedom to Vote for a Utility Provider

In 1990, the State of Washington adopted the Growth Management Act to help our state plan for future growth, with a focus on urban and suburban areas.

One component of this Act was "Encouraging the involvement of citizens in the planning process" (RCW 36.70A.030). Another component stated that, "In general, cities are [the units of local government] most appropriate to provide urban governmental services" (RCW 36.70A.110).

Stuck in the middle of these two components was another state law that allowed a city to abolish and take over one type of public utility district—a water/sewer district—**without the citizens having the right to vote on that action** (RCW 35.13A).

According to this law, all a City had to do to take over a water or sewer district was to get a majority vote by their City's Council. This takeover process was called an "assumption."

Why Only Water/Sewer District Assumptions?

Water/sewer districts are the only two utilities on which a City can impose additional taxes—**without any limit, without restrictions on how the funds are repurposed for other uses, and without a vote of the citizens**—once a City assumption has taken place.

In essence, water/sewer districts represent a potential income stream to Cities, post-assumption.



Is there a statutory limit on the amount of the utility tax that a city can impose on its own water or sewer utility?

Reviewed: 12/13

There is no statutory limit on utility tax rates that a city can impose on its own water and sewer utility, which is why you will see some of these tax rates at over 20 percent. The limit in RCW 35.21.870 of six percent on electricity, telephone, natural gas, or steam energy businesses does not apply to water and sewer utilities. So, the political arena imposes the only limitation on this utility tax.

Cities Versus Citizens' Right to Vote

Beginning in 1890, Special Purpose Districts were **established by a vote of the citizens** to provide a specific, special service—ranging from Public Utility Districts, to Fire and School Districts. Special Purpose Districts offer maximum focus with minimal

overhead, thus they continue to be an effective way of managing community services, as evidenced by the City of Shoreline's recent establishment of the Transportation Benefit District.

Because these Districts were put into place by a citizen vote, it seemed only natural that citizens should be able to vote on whether or not a City could take over something the citizens created.

We at North City Water District felt similarly. As a Special Purpose District, we take great pride in our focus on your water system, and the fact that we dedicate **100% of your dollars back into your water system**. We saw no significant benefit to a City-owned water or sewer district, particularly in light of the City's ability to impose an additional tax on water or sewer bills—a tax that could be raised as high and as often as a City deemed necessary, and used for whatever project the City deemed appropriate (i.e., not required to be invested back into the water system)—in yet another process for which citizens would be denied a vote.

Legislators Restore Citizens' Voice

32nd Legislative District Senator Chase couldn't have agreed more. She introduced Senate Bill 5048 during the recent legislative session to restore the citizens' right to vote about a Water/Sewer District assumption. A companion bill was introduced in the House by Representative Dean Takko (House Bill 1417) at the same time.

After months of review and discussion, Governor Jay Inslee signed Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 5048 into law on Wednesday May 6, 2015. When this law goes into effect in July, it will permit a referendum that enables voters of a Special Purpose District to file a qualifying petition, when a City is attempting to take over (do an assumption of) their District.

The North City Waves Newsletter is brought to you by North City Water District, and its Board of Commissioners: Charlotte Haines (President), Ron Ricker (Vice President), and Larry Schoonmaker (Secretary). Feel free to contact us at PO Box 55367, or 1519 NE 177th Street, Shoreline, WA 98155. 206.362.8100 • www.northcitywater.org



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NORTH CITY Water District

Formerly Shoreline Water District

2014 ANNUAL REPORT of DRINKING WATER QUALITY

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

Issue 2: April • May • June 2015

From Our Board...

by Charlotte Haines, President

Last month, our article entitled "Will We Have a Water Shortage This Summer?" indicated a positive outlook for our area's water supply—thanks to the proactive efforts of Seattle Public Utilities, who began preparing for drought conditions early this year by filling both the reservoirs in the Tolt and Cedar River. Yet a recent announcement by Governor Inslee has declared a statewide drought. **Why has the story changed?** The primary reason behind the recent drought announcement is the impact that this past winter's low snow pack will have on our state's overall economy. **What does this mean for our ratepayers?** We do not anticipate any lack of water supply locally. Levels are adequate for summer residential use, public recreation, and the operation of Ballard Locks, as well as safe passage for fish, fisheries, navigation, and salinity control. **What can you do to help the rest of the state?** Unfortunately, saving water in our area won't help our neighbors in drought-stricken parts of the state. However we encourage all of our ratepayers to continue to use water wisely, and learn as much as possible about ways to conserve through our youth programs, community education booths, and free classes.



Commissioner Schoonmaker at the Shoreline STEM Festival



Rate Reduction Available for Eligible 150 Low Income Persons
Call us or visit www.northcitywater.com

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Water District



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



Annual Water Quality Report for 2014

North City Water District continues to maintain state and federal water quality guidelines that are significantly below EPA maximum levels.

All About Your Water

Who: Your drinking water is regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), who sets drinking water quality standards, establishes testing methods and monitoring requirements for water utilities, sets maximum levels for water contaminants, and requires utilities to give public notice whenever a violation occurs. Your drinking water is tested frequently both by North City Water District and Seattle Public Utilities, our supplier, to ensure that high quality water is delivered to your home.

What: Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Hotline 800.426.4791.

When: Your water is continuously monitored 365 days a year.

Where: Your water comes from both the Tolt and Cedar River Watersheds.

How: Last year your drinking water was tested for over 200 compounds and additional contaminates. Tests are done before and after treatment and while your water is in the distribution system. The Tables presented on the following page list all of the contaminants detected in the most recent required water testing and compare them to the limits and goals set by the EPA and the State of Washington to ensure your tap water is safe. Not shown are more than 200 additional contaminants that were tested for, but not detected, in your drinking water. If you would like to see a list of these other compounds or if you have other water quality questions, do not hesitate to contact us. Please note: asbestos monitoring is not required for our District because all the asbestos pipe in our distribution system was replaced prior to 1991.

The Best News: Your water falls safely within state and federal guidelines for each and every contaminant, significantly below the EPA's levels.

Lead and Copper Monitoring Results

Our regional water supply does not contain lead or copper. However it is possible that lead levels at your home may be higher than at other homes in the community as a result of materials used in your home's plumbing.

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. North City Water District is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components.

When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available by calling the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1.800.426.4791, or visit their website at: www.epa.gov/safewater/lead

People With Special Concerns

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Water Drinking Hotline 1.800.426.4791.

If you would like to learn more about your water, or if you have questions about its quality, please don't hesitate to contact North City Water District at (206) 362-8100.

Table 1: Water Quality Testing Results for 2014

Compounds that were not detected in 2014 are not included in these charts.

Types of Detected Compounds	Units	Primary Source	Ideal Goal (MCLG)	Max. Allowed (MCL)	Levels in the Cedar River Watershed Average	Levels in the Cedar River Watershed Range	Levels in the Tolt Watershed Average	Levels in the Tolt Watershed Range	Meets EPA Stds.?
RAW WATER									
Total Organic Carbon	ppm	Naturally present in the environment	NA	TT	0.9	0.4 to 1.9	1.3	1.1 to 1.7	Yes
Cryptosporidium*	#/100L	Naturally present in the environment	NA	NA	ND	ND	ND	ND	Yes
FINISHED WATER SOURCE									
Turbidity	NTU	Soil runoff	NA	TT	0.4	0.2 to 1.6	0.07	0.05 to 0.28	Yes
Barium	ppb	Erosion of natural deposits	2000	2000	1.4	(one sample)	1.2	(one sample)	Yes
Bromate	ppb	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection	0	10	ND	ND	0.2	ND to 1.5	Yes
Fluoride	ppm	Water additive to promote strong teeth	4	4	0.8	0.7 to 0.8	0.8	0.7 to 0.9	Yes
SPECIFIC SAMPLES FROM NORTH CITY WATER DISTRICT'S DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM									
Total Trihalomethanes	ppb	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection	NA	80	Average: 35 Range: 22 to 46				Yes
Haloacetic Acids (5)	ppb	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection	NA	60	Average: 40 Range: 20 to 44				Yes
Chlorine	ppm	Water additive to control microbes	MRDLG =4	MRDL =4	Average: 0.69 Range: 0 to 1.2				Yes

*Cryptosporidium was not detected in any samples from the Cedar or Tolt (3 samples each supply)

Table 2: Lead and Copper Monitoring Results for the Tolt Watershed in 2014

None of the samples for the Cedar River Watershed are in North City Water District's area.

Lead and Copper Sampling Program and Units	Ideal Goal MCLG	Action Level¹	Results of 2014 Samplings²	# Homes Exceeding Action Level	Typical Sources in Drinking Water
Lead, ppb	0	15	2.9	0 of 50	Corrosion of household plumbing systems. Samples collected in homes within the Tolt water service area.
Copper, ppm	1.3	1.3	0.16	0 of 50	

¹ The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

² 90th percentile: 90 percent of the samples were less than the values shown.

Table Definitions

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)

The highest level of a contaminant allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG)

The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRGL)

The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG)

The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health.

Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU)

Turbidity is a measure of how clear the water looks. The turbidity MCL that applied to the Cedar supply in 2014 is 5 NTU; the Tolt was 0.3 NTU for at least 95% of the samples in a month.

Treatment Technique (TT)

A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

EPA

United States Environmental Protection Agency

ppm:

Parts per million.

ppb:

Parts per billion.

NA:

Not applicable.

ND:

Not detected.

Components of Your Water System

What sort of water system does your bi-monthly water payment provide to you? Are all water systems created equal?

As a member of the American Water Works Association, we often see comparisons between water systems. Variables such as the number of customers, the source(s) of water, the topography of the service area, not to mention the variety of approaches to operating a water system—all add up to different types and numbers of components from system to system. In the case of a water system, one size definitely does not fit all.

To meet the needs of our ratepayers, our system includes the following components that represent the “backbone” of our system:



Water Source

North City Water District has two sources, the Cedar River and the Tolt River (shown at left), made available through our contract with Seattle Public Utilities (who also handles water treatment).

Transmission and Distribution

Water is brought from the source through regional transmission mains (pipes), where it enters the North City Water District system via multiple supply stations. Water is then transmitted throughout our water system using smaller distribution mains (pipes), which function much like the arteries of the human body, bringing the water directly to each of the neighborhoods in our service area. We have 92 miles of pipe with almost all of our pipes installed since the 1960s.



Storage

A water system must have four types of storage for operational purposes, in order to ensure everyone has appropriate water pressure, reliable back-up storage in case one of the supply sources fails, and for firefighting purposes. These four storage types are included in our two reservoirs—totalling 5.7 million gallons of storage for our water system—both of which function much like the multiple chambers in a heart to support the overall system.

Pump Stations

As we described in our last newsletter, a pump station is similar to the human heart, helping move water through the system while maintaining optimum water pressure. Just like our heart rate increases during exercise to support the added demand on our body, the same is true of a pump station. Our new station will have three series of pumps to accommodate three levels: 1) normal operations, 2) warm summer days when water use is higher, and 3) in the event of a fire.



Support Components

Service lines, valves, meters, generators, computerized telemetry monitoring, and even fire hydrants—each of these components completes the water system to ensure safe, reliable drinking water is available to your house every day.

As a Special Purpose District focused on nothing but water, 365 days a year, we are continually striving to make sure your water system functions like the best “circulatory system” possible.

