

Do You Have a Secret Leak?

What’s the number one cause of a water leak, and higher-than-normal water bills? ***Your toilet.***

Think it’s not happening to you, because your bathroom floors are dry? ***Toilets typically leak on the inside.***

That’s right, your toilet may be leaking right under your very nose. And often you have no idea, because the excess water drains internally through the toilet’s normal processes.

You could be losing hundreds of gallons of water every month and have no idea.

Symptoms of a Leaky toilet:

- You have to wiggle the flush handle to make your toilet stop running.
- You hear sounds coming from your toilet even when it’s not being used.
- You have to hold the flush handle down to get the tank to empty.
- You see water running over the top of the overflow tube inside the tank—this is a sign that the refill valve is leaking. If you are unsure, sprinkle talcum powder on top of the water in the tank, and you will be able to clearly see if any water is running over the top of the overflow.
- You can see water trickling down the inside of your toilet bowl long after it’s been flushed.
- Water is dripping out of the narrow refill tube into the overflow tube inside the tank.
- Your toilet runs for 15 seconds or so without you touching the flush handle.

What You Can Do to Fix it:

A dye test can indicate whether or not your toilet is leaking. Simply call us to receive free “Dye Tabs” and use them according to the instructions included in the package.

By placing dye tabs in the tank’s water and waiting the specified amount of time, you can see if any of the dyed water has made its way into the toilet bowl. If it has, your toilet is leaking. A properly operating toilet will store water in the tank indefinitely without any water running into the bowl.

If your toilet is leaking, you can obtain parts for most toilets from your local home repair warehouse... or consider replacing your toilet with one of the new WaterSense-labeled high-efficiency toilets (HET), which currently have a \$30 rebate available from Seattle Public Utilities (see the article on the inside of this newsletter).

Avoiding Frozen Pipes

From the Seattle Public Utilities website

Prepare Your Pipes

- Know where your water shut off valve is.
- Wrap water pipes located in exposed or unheated areas (attics, basements and garages) with tape and insulating materials from hardware stores as per manufacturers’ instructions.
- Drain and remove all outdoor hoses.
- Caulk around pipes where they enter the house.
- Close all foundation vents by sliding cut pieces of wood or styrofoam into the vent openings to minimize cold wind entering your house. (Reopen in the spring to prevent dry rot).
- If you have a separate shut-off valve for outside faucets, shut it off, then turn on all faucets to drain the water. If you don’t have a separate shut-off valve, wrap outside faucets / hose bibs with foam insulated covers (about \$3 each at hardware stores).
- Shut off and drain in-ground sprinkler systems according to manufacturer’s instructions.

When the Weather Drops below Freezing

- Protect indoor sink pipes that are against exterior walls by opening under-sink cabinet doors.
- During severe cold temperatures, allow one indoor faucet to slowly drip cold water. Select the faucet that is the farthest from your front door (occupied buildings only).
- Set your thermostat no lower than 55 degrees day or night.

If your pipes break or freeze, visit the SPU website and search for “frozen pipes” for thaw / repair tips: <http://www.seattle.gov/util/>

News From Our Utility Partner: Ronald Wastewater District



Shoreline Water District and Ronald Wastewater District have a lot in common. Both of us manage water — we’re in charge of supplying it, they’re in charge of receiving and processing it. This means both of us are regularly addressing all sorts of infrastructure issues, which we often coordinate together, in order to save on construction costs.

What you may not be aware of is that both of us are also considered a “special purpose district.” This means that neither of us is affiliated with, or managed by, the City of Shoreline. Instead, we are comprised of industry experts, all governed by publicly elected commissioners who hold routine meetings that are open to every citizen for participation and input in decision-making.

SHORELINE
Water District
Excellence in Water Quality for 80 Years

SHORELINE WAVES

Issue 1: January 2012

A newsletter for water-related issues and information

From Our President

by Ron Ricker

After a little hiatus, your Board of Commissioners decided to reinstate a quarterly newsletter, in order to keep our ratepayers more closely informed about current and upcoming news at Shoreline Water District. We’d like to begin with an exciting announcement: Diane Pottinger, P.E. has joined the staff as our new District Manager, replacing Stu Turner, who has retired but will remain on call as an Advisor. Stay tuned for an article about Diane in the next issue of this newsletter. Other exciting developments include a major upgrade to our largest pump station, in order to increase efficiency and save on maintenance costs. We are also looking at repairing existing problems at our main office and shop facilities, and are undergoing an analysis to determine what is needed with both facilities in order to comply with current code. We’re hoping to take advantage of the bid climate, which is at an all time low (the last 3 years of bids are nearly 40% less than estimates). In closing, we hope you will enjoy reading this newsletter and welcome you to contact us with your comments or questions at 206.362.8100. Happy 2012, everyone!



Shoreline Waves Newsletter ~ a publication by Shoreline Water District



Change Service Requested

PRSRT STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Shoreline, WA
Permit# 1352

SHORELINE

Water District

1519 NE 177th Street • PO Box 55367

Shoreline, Washington 98155-0367

(206) 362-8100

ACCOUNT NUMBER		CUSTOMER NAME	
012000 000		HANK MCSNEY	
SERVICE LOCATION			BILLING DATE
12901 NE 181 ST			09/15/11
FROM	SERVICE TO	DUE DATE	AMOUNT DUE
07/05/11	09/04/11	10/11/11	\$63.85

METER READING		CONSUMPTION	NO. OF	METER	TRANS DATE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
PREVIOUS	CURRENT	100 CU. FT.	DAYS				
07/02/11	1832	09/02/11	1842	10	47976676	07/15/11 PREVIOUS BALANCE	59.21
					08/09/11	PAYMENT	-59.21
						BALANCE FORWARD	0.00

Understanding the Water Rate Increases

After the news of a significant water rate increase from Seattle Public Utilities, Shoreline Water District took a long, hard look at the way rates are structured. Clearly it was time for a change...

As you know, Shoreline Water District purchases all of our water at a wholesale rate from the City of Seattle / Seattle Public Utilities (SPU). When SPU announced a significant rate increase, we recognized the impact this new rate could have for our ratepayers, particularly in light of this economy. Thus our Board of Commissioners and staff spent several months analyzing operations and rates to see if there was a way to mitigate the increased costs.

As per the letter we sent to each one of you in December, we have found a solution that reduces the impact on the average residential water customer. Here are some of the questions we’ve answered recently to help our customers better understand this change:

How Were Shoreline Water District’s Rates Calculated Before?

For decades, almost every water utility has used the size of the water meter as the basis for calculating rates. However, the size of a water meter has little relationship to water requirements, particularly when a building catches fire.

Not only does it typically take far less water to extinguish a home fire versus a commercial facility fire, but a commercial facility is required by the Universal Fire Code to have more available fire protection. That requirement translates into the need for larger “water infrastructure” (pipe capacity, available water volume, and available water pressure) in case of a fire.

Continuing to charge all customers based on the size of their water meter was unfairly passing along the cost of commercial buildings’ water infrastructure to residential water customers.

How Are The Rates Being Calculated Now?

While you will see a change in the water rates for all customers, the biggest change is in the way the water rates are calculated, based on what type of water customer you are—residential, commercial, municipal, or wholesale.

The calculation is now based on the actual square footage of a building, translated into an “ERU,” or Equivalent Residential Unit.” One ERU equals 840 square feet.

Going forward, all commercial, municipal and wholesale customers’ rates will be calculated based on their actual square footage, translated into ERUs. A 2,500 square foot commercial facility counts as 3 ERUs.

Residential customers are calculated differently: a single family residence that is less than 5,000 square feet is always 1 ERU.

Why Do Commercial, Municipal and Wholesale Customers Get a Lower Rate?

Because ERUs are applied differently to commercial, municipal, and wholesale customers. Unlike residential customers, commercial, municipal and whole customers’ actual square footage is now included in the way their rates are applied, based on their ERUs. This reflects their greater impact on the water system in terms of available fire protection.

Where Did Shoreline Water District Come Up with the Idea for Using ERUs?

The City of Shoreline has historically had 2.5 persons per household:

http://cosweb.ci.shoreline.wa.us/uploads/attachments/Comp_SA%20H.pdf

However, this average is expected to decrease slightly over time, so for planning purposes, we used 2.4 persons per household in our analysis.

In 2007, it was determined that The City of Shoreline used an average of 350 square feet per employee for commercial space, as per the 2007 Buildable Lands Study (page VII-15):

http://your.kingcounty.gov/budget/buildland/BLR_Ch7_SeaShore.pdf

Multiplying the proposed population density (2.4 persons or employee per unit) by the proposed square foot per employee estimate (350 square feet/employee) equals 840 square feet/unit.

continued on the following page >

Understanding the Rate Increase, continued

Does the Rate Increase Include Anything Else Besides Water?

The majority of this increase will pay the increased cost of water supplied by Seattle Public Utilities. However a small portion (approximately 3-4%) will be used to address critical capital improvement projects in Shoreline Water District.

These projects include the new North City pump station, painting and repairs to the North City water reservoir, and necessary upgrades to our main office building and maintenance facility to replace a leaking roof, improve energy efficiency with better windows and insulation, add a public bathroom, and create an actual meeting room (meetings have all been conducted in the lobby of our building for the past 40+ years).

We believe that addressing these capital improvement projects immediately is in our ratepayer’s best interest, due to the current low construction costs and interest rates. Doing it now helps us get the most value for our rate payers’ dollars, helps create jobs for our community, and extends the operational life cycle of our facilities and infrastructure well into the future. (Note: the new trucks you’ve see us driving are already paid for. Our existing fleet was over 20 years old, and had reached the end of its reliability and life cycle.)

Will My Billing Due Date Change?

No. Billings will still be prepared on or about the 15th of the month and are still due on or about the 10th of the following month.

Summary

The new method of calculating rates based on the type of ratepayer and their associated ERUs will enable Shoreline Water District to absorb the new higher cost of water from Seattle Public Utilities, and address critical infrastructure improvements, all with very little impact to our residential customers, and minimal impact to our commercial, municipal and wholesale customers. We warmly welcome you to contact us at (206) 362-8100 should you have any additional concerns or questions.

Need a New Toilet? Save Money and Water with These Great Replacement Rebates!

Toilets are the main source of water use in the home, accounting for nearly 30% of residential indoor water use. By replacing your old toilet with an efficient WaterSense-labeled model, you can cut your utility bill by an estimated \$260 a year,* reduce water waste, and save money too.

Seattle Public Utilities is now offering a \$30 rebate when you purchase a new WaterSense-labeled high-efficiency toilet (HET). Or if you are a low-income homeowner, you can get a water saving toilet for free! These toilets use less than 1.28 gallons per flush — compared to the 3.5 gallons per flush (or more) used by toilets installed prior to 1994.

Here’s how to take advantage of the rebate:

1. You must be a single-family resident (or duplex) with a separate utility bill.
2. You must purchase a WaterSense eligible toilet. If you have any doubt , visit the EPA’s WaterSense product search database before purchasing your toilet:
http://www.epa.gov/watersense/product_search.html
3. You must complete, sign, and submit the Rebate Application form, along with your receipt and a copy of your water bill, to Seattle Public Utilities. For more information, give SPU a call at (206) 733-9137 or visit their website at:

http://www.seattle.gov/util/Services/Water/Reduce_Water_Use/Rebates/index.htm

**Based on a family of four living in a single-family home in Seattle.*

Project Spotlight: Supply Station #4

The new Supply Station #4 off the Cedar River source includes a vault with control valves and telemetry equipment, as well as 80 feet of 8” Ductile Iron Water Main, and 350’ of 12” Ductile Iron Water Main. This station will provide an alternate source of water for Shoreline Water District in zones 615, 590, 502 and 400.

