



Thurston PUD Newsletter

We are committed to providing safe, reliable, affordable, and sustainable water services to our customers.

June 2023

Leadership Message

Help Our Crew by Keeping Your Water Meter Accessible

By: Jim Campbell, Director of Field Operations

One of the requirements of water service is keeping the area around your water meter clear at all times. It's the time of year when grass and plants are growing fast, so please be sure to include any right-of-way areas on your property in your plans for outdoor/yard maintenance. Thurston PUD requires clear access and entry to our facilities and equipment at all reasonable times so we may:

- Install, inspect, maintain, or remove equipment or plumbing.
- Read, connect, disconnect, or inspect metering devices.
- Inspect customer owned cross-connection control devices.
- Inspect all customer water facilities to ensure there are no cross-connections.



Jim Campbell,
Director of Field
Operations

Water meters are most often located in front of customer houses or businesses, near the street or sidewalk, and inside a meter box that is usually level to the ground. If you are not sure where your meter is on your property, please call our Customer Service Team; our representatives may be able to provide your meter's location over the phone.

If our Meter Readers come across an obstructed meter, they will notify our Customer Service Team who follows Thurston PUD's policy to notify the customer.

- **First Occurrence.** We will mail a courtesy letter informing the customer of the obstruction and requesting it be cleared.
- **Second Occurrence.** We will mail a second obstruction letter requesting the obstruction be cleared . A \$50.00 non-compliance fee for the second occurrence may be billed to the customer's account.
- **Third Occurrence.** We will mail a third obstruction letter requesting the obstruction be cleared. A \$110.00 non-compliance fee for the third occurrence may be billed to the customer's account.
- **Fourth Occurrence.** The account will be escalated to PUD management, and the customer's water service may be subject to disconnection.

Our recommendations for keeping your meter clear include keeping grass and other vegetation trimmed to the edge of the meter box, removing all branches hanging lower than six feet over the box, keeping everything off the meter box (including trash cans and recycling bins). Remember: parked vehicles, overgrown plants, yard debris, and construction materials prevent meter readers from accessing your meter.

Thurston PUD Commissioners

District 1

Linda Oosterman

District 2

Russell E. Olsen

District 3

Chris Stearns

In This Issue

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The PUD offices will be closed for Independence Day, July 4, 2023.



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Call 811 Before You Dig

The Spring and Summer seasons bring better weather and outdoor projects. If you have a project you will have to dig for, remember to call 811 first to have the underground utility lines located in the area of your dig site. By calling in a locate request and having underground utility lines located, you can avoid hitting these lines and causing damage for which you may be monetarily responsible. **Calling 811 two business days before you begin digging will alert utilities to come out and mark their buried lines from the street to your house for FREE!**



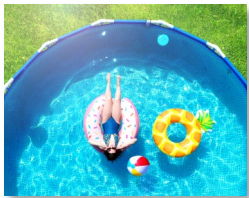
- **What is 811?** 811 is the national call-before-you-dig phone number. Anyone who plans to dig should call 811 or go to www.washington811.com before digging to request that the approximate location of buried utilities be marked with paint or flags so that you don't unintentionally dig into an underground utility line.
- **When do you call 811?** You should call 811 or make a request on www.washington811.com two business days before you begin any digging, including common projects like planting trees and shrubs or installing fences and mailboxes.
- **What info do you need before calling 811?** You will need to know the address of where you plan to dig, including the county and nearest cross street, as well as the type of project you are completing and the exact area on the property where you're planning to dig. Whether you call 811 or make your request online, you'll need the same info.
- **After you call 811, what do you do?** You need to wait two days to allow utilities to respond to your request and ensure that all utilities have time to respond to your request before breaking ground. Once all utilities have marked their buried lines, you should dig carefully around any utility marks and consider relocating projects that are close to buried utilities.

Something to be aware of is many buried utility lines on your property belong to you (like the water line leading from your water meter to your home). Locating buried utility lines that you own must be performed by a private company. You can learn more at www.digsafewa.com.

Summer Time Means Pool Time!

We all enjoy lounging in a pool during periods of hot weather, even our pets! If you have a pool that you would like to fill, please keep a few things in mind:

- For your water system, peak demand times may vary, but customers usually use the most water in the morning (when getting ready for work) and in the evening (when returning from work). We recommend filling your pool **outside** of these peak times.
- It may take several hours to fill a pool. For reference, a 5,000-gallon pool being filled with a 1/2-inch garden hose takes approximately nine (9) hours to fill.
- Our consumption rates are billed on a tiered rate structure, charged per 100 cubic feet. One (1) cubic foot is equivalent to 7.48 gallons. When calculating how much your water bill will increase, you will need to divide the total gallon size of your pool by 7.48 to calculate the cubic foot amount. Once you have the cubic foot amount, you can compare it to the rates on our website at www.thurstonpud.org/our-rates.htm under Adopted 2023 Rates, Fees, Charges, and Surcharges. Since the PUD bills on a tiered rate structure, the extra usage may be billed at a higher rate depending on how much water your household uses in addition to filling your pool.



Based on the information above, we suggest filling your pool in increments over a few days during off-peak demand times. This will help prevent possible water outages if your system's well cannot keep up with demand; this could also help prevent certain water quality issues caused by an overworked system. If you have any questions, please contact us by telephone at (360) 357-8783 or by email at PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org.

National Safety Month—Tips for Hot Weather



The risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke increase with rising outdoor temperatures. When temperatures rise to extreme highs, reduce your risk by taking the following precautions.

- Stay indoors and in an air-conditioned space as much as possible.
- Drink plenty of fluids but avoid beverages that contain alcohol, caffeine, or a lot of sugar.
- Never leave any person or pet in a parked vehicle.
- Ensure that pets have plenty of water.
- Cover windows that receive morning or afternoon sun.

If you go outside:

- Plan strenuous outdoor activities for early or late in the day when temperatures are cooler.
- Take frequent breaks when working outdoors.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat, sunscreen and light-colored, loose-fitting clothes.
- At the first signs of heat illness (dizziness, nausea, headaches, muscle cramps), move to a cooler location, rest for a few minutes, and slowly drink a cool beverage. **Seek immediate medical attention if you do not feel better.**
- Avoid sunburn by using a sunscreen lotion with a high SPF (sun protection factor) rating and reapply throughout the day as recommended.
- Avoid extreme temperature changes (like taking a cool shower after coming in from hot temperatures) as this can result in hypothermia, particularly for elderly or very young people.

2023 Conservation Program

Each year, Thurston PUD promotes water conservation inside and outside customer homes by offering tools, resources, and rebates. This year, the PUD is offering the following:

- ◆ **Residential Toilet Rebate.** A \$50.00 rebate is offered for qualifying high efficiency residential toilet replacements. Toilet fixtures are required to be purchased in 2023 and must include the WaterSense logo (right). Please review all eligibility criteria by clicking on the “Residential Toilet Rebate” link at www.thurstonpud.org/water-systems.htm.
- ◆ **Advanced Meter Program.** Advanced, cellular meters are offered to customers that want direct access to their water consumption data. Customers are billed \$50.00 for the meter itself (valued at \$270), then an additional \$3.00 per month for the ongoing cost of the app. Customers will gain access to an online dashboard, accessible by computer or on a mobile device, to view consumption, leak alerts, or tips on conserving water.
- ◆ **Shower Timers and Garden Timers.** These devices are offered to help customers keep track of their water usage and conserve. Customers may visit our office or request delivery to their home for these timers. Request forms for these devices can be found on the PUD’s website at www.thurstonpud.org/water-systems.htm.
- ◆ **Soil Moisture Meters.** This device is helpful to determine how much water to apply to avoid overwatering during the summer months. This device is free and limited to one per household. Customers may visit our office or request delivery to their home for these timers. A request form for this device can be found on the PUD’s website.



For more information on the program options listed above or to apply for any of these options, please visit the Conservation Program section on the PUD’s website at www.thurstonpud.org/water-systems.htm. You may also contact our Customer Service Team by email at PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org, by phone at (360) 357-8783, or toll-free at (866) 357-8783.

There are a limited number of rebates, meters, water timers, and soil moisture meters available. These are offered on a first-come, first-served basis, so be sure to contact us soon!

Cross-Connection Control Plan—Current Efforts

Our Field Operations and Planning and Compliance Teams work at completing water system requirements to ensure your drinking water is safe and reliable. One requirement we are currently working on is the PUD’s **Cross-Connection Control Plan**, which was developed in compliance with Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 246-290-490, to prevent contamination of our customers’ drinking water.



Customers have begun receiving Cross-Connection Control Questionnaires in the mail from us with a request to complete the form and return it to our office. We recently sent out reminder notices for customers that have not yet submitted the Cross-Connection Control Questionnaires. These forms are required by law, and our staff will be following up with calls, text reminders, and door hangers to obtain these forms. **If you have received a reminder and have not yet submitted your form, please do so as soon as possible.** Customers that do not submit their form may be subject to water service disconnection.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Planning and Compliance Team at (866) 357-8783 Option 3, or by email at PUDPlanning@ThurstonPUD.org.

Consumer Confidence Reports (CCRs) and Water Use Efficiency (WUEs) Reports

To meet federal and state requirements, Thurston PUD generates Consumer Confidence Reports (CCRs) and Water Use Efficiency (WUE) Reports for all PUD-owned Group A water systems. These reports are available by July 1st every year. **If you are a Group A water system customer, the link to your water system’s CCR and WUE is listed as a special message on the billing statement included with this newsletter.** You can also find these reports listed on our website at www.thurstonpud.org/water-systems.htm, listed under Water Quality Reports. Here are some frequently asked questions we routinely receive about these reports:

- **What’s the difference between Group A and Group B water systems?** Group A water systems serve 15 or more connections or 25 or more people. Group B water systems serve less than 15 connections or less than 25 people.
- **How do I know which type of system I belong to?** If you are a Group A water system customer, a URL link will be listed in the special message portion of your billing statement included with this newsletter. You can also call or email our Customer Service Team to inquire about your water system name and type.
- **I’m a Group B water system customer. Why don’t you generate reports for my water system?** Requirements for Group B water systems are different than Group A water systems. While Group A water system reporting is mandated at federal and state levels, the PUD works closely with County Health Departments on requirements for Group B water systems.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Customer Service Team at (360) 357-8783 or PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org.

Report Type	Consumer Confidence Reports (CCR)	Water Use Efficiency Reports (WUE)
Purpose	CCRs contain details about your water source, explanation of contaminants and their presence in your drinking water, and other information about the PUD and your water system. <i>These reports are also referred to as annual water quality reports or drinking water quality reports.</i>	WUEs contain details on the amount of water produced and consumed for the year, the system’s leak loss percentage and its conservation goals. WUE requirements help ensure reliable long-term water supply and help reduce energy use which leads to cost savings.
Required By	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Consumer Confidence Report Rule	Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 246-290