



Public Utility District No. 1
of Thurston County

February 2012 Newsletter



Commissioner's Corner

By Paul Pickett

Commissioner, District 1

Your Thurston PUD is governed by a Board of Commissioners. Each Commissioner is elected for six years. The terms of Commissioners are staggered so one Commissioner is elected every two years on an even-year election.

This year my position is up for election. I serve in the First District, which runs north to south in the center of Thurston County. It has the same boundaries as the County Commissioner position held by Cathy Wolfe and the Port Commissioner position held by George Barner. (You can view a pdf map of the District Boundaries at: <http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/auditor/Elections/Redistricting/layers/final.pdf>)

The PUD Commissioner must have permanent residence within his or her district. If there are more than two candidates, a primary is held just for voters in the District. The two candidates with the most votes, or the one or two candidates if that's all who filed, will be on the general election ballot in November. The winner begins a new term in January 2013.

After a lot of thought and discussion with my family, I've reached a difficult decision: I will not run for re-election in 2012 as Thurston Public Utility District Commissioner.

Eleven years ago Thurston PUD had one water system and only contract employees. I set out to help it grow into a strong viable water utility that can serve the citizens of our county by solving water supply problems and providing clean, affordable, and dependable drinking water. I have succeeded wildly in reaching that goal. It is difficult to move on, but the time is right for me personally.

I encourage the citizens of Thurston County to select a new Commissioner who will work for their best interests and maintain a strong and effective PUD. Filing week for the position is in May. If you have any questions about the position, please don't hesitate to contact me.



We're on the Web:

Did you know that you can access your Thurston PUD water account at our website? You can look at your bill, water usage, account information and more? You can also pay your bill online. Our website is:

www.thurstonpud.com

Please call the office if you have any questions or are having trouble accessing our website.

Featured Employee: Cathy Skiles



Cathy Skiles is our lead customer service representative. She has been with the PUD since July 2005 bringing her vast experience gained in working in the water industry since 1982. Cathy enjoys spending time with her husband Steve, their two cocker spaniels and gardening.

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January Snowstorm Update

Here's some information on our water systems that were affected from the snow storm that hit us in January:

- The Covington water system had a broken pipe at the well head; a tree limb fell on it. The PUD was able to fix this within hours of the power returning to the system.
- The 366th water system had a tree limb fall on a power line causing a water outage. The PUD was able to fix this before the power was restored to the system.
- Cedarwood (which is a managed system) had a tree root break a service line that caused a water outage. The PUD was able to fix this leak within hours of it being reported .



There was a lot of debris left from the storm and we are working to get this cleaned up. We'll also be assessing each site for limb removal in the future.

How to Acquire Emergency Generators

After the last storm, PUD staff received several inquiries about how to get back-up generators to run the water system when power is out. If you are interested in getting back-up generator support for your water system the facts and process are outlined below.

1. If a supermajority (65%) of your water system's homeowners are willing to pay a surcharge for a generator, the PUD will engineer, purchase, and install a generator for you. A mail-in ballot will be required and a public meeting will be set for the Commissioners to take comments on generators for your water system. If a surcharge is authorized by the Commissioners, it will apply to all customers on your water system.
2. The generator will have an automatic turn-on switch and will have a fuel supply to last for several days.
3. In some systems, dependent on the septic system installed, homeowners may need to provide power to their septic pumps to avoid backing-up of your septic system. Septic system generators would be an individual homeowner responsibility.

The cost of a generator will be dependent on the size needed to operate your water system. The surcharges will be on your monthly bill and will continue for several years until the costs are paid. The estimated cost of a generator system is between \$40,000 and \$80,000. Once the life cycle of a generator system was completed, replacement of the system would again need to be paid through surcharges. At this time, the costs of fuel, operations and maintenance would be covered as part of the overall rate structure.

If you are interested in having a generator installed on your system, we recommend you discuss it with your neighbors and if there is sufficient interest, call John Weidenfeller at 360-357-8783, toll free 866-357-8783, to start the process of conducting a vote of your water system's customers.

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