



Thurston PUD Newsletter

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

April 2024

Getting Ready for Better Weather? *(Continued on Page 2)*



Spring is here, which for many of our customers means increased water usage for various things. Perhaps your household participates in spring cleaning, or maybe you've been putting off a household project until the weather was nicer. Whatever the case may be, we want to provide you some tips on how to save water and money, while still getting the work done!

Keep an Eye on Your Bill

Spring can mean increased water usage for things like watering your lawns, filling up pools, garden irrigation, and letting the kids use the water slide. Don't let your water bill surprise you. You can check your monthly statement to monitor your water usage either by reviewing the graph on the left side or the timeframe of your most recent usage under "Meter Reading" on the right side. If you have any questions about your bill, please contact our Customer Service Team at (866) 357-8783 or by email at PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org.



Look Out for Leaky Toilets

Depending on the location, a leaky toilet can add a lot of money to your monthly bill over time or cause serious damage to your floors. For starters, feel the floor around the toilet. If it's wet, that could be a sign of a failed joint or broken seal. Whatever it is, it should be fixed before the ongoing wetness causes damage to the floor or the ceiling below. Then, lift the lid of your tank and put in three to four drops of food coloring. Wait 30 minutes and check the bowl. If the coloring has made its way into your bowl, you may have a leak. We also have free toilet tabs available at PUD Headquarters (1230 Ruddell Road SE, Lacey, WA 98503) that work just like the food coloring, stop by and pick one up!



Pool Time

Filling your pool over time instead of all at once can spread the cost over a couple water bills. Covering and uncovering your family pool may be a bit of work and even a bit challenging, but when you keep the water from evaporating, you reduce the amount of water needed to keep it fully functional and ready for those long, hot months of swimming and summer fun. We also recommend to fill your pool during off-peak times, or times when most people are not using water in your neighborhood. This helps to prevent stress on the water system that could cause low pressure due to the high demand.



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Thurston PUD Commissioners

District 1

Linda Oosterman

District 2

Russell E. Olsen

District 3

Chris Stearns

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Five Steps for Safe Digging—Call Before You Dig

Weather is getting warmer, so those outdoors projects may be calling your name! Before beginning any landscaping or other outdoor project that requires digging, call 811 to notify your local utilities and have underground pipes and wires marked. These five simple steps could save you thousands of dollars in repairs.



1. **Notify.** Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before you start your project.
2. **Wait.** Wait two to three days for a response to your request. Affected utilities will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.
3. **Confirm.** Confirm that all affected utilities have responded by comparing the markers to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.
4. **Respect.** Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. They are your guide for the duration of your project.
5. **Dig Carefully.** If you can't avoid digging near the markers, consider moving your project.

Visit www.washington811.com/home/ for more information.

Getting Ready for Better Weather? *(Continued from Page 1)*

Spring is the perfect time to prepare your yard for the sunshine and get it back in tip-top shape! One of the most common ways people revamp their yard is by simply watering it. If you are going to be watering your lawn this season, there are a couple things to keep in mind:



Form a Neighborhood Watering Schedule

Consider talking with neighbors and forming a neighborhood water schedule. By alternating water times, your water system can recharge and water pressure will be less impacted. Try to avoid watering during peak water usage times during the day or take your shower a little earlier or later than you normally would. You can also take a quick look around your neighborhood to see when most of your neighbors run their sprinklers and set yours to start a little later, preserving your water pressure. Some PUD customers use voluntary alternating water schedules with the people around their neighborhoods.

Prepare Your Sprinklers

To conserve water, make sure your sprinkler heads are in working order and directed on your lawn and not on sidewalks and streets. It's also important to monitor your system throughout the season to make sure individual sprinkler heads do not become clogged with obstructions like dirt, grass clippings or other debris. Should a sprinkler head be jammed with this material, it can cause an unnecessary buildup in water pressure that can burst the system's water line. Test your system as early as you can and monitor it throughout the season to make sure all heads are running as they are supposed to. It's also a good idea to check each head to make sure they haven't been damaged — perhaps as a result of a careless pass with the lawnmower. A damaged head does more than simply fail to water the area it is assigned; it can also be a water waster, as fluid is still assigned to the head by the system but isn't being dispensed as it should be. If you do find a damaged sprinkler head, have it replaced immediately.

We hope these tips can help you save some money on your water bills this spring and summer. Because conservation is very important to our organization, during spring and summer newsletters, we share conservation tips and each year we have new conservation goals that we aim to meet with your help.

Earth Day—April 22! (Continued on Page 4)

Spot The Difference

At first glance these two photos may look identical, but there are actually ten (10) differences between them! Can you spot all ten differences? You can find the answers on Page 4!



Celebrate the Earth, and Don't Forget to Include Water!

If you want to celebrate Earth Day this year, don't forget to include water. Because water is such a precious resource, we all need to do our part to save it. Here are some ways you can start saving water on Earth Day—and every day:

1. **Don't let the water run.** Water doesn't need to be flowing while you are brushing your teeth, so turn it off and save a couple of gallons! Also, be sure that the faucet is turned off tightly when you're done washing your hands as those drips can become wasted gallons.
2. **Reuse "leftover" water.** If you don't drink all the water in your glass, use it to water houseplants or flowers in the garden. Leftover ice cubes can also go right into small plant pots; as they slowly melt, they will give the roots just the water they need.
3. **Take a shower instead of a bath.** Taking a shower uses much less water than filling up a bathtub. A shower only uses 10 to 25 gallons, while a bath can use up to 70 gallons! If you do take a bath, be sure to plug the drain right away and adjust the temperature as you fill the tub. To save even more water, keep your shower under five minutes long—try timing yourself with a clock next time you hop in, we have free shower timers available at our office! Or, if you shorten your shower by just a minute, it will save two gallons of water.

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Utility Rate Advisory Committee (URAC) Recruitment!

Are you interested in Thurston PUD rate making? Then the URAC may be for you!

We are currently looking to recruit more Thurston PUD customers to join our Utility Rate Advisory Committee (URAC)! Established in 2018, this committee learns about the PUD and how rates, fees, and charges are set. The URAC then provides recommendations to PUD Management and Commissioners related to rates, rate structure, fees, and other charges made to water utility customers.



Meetings are hybrid, held in-person at Thurston PUD Headquarters and online using the Zoom video conferencing platform—virtual meeting attendance is allowed.

For more information regarding this group or to request an application, please contact John Weidenfeller at (360) 357-8783 ext. 107, or by email at jweidenfeller@thurstonpud.org.

Project Update—Tanglewilde Thompson Place 600 Mainline Replacement

Thurston PUD received a Public Works Construction Loan for \$10 million to begin Phase 1 of a water mainline replacement project at the Tanglewilde Thompson Place 600 water system, the District's largest water system, serving over 1,900 families, parks, schools, and businesses.

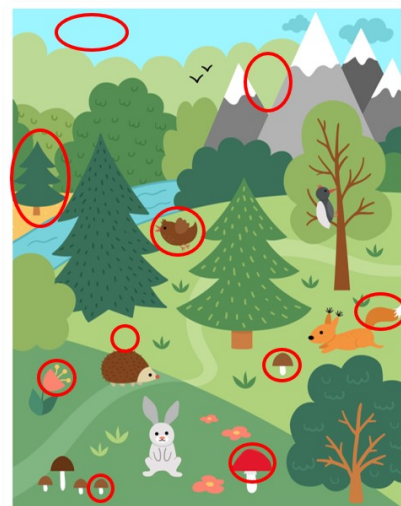
This multi-year project, one of the largest in Thurston PUD history, will include replacement of the existing, aging water mains, valves, hydrants, service connections, and service meters.

Staff is still in the planning phase of this project, but we will keep our customers informed along the way. Keep an eye out in future newsletters for updates on this project, and please contact our Customer Service Team at (866) 357-8783 with any questions or concerns.

Earth Day—April 22! Don't Forget to Include Water! *(Continued from Page 3)*

4. **Scrape don't rinse.** If you're cleaning up after meals, scrape food scraps into the trash before loading the dishwasher. Washing and rinsing dishes in the sink uses a lot more water than the dishwasher. Only run the washer when it's full.
5. **Don't use the toilet for trash.** Used paper towels and tissues belong in the garbage. When you use the toilet as a trash can, you waste anywhere from one gallon of water to three gallons or more!
6. **Who needs a hose?** An easy way to save water is to use a bucket and sponge when washing cars. Washing your car with a bucket and sponge instead of a hose saves a lot of water. A hose can waste six (6) gallons per minute if you leave it running, but using a bucket and sponge only uses a few gallons!

For more information, fun activities, and even a game you can play while you learn to save water, visit www.epa.gov/watersense/watersense-kids.



Answer Key to Earth Day -
Spot The Difference on Page 3