



# Thurston PUD Newsletter

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

July 2020

## Leadership Message

### Amid COVID-19 Concerns, Budget Process Shifted

By: Julie Parker, Assistant General Manager

For all of us, 2020 has been a historic and life-changing year. We have all been urged to transform our lives for the sake of health and safety. The PUD modified its operations using mandated guidelines starting with social distancing as the norm. Impending economic and overall uncertainty driven by the pandemic prompted the PUD Board of Commissioners to institute additional meetings in the form of Board workshops using the Zoom video conferencing application. These workshops keep the Board informed with the latest and rapidly changing information that impact the District.

Annual financial reports were completed and submitted to the State Auditor's Office, allowing our team's focus to shift towards the budget.

Due to the uncertainty of COVID-19 and the increased risk of infection that is expected this fall, the PUD Board of Commissioners asked that we begin preparing the budget in June in order to hold the 2021 Budget and Rates Public Hearing in July using video conferencing.

#### Goals of the 2021 Budget

- Use the current economic climate and present as a starting point for a baseline budget with only required increases to maintain current operations.
- Prepare options to the baseline budget focusing on essential functions.
- Spending that encourages greater efficiencies in the future.
- An option for studying new utility services such as Fiber-Optic/Broadband service to underserved areas.
- An option for funding projects to reduce energy use by the District, such as solar technology.
- Preparing facilities to withstand and equipping employees to respond to emergency events.

A Preliminary Budget was prepared and presented to the Board of Commissioners on June 23, 2020. A copy of the budget document is available on our website at [www.ThurstonPUD.org](http://www.ThurstonPUD.org).

We will host a public meeting on July 16, 2020 using Zoom video conferencing. Staff will deliver a presentation describing the 2021 Proposed Budget and Rates. On July 21, we will host a Public Hearing on Zoom to provide members of the public a chance to give testimony to the Board of Commissioners. Meeting information, links and phone numbers to attend will be posted online.

We expect to adopt a budget at the last meeting of July. We hope you will join us in July. Until then, stay safe and healthy.



Julie Parker, Assistant General Manager

## Thurston PUD Commissioners

### District 1

Linda Oosterman

### District 2

Russell E. Olsen

### District 3

Chris Stearns

## Important Messages

Our main office located at 1230 Ruddell Road SE in Lacey is temporarily closed to the public.

For information about the 2021 Budget & Rates Public Hearing, review Page 2.

For more information about annual drinking water reports, review Page 3.

We encourage you to review your water consumption as outside temperatures climb during summer months.

**Thurston PUD**  
1230 Ruddell Road SE  
Lacey, Washington 98503  
(360) 357-8783  
Toll Free: (866) 357-8783  
Fax: (360) 357-1172  
[www.ThurstonPUD.org](http://www.ThurstonPUD.org)

## 2021 Budget & Rates

Due to the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 and our commitment to keeping customers and employees healthy, the Public Hearing for 2021 Budget and Rates will be held via the Zoom video conferencing application.

| Date         | Thursday, July 16, 2020 | Tuesday, July 21, 2020 |
|--------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Start Time   | 7:00 p.m.               | 7:00 p.m.              |
| Meeting Type | Public Meeting*         | Public Hearing         |
| Phone Number | (253) 215-8782          | (253) 215-8782         |
| Meeting ID   | 875 9678 5728           | 891 4564 8745          |

\* Thurston PUD Board of Commissioners will not be in attendance for this meeting.

PUD staff will deliver a 2021 Budget presentation on Thursday, July 16, 2020. The Public Hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, July 21, 2020 – at this meeting, members of the public will have the opportunity to testify on the 2021 Budget and proposed rates, fees, charges, and surcharges. If you cannot attend the Public Hearing, we encourage you to submit written testimony to our office. Please direct any written testimony as follows:

Thurston PUD Board of Commissioners  
1230 Ruddell Rd SE  
Lacey, WA 98503  
Fax: (360) 357-1172

Email: [PUDCustomerService@ThurstonPUD.org](mailto:PUDCustomerService@ThurstonPUD.org)

*Written testimony must be received no later than Friday, July 17, 2020 to become part of public record.*

Members of the public are welcome to join these meetings from a personal computer or mobile device. If you wish to attend by telephone only, please use the information listed above to dial into each meeting.

Login information will be published on the PUD's website at [www.ThurstonPUD.org](http://www.ThurstonPUD.org). If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Customer Service Team at (866) 357-8783.

## Equal Payment Plan Program - Enrollment Open Soon!

This year, our Equal Payment Plan (EPP) Program launched for the very first time in May. Due to the success of this program, we're offering another open enrollment period for customers that are interested in this program.

### What is it?

The Equal Payment Plan (EPP) is a free, stable payment plan. You can find comfort in knowing what to expect each month because you'll pay roughly the same amount year-round. EPP is not a discount program, but it allows you to better manage your monthly budget by keeping water costs predictable and manageable. That way, you can avoid spikes in your bills caused by seasonal changes in how much water you use. Remember: there's no fee to enroll, and it's easy to manage. It's just another way we can help you better manage your monthly water costs.

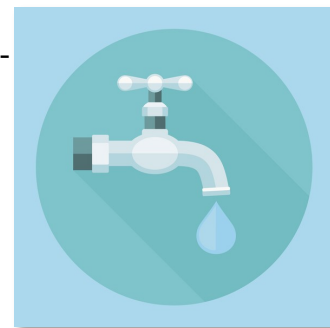
### How does it work?

Your monthly bill will be based on your average usage from the past 12 months. On your EPP anniversary date, we will recalculate your next year's payment. Your bill will only change if your usage amount changes.

*(Continued on Page 4.)*

## CCRs & WUEs

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. Please review the additional information listed below.



### What types of water systems does the PUD own?

Thurston PUD owns and operates 275 water systems throughout several counties. Of these 275 water systems, there are 74 Group A water systems and 201 Group B water systems.

### 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.

| Report Type    | Consumer Confidence Reports  | Water Use Efficiency Reports   |
|----------------|--|--|
| Abbreviation   | CCR  | 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   |
| Date Available | July 1st each year   | July 1st each year   |

**Remember, 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 here: [www.ThurstonPUD.org/water-systems.htm](http://www.ThurstonPUD.org/water-systems.htm).

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Customer Service Team at (866) 357-8783 or [PUDCustomerService@ThurstonPUD.org](mailto:PUDCustomerService@ThurstonPUD.org).

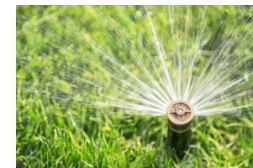
For more information about drinking water, practices, and regulations, visit [www.ThurstonPUD.org/links-and-forms.htm](http://www.ThurstonPUD.org/links-and-forms.htm) for a list of links to the Washington State Department of Health and other industry organizations.

## Equal Payment Plan (EPP) Program - Open Enrollment (Continued)

This may result in the PUD crediting your account or you may owe money to the PUD. ***Paying attention to your water consumption throughout the year is critical with this payment option.*** When you sign up for EPP, we first determine your average monthly bill.

### What if I use more or less water than I paid for?

If your water use differs greatly from your budgeted amount, we will adjust your future bills accordingly on your EPP anniversary.



### Who is eligible?

The Equal Payment Plan program is open to Thurston PUD who have 12 or more months of historic consumption data. If you rent your home, the program enrollment application includes a section for landlord authorization. Please visit [www.ThurstonPUD.org](http://www.ThurstonPUD.org) for more eligibility requirements.

### When can I sign up?

Enrollment is open August 1, 2020.

### When is the last day to sign up? When will it begin?

Open enrollment closes August 31, 2020. You will see your first EPP bill amount on the billing statement you receive in October. Instructions on how to enroll will be published at the end of July 2020.

## Project Help Low-Income Assistance Program & COVID-19 Bill Deferral

Do you qualify as income-eligible and need assistance with paying your water bill? Have you and your family been affected financially by the COVID-19 pandemic? You may qualify to receive a \$50.00 credit towards your utility bill through our Project Help program, limited to \$50.00 per calendar year.

To be eligible for assistance you must (1) be a customer with the PUD, with an active account in your name, (2) have received a disconnect notice for your water service, and (3) provide documentation that household income is \$40,000 or less or that you've been adversely affected by COVID-19. If you are a customer in need, we encourage you to reapply yearly. Contact our Customer Service Team with any questions or concerns about the program's requirements.

To apply, visit our website at [www.ThurstonPUD.org](http://www.ThurstonPUD.org) to complete the Project Help application (found on the front page of our website). If you'd like to request a paper copy of the application, please call us at (866) 357-8783 to speak with our Customer Service Team.

If you're interested in making a one-time or monthly donation, please call us at (866) 357-8783 or email [PUDCustomerService@ThurstonPUD.org](mailto:PUDCustomerService@ThurstonPUD.org) if you're interested in making an electronic payment. Or return the form below with any payments mailed to our office.

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I authorize Thurston PUD to bill my account \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

- One-time only  
 Each month

This authorization shall remain in effect until the PUD receives written notification from me to terminate this agreement. I understand that if my account becomes past due, this authorization becomes invalid.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Account No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_