



Thurston PUD Newsletter

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

March 2022

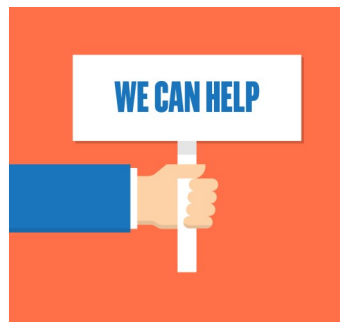
Leadership Message

Utility Relief Assistance Program Funds Awarded in Full

The Utility Relief Assistance Program (URAP) was created in August 2021 to support PUD customers financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic thanks to a grant received from the Washington State Department of Commerce. Last month in February 2022, the PUD awarded the last of the funds available through this program. All \$153,029 received from the grant have been awarded to PUD customers!

Although we are no longer accepting applications for the Utility Relief Assistance Program, the PUD offers other assistance programs to help customers pay their water bills. Please review the information listed below.

- **Extended Payment Plan:** As a public water utility, we are not able to forgive or write-off any customer balances. However, we can help customers set up payment plans to defer part of the balances due on their account. To inquire about creating a Extended Payment Plan for your account, please contact our Customer Service Team so that we can work with you to find an payment plan that fits your financial needs.
- **Project Help Program:** This program is funded by the generous donations of PUD customers. Project Help provides monetary assistance to individuals who qualify as low-income or have recently experienced financial hardships. To apply for this program, please visit the PUD’s Customer Support page at www.thurstonpud.org/customer-support.htm.
- **Other Community Resources:** The PUD has compiled a list of resources throughout the south Puget Sound community so that customers may refer to this list in seeking additional assistance opportunities. Please visit our Customer Community Resources webpage at www.thurstonpud.org/community-resources.htm.



As a reminder, payments are due by the 15th of each month. The PUD offers several convenient options to pay your bill and all options are fee-free.

If you are a customer with a past due balance on your account, please contact our Customer Service Team at (360) 357-8783, toll-free at (866) 357-8783, or PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org to discuss options available to you.

Thurston PUD Commissioners

District 1

Linda Oosterman

District 2

Russell E. Olsen

District 3

Chris Stearns

Important Messages

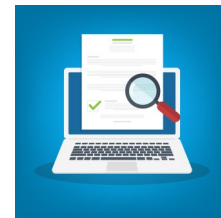
- Check out the “What’s Happening at the PUD?” article on Page 2.
- Want to learn more about the PUD’s infrastructure and capital improvements? Review Page 3 for more information.
- World Water Day is March 22, 2022! Read more on Page 4.

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

What's Happening at the PUD?

2020 Audit Report Results

Annually, the Washington State Auditor's Office (SAO) conducts a Financial Statement Audit for the PUD, and an Accountability audit is performed every other year. In February, the SAO completed their annual audit of the PUD's 2020 financial statements. ***The SAO did not report any significant deficiencies or material weakness in our financial reporting.***



We look forward to ensuring our financial statements are consistently presented fairly and accurately according to internal policies, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), as well as state and federal laws and regulations.

If you would like to review the complete Audit Report including Financial Statements and supplemental information, visit our website at www.ThurstonPUD.org and click on "Audit Report - 2020 Financial Statements" under *The Latest* on the right side of the webpage.

Employee Spotlight



David Gruver,
Field Technician

This month, we'd like to introduce one of the PUD's Field Technicians, David Gruver. David, an Olympia area local, was employed by the Pattison Water Company for over 20 years before transferring to the PUD early last year. David earned degrees in Biology and Chemistry from St. Martin's University, and he and his wife enjoy travelling around the world in their free time.

David ensures that the PUD's water systems function properly, which includes providing maintenance and repairs on pumps, motors, and drives. He also installs new service lines and locates utility lines among his other regular duties. David says, "What I really enjoy at Thurston PUD is that everyone is willing to help each other." His advice for our customers? "If you think you have a leak, please do not hesitate to call us."

If you believe you may have a leak at your property or if you have any questions regarding your usage or your customer account, please contact our Customer Service Team at (360) 357-8783, toll-free at (866) 357-8783, or PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org.

Keep Your Contact Information Updated

Our Customer Service Team uses customer contact information frequently to process requests, update files, and most importantly, update customers during emergencies or due to account changes. If you need to update your contact information or have questions about your account or your water system, please use one of the following methods to contact our office.

Main	(360) 357-8783
Toll-Free	(866) 357-8783
Email	PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org
Fax	(360) 357-1172
Mailing Address	1230 Ruddell Rd SE, Lacey, WA 98503

If you experience a water emergency, please call us immediately at (360) 357-8783 or toll-free at (866) 357-8783. If you call outside of our normal business hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday), you will be connected to our emergency answering service and on-call staff.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns. We look forward to hearing from you!

Infrastructure Replacement & Capital Improvements

For the Northern Hemisphere, the first day of spring is Sunday March 20, 2022! With spring's arrival, we can look forward to better weather. In order to prepare for summer months and warmer temperatures, our Planning and Compliance Team is working with our Field Operations Team to plan for infrastructure replacements and capital improvements.

Infrastructure replacements and capital improvements are partially funded by the PUD's Capital Surcharge which is charged to every PUD customer. We receive a lot of questions about the Capital Surcharge and water system improvements/replacements, so we compiled a list of the popular questions for you to review.

What is infrastructure? What is a capital improvement?

Infrastructure is a general term for the basic physical elements of a water system. Examples of infrastructure include pipeline, well pumps, and treatment systems. A capital improvement is a permanent structural change, addition, or alteration to infrastructure that adds to the value of the infrastructure or prolongs its useful life.

What is the Capital Surcharge? Why is it charged?

The Capital Surcharge is the primary financial tool used to help fund infrastructure replacements and capital improvements based on a water system's Asset Management Plan (AMP).

Capital surcharges are used to help fund system replacements at the end of an asset's life cycle. The capital surcharge is paid by all PUD customers, and infrastructure replacement costs are shared by all PUD customers like a cooperative.

What is an Asset Management Plan?

An Asset Management Plan (AMP) is a tool used to forecast the capital improvements or replacements that will be needed for your water system in the next 50+ years, specifically the timing of the replacements/improvements and the projected cost. Staff has created an AMP for each of the 279 water systems owned and operated by the PUD.

How much is the Capital Surcharge?

The Capital Surcharge is \$10 per month per equivalent residential unit (ERU). A normal, single-family home is considered to be one ERU, so most residential PUD customers pay \$10 per month.

What capital projects or improvements does my system need?

As stated previously, the PUD has created an AMP for each of the PUD's 279 water systems. Based on a water system's AMP, we have projected and budgeted several capital improvement projects for 2022. Capital Budget information can be found on our website at www.thurstonpud.org/out-rates.htm. For more information on your specific water system and its AMP, please contact our office at (360) 357-8783, toll-free at (866) 357-8783, or PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org.

Why is the Capital Surcharge shown separately on my bill?

The Capital Surcharge is billed separately from normal charges, because these monies are tracked separately from the monies received for normal charges (i.e. the base rate, consumption charges, and miscellaneous fees). The PUD has made a commitment to all of our customers that we will be good stewards of these monies you pay as surcharges and only use them toward infrastructure replacement.



A PUD crew working to repair a water leak, classified as a repair. Taken in 2018.

(Continued on Page 4.)

Infrastructure Replacement & Capital Improvements (*Continued*)

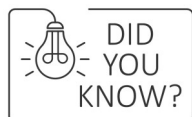
What is the difference between capital improvements/replacements and repairs?

Knowing the difference between capital improvements and repairs helps our team decide how to fund projects and understand how it will impact future plans. There are a number of factors that go into helping the PUD understand how to classify projects.

For Thurston PUD, capital improvements can be defined as improving the condition or value of an asset/infrastructure beyond its original state at the time of purchase. These include permanent structural changes or restoration that enhances our infrastructure or increases its useful life. Examples of capital improvements can be replacing the roof on a pumphouse, installing fencing around a reservoir, and replacing aging booster or well pumps.

Repairs can be defined as improvements that keep property in efficient operating condition, restore infrastructure to its previous condition and/or protect infrastructure through routine maintenance. Examples of repairs can be repairing leaking pipes or repairing broken meters. Repair work is inevitable in any profession and life in general, but with a proactive approach through the investment in capital improvements, repair work can be reduced. Although the PUD has a standard to run equipment and components to the end of their useful life, those items are still classified as capital improvements because they have been identified and forecasted within the AMP.

PUD staff is working on compiling information on projects that were completed in 2021. Keep an eye out for a list of completed 2021 projects in a future newsletter. If you have any questions about infrastructure replacement or capital improvements, please don't hesitate to contact our office by phone at (360) 357-8783, toll-free at (866) 357-8783, or via email at PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org.



According to the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), our nation's drinking water infrastructure is composed of 2.2 million miles of pipe. The Tanglewilde-Thompson Place water system, the PUD's largest water system, has approximately 16 miles of pipe.

World Water Day is March 22, 2022

World Water Day is an annual United Nations (UN) Observance which began in 1993. World Water Day is held on March 22nd each year and aims to celebrate water and raise awareness on the two billion people living without access to safe water. For 2022, the theme is groundwater - "making the invisible visible." Please review the information listed below for some essentials on groundwater.

Groundwater is water found underground in aquifers which are geological formations of rocks, sands, and gravels that hold substantial quantities of water. Groundwater feeds springs, rivers, lakes and wetlands, and seeps into oceans. Groundwater is recharged mainly from rain and snowfall infiltrating the ground. Groundwater can be extracted to the surface by pumps and wells.

Why is groundwater so important to the PUD? The main source of water for the PUD's 279 water systems is groundwater, so understanding groundwater and conservation surrounding this important resource is vital to the PUD's operations. Groundwater plays a critical role in supplying our customers with safe, reliable drinking water and is also globally fundamental to sanitation, agriculture, industry, as well as natural ecosystems.



For more information about World Water Day, please visit the UN's World Water Day website at www.worldwaterday.com If you'd like to review additional information on water conservation, please visit the PUD's website at www.thurstonpud.org/water-systems.htm.