



Thurston PUD Newsletter

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

February 2024

Leadership Message

Customer Service Provides Tips and Reminders

By: Mariah Montague, Customer Service Supervisor

Our Customer Service Team offers the information below to help you with any questions you may have about the PUD or your utility account. We are committed to customer satisfaction, so if there is something you believe we can do to better serve you, please let us know! We appreciate the opportunity to serve our communities and look forward to addressing any feedback received.



Mariah Montague,
Customer Service
Supervisor

Update your contact information with our office.

Winter in the Pacific Northwest comes with its fair share of inclement weather which can sometimes cause emergency situations. Now is the perfect time to confirm or update your contact information with our Customer Service Team to guarantee that you receive any communication we may send out regarding your water system. To update your account, send our Customer Service Team an email anytime at PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org or give us a call at (360) 357-8783 or toll-free at (866) 357-8783. Bringing your account up-to-date will ensure that you receive water outage information, possible health emergency notifications, or other important information.

We are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to address water system issues and emergencies. If you need to report an issue after normal business hours or during a weekend, you can call us at (360) 357-8783 or toll-free at (866) 357-8783. Phone calls received outside of normal business hours are directed to a call center that will notify our on-call staff.

Our website has a wealth of information! Most of the forms you may need can be found on our website at www.thurstonpud.org under Links & Forms. We also save PUD newsletters on our website, dating back to 2012! You can review past newsletters for specific articles or information. You can also read the agendas and minutes from past Commission meetings to stay informed on what is happening at the PUD.

We offer a variety of ways to pay your bill, all without added fees. You can pay online at our website at www.thurstonpud.org. You will be able to review and pay your bill by registering online. We also offer an automated payment option by phone available 24/7—please call us at (360) 357-8783 and select option 1 to use the automated payment system - you will need your account number! Payments can be mailed to Thurston PUD at 1230 Ruddell Road SE, Lacey, WA 98503. Payments can also be made in our office Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. A drop box is located in the office parking lot for payment drop-off as well.

Thurston PUD Commissioners

District 1

Linda Oosterman

District 2

Russell E. Olsen

District 3

Chris Stearns

In This Issue

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Upcoming Office Closure

**Presidents' Day
Monday, February 19,
2024**



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(360) 357-8783
Toll-Free: (866) 357-8783
Fax: (360) 357-1172
www.ThurstonPUD.org

Reminder About Your January Water Bill—2024 Budgets, Rates, and Fees

On September 25, 2023, the PUD Board of Commissioners adopted the 2024 Budgets and Rates, Fees, Charges, and Surcharges. These rates went into effect on January 1, 2024.

Our staff reads your water meters monthly during the first three weeks of each month, which means that this month's bill will include usage from December 2023 and January 2024. Our system prorates your consumption totals so that a portion of the consumption amount is charged at last year's rates and a portion will be charged at this year's rates. Due to the proration, you may see two consumption charges on your billing statement this month to reflect the two rates.

Our accounting system is programmed to show two separate, prorated consumption charges to provide transparency on the two different water rates (2023 versus 2024). This also ensures that you are not overcharged for 2023 consumption at 2024 rates.

The Adopted 2024 Rates, Fees, Charges, and Surcharges can be found online at www.thurstonpud.org/our-rates.htm. If you have any questions about your billing statement, please contact our Customer Service Team at (360) 357-8783, toll-free at (866) 357-8783, or via email at PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org.

How Winter Storms Affect PUD Water Systems

Winter storms are common here in western Washington. Not only do we experience severe winter windstorms, we can also experience widespread snowstorms and extreme flooding. How do these events affect the PUD's water systems?

Oftentimes, winter storms can cause electrical outages that in turn cause water outages for water systems without a generator. Flooding is another major effect of winter storms as storms can cause rivers to overflow. Major flooding can damage to infrastructure and carry an increased contamination risk for wells or water treatment plants. Fortunately, the PUD has not experienced this type of situation in the recent past. Winter storms can also be a hazard for our field staff to travel in. Icy and snowy roads cause increased response times, and freezing temperatures can cause damage to plumbing, pumphouses, and other water system components.

So what can customers do to become better prepared for winter storms? Become familiar with your home's plumbing layout. Water shut-off valves (separate from the shut-off valve at a customer's water meter) are usually located in garages or within three feet of a customer's home. If you don't have a water shut-off valve, we encourage you to speak with a plumbing professional to discuss the benefits of having a shut-off valve installed. These valves are useful if any plumbing repairs are necessary or if an emergency occurs to prevent costly property damage.



Flooding around a pumphouse at a water system in Thurston County after a winter storm brought heavy rain.

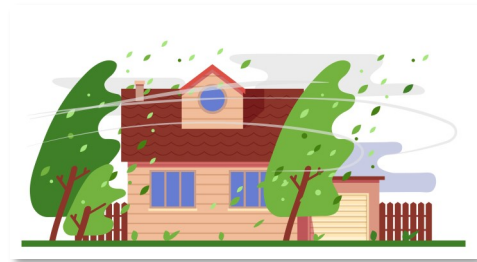


If you experience a water service emergency, contact us at (360) 357-8783 or toll-free at (866) 357-8783. Calls received outside of normal business hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday) are routed to our answering service and on-call staff.

What Can We Do During the Height of Winter?

In the past few years, western Washington has experienced some of the most challenging weather in February, ranging from unexpected snow events to large-scale windstorms. To help you better prepare for these winter storms and possible unexpected outages, we created a short list of suggestions just for you:

- **Keep drinking water on hand.** In the event of an outage or emergency, keep bottled water handy or fill buckets to ensure that you have enough water to drink and cook with. Assume one gallon of drinking water per person per day is sufficient and store in a cool, dark place.
- **Store water for other purposes.** Fill buckets or fill your bathtub with water to use for washing and flushing toilets. A toilet will flush when approximately a gallon of water is dumped into the bowl.
- **Prepare accordingly prior to a storm that has been forecasted.** If you hear of an upcoming storm, be sure to fill your car's gas tank and stock up on essential food and medications to avoid shortages during or immediately following a storm.



Safety Kit For Your Car

We occasionally experience hazardous road conditions during winter here in western Washington. We encourage you to plan long road trips carefully and check online or listen to the radio or television for up-to-date weather forecasts and road conditions. In bad weather drive only if absolutely necessary. In case you get stranded, it's smart to keep an emergency supply kit in your car with these automobile extras:



- Jumper cables
- Flares or reflective triangle
- Ice scraper
- Car cell phone charger
- Blanket
- Map
- Cat litter or sand for better tire traction

Car Safety Tips

- Keep your gas tank full in case of evacuation or power outages. A full tank will also keep the fuel line from freezing.
- Install good winter tires and make sure they have enough tread, or any chains or studs required in your local area.
- Do not drive through flooded areas. Six inches of water can cause a vehicle to lose control or possibly stall. A foot of water will float many cars.
- Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded. Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of the car.
- If a power line falls on your car you are at risk of electrical shock. Stay inside until a trained person removes the wire.
- If it becomes hard to control the car, pull over, stop the car and set the parking brake.
- If the emergency could affect stability of the roadway avoid overpasses, bridges, power lines, signs and other hazards.

For more information, please visit www.ready.gov/car.

Project Update—Pattison Water System



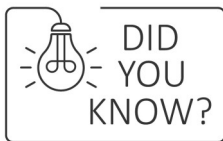
In 2021, Thurston PUD received a \$3.2 million dollar Drinking Water State Revolving (DWSRF) Loan with 50 percent loan forgiveness for replacement and improvements to the Pattison water system, a water system in Thurston County that serves over 1,700 customers.

The scope of the project funded by this DWSRF loan includes:

1. Replacement of Tri-Lakes booster pump station.
2. Replacement of the Christmas Tree well.
3. Replacement of the Christmas Tree booster pump station.
4. Replacement and upgrades of approximate 200,000-gallon reservoir.

Thurston PUD has been actively working on this project and most recently hired a local contractor, American Pump and Drilling, for the replacement of the Tri Lakes Pumphouse and Booster Station. The construction work for this project began in January 2024 and is expected to be completed by May 2024.

The project also includes the replacement of the Christmas Tree well, reservoir, and booster station. That work will begin later this year.



According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, only one percent of all the world's water can be used for drinking. Nearly 97 percent of the world's water is salty or otherwise undrinkable, and the other two percent is locked away in ice caps and glaciers.

Project Help Customer Support Program—Requirements Updated

We recently updated the eligibility requirements for the PUD's Project Help Customer Support Program.

You may qualify to receive a credit towards your utility bill through our Project Help Customer Support Program.

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 \$64,000 or less.

If you are a customer in need, we encourage you to reapply each year. Contact our Customer Service Team with any questions or concerns about the program's requirements.

To apply, visit our website at www.thurstonpud.org to complete the Project Help application (available on our website under Links & Forms). If you'd like to request a paper copy of the application, please contact our Customer Service Team via email at PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org or by calling (360) 357-8783 or toll-free (866) 357-8783. For other available resources, please visit our website at <http://www.thurstonpud.org/community-resources.htm>.

If you're interested in making a one-time or monthly donation, please call us at (866) 357-8783, or email PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org.

