

If there was a water outage at my water system, and the problem is fixed, why do I have to wait to use my water?

This month's question is answered by Kim Gubbe, Director of Planning and Compliance. Kim has served as a manager at Thurston PUD for 21 years and holds an Environmental Technical degree from Clover Park. She was named Water Operator of the Year in 2011 by the Washington State Department of Health Office of Drinking Water. She also volunteers as a Special Olympics coach in Thurston County.



Kim Gubbe, Director of Planning and Compliance

Water outages can happen for many reasons, including planned maintenance, mainline breaks or leaks, equipment failures, or power interruptions. Any of these issues can disrupt normal system operations and require time for repairs.

When you experience a water outage, it's recommended you shut off your electric hot water heater to prevent potential damage to the heating element. This is also a great time to test your home emergency kit, a quick check of your supplies—water, food, lights, chargers and medications—can reveal gaps you wouldn't notice until actually needing them. If you need to start planning for an emergency www.ready.gov is a great resource.

When water service is restored, the sudden rush of water through the pipes can stir up natural mineral deposits that settle inside the system's lines. This can cause temporary discoloration or cloudiness in your tap water. It's harmless, but it can look concerning.

To help the system fully recover and to prevent drawing discolored water into your home's plumbing, we ask that you wait about 20 minutes after service is restored before flushing your service line.

After the 20-minute wait:

- Use an outdoor hose bib or a bathtub faucet to flush water first, since they move higher volumes of water and have no screens.
- Run cold water only until it clears — usually no more than 10 minutes.

This simple step helps ensure clean, clear water throughout your home.

If your water does not clear after flushing, please contact us at (360) 357-8783 or toll-free at (866) 357-8783 so our Field Operations staff can investigate and ensure your water system is functioning properly.

Thurston PUD Commissioners

District 1

Jim Campbell

District 2

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District 3

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Five Steps for Safe Digging—Call Before You Dig



Spring is around the corner—those outdoors projects may be calling your name! Before beginning any landscaping or beginning other outdoor projects that require 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. Visit www.washington811.com/home/ for more information.

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.

Sign Up for Auto Pay and Paperless Billing for a \$5.00 Bill Credit!

Customers who enroll in Auto Pay *and* paperless billing through the PUD's payment processing website are eligible to receive a one-time credit of \$5.00.

Going paperless reduces mailing costs, delivery delays, and is environmentally friendly. Going paperless means no more mail delays and related penalties, you will **automatically receive our newsletter digitally**, and we can cut back on clutter and paper waste!

To get started, please review the process below and contact our office when completed. *You must contact our Customer Service Team after completing enrollment so that our staff can apply the credit to your account.*



Step 1: Register your account online at <https://thurston.merchantransact.com/Registration>

Step 2: Verify your email address

Step 3: Add a payment method (checking account, Visa, or MasterCard)

Step 4: Enroll in Auto Pay

Step 5: Stop paper billing and enroll in E-Bills

Step 6: Contact our Customer Service Team so we can apply the credit to your account

For detailed instructions, visit our website at www.thurstonpud.org/credit.htm. At the bottom of the webpage there is a link to a "New Registration Guide" with easy to follow instructions that will walk you through the process from beginning to end. There is also a link to "Quick Guide Instructions" for customers who have already completed Steps 1-3, and it shows how to quickly enroll in Auto-Pay and Paperless Billing with just a few clicks.

If you have any issues with set-up, please contact our Customer Service Team at (360) 357-8783, toll-free at (866) 357-8783, or via email at PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org.

Hard Work In Action—Featuring Thurston PUD Field Staff



Pictured left: A Thurston PUD Field Technician using the Vactor truck to access an underground leak on a water mainline. The Vactor truck uses high-pressure water to break up soil and a vacuum to remove it, exposing underground utilities without damaging them.



Pictured right: Thurston PUD Field Technicians installing new drop pipe and a new pump at a well for a Thurston County water system.

Project Help—Customer Support Program

Do you qualify as income-eligible and need assistance with paying your water bill? 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.
3. Provide documentation that household income is less than the threshold listed below for the county your property is in:

County	Income Threshold
Grays Harbor	\$40,400 or less
King	\$84,000 or less
Lewis	\$48,000 or less
Pierce	\$64,000 or less
Thurston	\$59,000 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 community resources, please visit our website at <http://www.thurstonpud.org/community-resources.htm>, or call 211, a free, confidential, 24/7 service that connects people to local health and human services.

If you're interested in making a one-time or monthly donation, please call us at (866) 357-8783, or email PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org, or return the form below with any payments mailed to our office at Thurston PUD, 1230 Ruddell Road SE, Lacey, WA 98503.

I would like to contribute to Project Help and authorize Thurston PUD to bill my account in the amount of \$_____.

(Check one) 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: _____