



Thurston PUD Newsletter

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

August 2025

Leadership Message

Public Hearings on the Proposed 2026 Budget and Rates, Fees, Charges, and Surcharges

By Julie Parker, Assistant General Manager

The District's Management Team and Board of Commissioners work together to develop a budget for the upcoming year that includes the District's goals, needs, and projects. The budget serves as a guiding document for the PUD and as a communications plan for our customers.



Julie Parker,
Assistant General
Manager

The Proposed 2026 Budget and Rates, Fees, Charges, and Surcharges will be posted on the PUD's website at www.thurstonpud.org by August 31, 2025. We encourage customers to review these files and submit any questions to our office.

The PUD Commissioners will hold two Public Hearings in September on the Proposed 2026 Budget and Rates, Fees, Charges, and Surcharges. The Public Hearings will be hybrid meetings, held in-person at PUD Headquarters (1230 Ruddell Road SE, Lacey, WA 98503) and via the Zoom video conferencing platform. Members of the public are welcome to attend these meetings either in-person or virtually. Information on how to attend virtually is listed below.

Date	Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2025	Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2025
Webinar ID	841 4741 6477	970 3278 6949
Start Time	5:00 p.m.	
URL	www.zoom.us/join	
Phone No.	(253) 215-8782	

At these hearings, PUD staff will deliver a presentation on the budget, and members of the public will have the opportunity to provide testimony on the Proposed 2026 Budget and Rates, Fees, Charges, and Surcharges. The Commissioners will review any comments received prior to considering adoption of the Proposed 2026 Budget and Rates, Fees, Charges, and Surcharges at a meeting on September 30, 2025.

Members of the public are welcome to join these meetings either in-person or from a personal computer or a mobile device. If you wish to listen in by telephone (audio only), please use the information listed above to dial into the webinar.

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Thurston PUD Commissioners

District 1

Linda Oosterman

District 2

Russell E. Olsen

District 3

Chris Stearns

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Thurston PUD Commissioner District No. 1 Vacancy—Call for Applicants

The Commissioners of Public Utility District No. 1 of Thurston County (Thurston PUD) are soliciting applications for an expected vacancy for the PUD Commissioner representing District No. 1.

Anyone that wishes to be considered for the Commissioner District 1 Commissioner position appointment must live within the Thurston PUD District No. 1 boundaries and meet all other Thurston County Auditor requirements for an elected official that would run for this position.

A map identifying the Thurston PUD district boundaries can be found on the front page of our website at <https://www.thurstonpud.org/>.



The timeline for recruiting for the position, for submitting applications, and for appointing the position is outlined below:

1. As required by law after the vacancy occurs, the remaining members of the Board will nominate one or more candidates at a meeting of the governing body (per RCW 42.12.080(1)), expected at the special Commission meeting on August 5, 2025.
2. The Commissioners must cause notice of the vacancy and the name of the nominated candidate(s) (can be one or more than one) to be posted in at least three public places within the District (and on its website) for at least fifteen days (per RCW 42.12.080(1)). During this period, registered voters within the District can submit nominations (also per RCW 42.12.080(1)).
3. An application form will be posted on the PUD's front webpage no later than August 5, 2025, and applications will be due back to the PUD's General Manager and must be received by mail or dropped off by no later than 4:30 p.m. on August 21, 2025, in order to be considered for the appointment. **Email submissions will not be accepted.**
4. The Commissioners will review the applications and select the applicants they want to interview and determine the interview process at the regular Commission meeting on August 26, 2025.
5. Applicants selected by the PUD Commissioners to interview will be notified after the August 26, 2025 meeting.
6. At a special Commission meeting that will begin at 5:00 p.m. on September 2, 2025, at the PUD Headquarters (located at 1230 Ruddell Road SE, Lacey, WA 98503), the Commissioners will interview the applicants for the position and select the new Commissioner.

If you are interested in being considered for the position, you can find more information on the front page of our website at www.thurstonpud.org under "The Latest!" or contact John Weidenfeller, General Manager, at (360) 763-5838 or by email at jweidenfeller@thurstonpud.org.

Public Hearings on the Proposed 2026 Budget and Rates, Fees, Charges, and Surcharges

If you cannot attend the Public Hearings, we encourage you to submit written testimony to our office. Please direct any written testimony as follows:

By Mail:

Thurston PUD Board of Commissioners
1230 Ruddell Road SE
Lacey, WA 98503

By Email:

PUDCustomerService
@thurstonpud.org

By Fax:

(360) 357-1172

Please note: the deadline for written testimony submissions is Friday, September 26, 2025.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Customer Service Team at (360) 357-8783, toll-free at (866) 357-8783, or by email at PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org.

Tree Roots and Meter Boxes—What to Avoid

Are you planting a new tree or shrub? Before diving into a project like this, it's crucial to make sure you are planting in the right place. Part of that is making sure your plant doesn't disrupt existing underground utility lines as its root system grows. Do not plant trees or shrubs near water meters as their roots can grow and cause damage to the meter and surrounding pipes.

As great as trees and other plants are, their roots can wreak havoc on underground water pipes. Tree roots are attracted to water sources and can encircle meter boxes, making maintenance difficult and potentially cracking water lines.

While tree limbs grow tall, their roots grow wide. That's why it's so important to pick an appropriate planting spot when you're dealing with buried utilities. Before you buy a new tree, find out about its growth potential. Then, plan accordingly when you're ready to plant so that there's ample space between the plant and utility line.



A meter box surrounded by tree roots.

Cedar Shores 677 Generator Installed

Emergency generators are not a required component for a water system. Due to the high cost of installing a generator, most PUD water systems do not have one. Thurston PUD offers a Generator Program for interested communities to request a generator and pay for it themselves, to keep water rates as low as possible for all PUD customers.

In 2024, the Cedar Shores 677 water system community completed a petition with more than 25 percent of property owner signatures in favor of installing and paying for a generator. Once receiving the petition, Thurston PUD mailed a ballot to all property owners on the water system that estimated the cost of installing a generator at the water system, and an estimated cost of the special monthly surcharge customers on the water system would pay over the next 20 years.

The vote passed with over 66 percent of property owners voting in favor of installation. Thurston PUD then used an engineer to analyze the power needs of the water system and get a better idea of the costs to install a generator. Once engineering and the cost analysis was completed, PUD staff presented this information to the PUD Board of Commissioners during a subsequent Commission meeting. The Board approved the project to move forward, and the PUD purchased the generator.



Generator at the Cedar Shores 677 water system.

The generator construction and installation was completed in June 2025. The PUD has taken on the operations and maintenance of the generator and will replace this equipment at the end of its life cycle or as needed, while the Cedar Shores 677 water system community has been paying a special monthly surcharge of \$11.01 for the generator since November 2024.

If you have any questions, if you would like more information on the Generator Program, or if you would like to request a petition template, please contact our Planning and Compliance Team at PUDPlanning@thurstonpud.org. You can also call us at (360) 357-8783 or toll-free at (866) 357-8783 option 3. Votes for emergency generators are limited to once every two years per water system.

PUD Office Closure—Labor Day

The PUD offices will be closed on Monday, September 1, 2025, in honor of Labor Day.

The PUD is closed for all major holidays, but we are always committed to our customers. Staff is available 24/7 for water emergencies. **If you experience a water service emergency, call us immediately at (360) 357-8783 or toll-free at (866) 357-8783 to report your location.** 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.



Does Your Community Have an HOA? We Want to Know!



If your community is governed by a homeowners association (HOA), we would like to know about it. Please call our Customer Service Team at (360) 357-8783, toll-free at (866) 357-8783, or send us an email at PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org to provide the following information:

Name of HOA, Names and Positions of HOA Officers, Contact Phone Numbers, Contact Email Addresses, and Website or Facebook Name.

We appreciate your help in obtaining this information so that PUD staff can to work with HOAs to address any issues or concerns within your community. Whenever possible, PUD staff would like to work with HOA Boards to address community water issues and projects.

2025 Conservation Program

Don't forget to take advantage of our 2025 Conservation Program to save water and money! This year we are offering the following:

Irrigation Help Line - Our Planning and Compliance Specialist, Blake Nylund, will take calls to help customers better understand their current system and ways they can conserve. If you have any questions about your irrigation, please call Blake at (360) 357-8783 extension 126.

Residential Toilet Rebate - A \$50 rebate is available for qualifying high efficiency residential toilet replacements. Toilet fixtures must have been purchased in 2025 and must include the WaterSense logo. A rebate will be provided to the first 25 eligible applications. Applications are available on our website at www.thurstonpud.org/water-systems.htm.

Garden Watering Timers - Watering timers are available to the first 100 customers who request them - call our office at (866) 357-8783 or email PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org to request a device. The timer connects to your spigot and hose and provides timed watering, giving your lawn just the right amount of water. Using this timer saves water and money by preventing over-watering.

Advanced Meter Program (formerly the Smart Meter Program) - Advanced, cellular meters are offered to customers that want direct access to their water consumption data. Customers are billed \$50 for the meter itself (valued at \$270), then an additional \$3 per month for the ongoing fee for the online program. Customers will gain access to an online dashboard, accessible by computer or on a mobile device, the view consumption, leak alerts, or tips on conserving water. Applications are available on our website by clicking on "Advanced Meter Program" at www.thurstonpud.org/water-systems.htm.



For more conservation tips, and to access the rebate and advanced meter applications, visit our website at www.thurstonpud.org/water-systems.htm.