

Commissioner Message (Continued on Page 2)

Get Prepared!

By Linda Oosterman, Thurston PUD Commissioner

Learning about local disasters, having a plan, and building a kit is important for preparing for disasters and emergencies that could happen at any time. Immediately after a large disaster, it will take time for help and resources to arrive. Put together a plan and build a supply kit to last at least two (2) months.



Commissioner Linda Oosterman, District 1

Tips

- Put a household plan together by discussing critical questions with your household to start your emergency plan. Some of the questions to consider are: Do I need to create or update my emergency preparedness kit? What is my shelter plan? What is my evacuation route? What will I rely on for emergency alerts and information? How will I communicate with my family or household during an emergency?
- Designate one (1) person in your household to be the primary contact during an emergency who can help everyone reconnect.
- Create a written Emergency Plan and share it with everyone in your household. That way if you are not together when disaster strikes everyone has this critical information to reconnect. For a free fillable form visit <https://www.ready.gov/plan-form>.
- Each household has a unique set of daily living needs and supplies and it's important to tailor your plan with this information in mind. Like being prepared for a stay-at-home order during COVID-19, ensure to stock up your critical supplies such as life-needing medications to last for two (2) months. This applies to pets or service animals as well.
- When an emergency occurs, there is a possibility you or family members will not be at home and must shelter in place. Create an emergency kit specifically for your car that includes water and prescription medications.
- Ensure your car's gas tank is always more than half full. Your car's radio can provide emergency alerts and information, and you will want enough gas to be able to run it.

(Continued on Page 2)

Thurston PUD Commissioners

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District 3

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In This Issue

- **Water Heaters and How to Secure Them—Page 2**
- **The Capital Surcharge and 2024 Capital Improvement Projects—Page 3**
- **Project Help Customer Support Program—Page 4**



Your bill may still reflect Summer water usage.

Check the 'Meter Reading' portion of your bill statement for your specific consumption dates.

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Water Heaters and How to Secure Them

After a severe emergency, such as a Cascadia earthquake, experts predict massive damage could be caused to buildings, the road, the power grid, and even the water supply. Drinking water may not be available immediately, and undamaged water heaters may be a source of safe drinking water during a disaster. Your water heater stores fresh water, and you can protect this valuable resource by ensuring it stays standing upright.

Securing your water heater to the wall studs will prevent it from tipping over and spilling the contents. To secure a hot water tank to the wall you can use heavy-gauge metal strapping and lag screws or expansion bolts. Strapping kits are commonly available at hardware stores and come complete with everything you should need. Once you have your supplies you can follow these steps:

1. To prevent the tank from tipping backwards, there should be very little space between it and the wall. If there is more than 2 inches, consider attaching a wooden block to the wall with long lag screws.
2. Use heavy-gauge metal strapping rather than plumbers tape. Wrap the heavy-gauge metal strapping 1 1/2 times around the tank. Start by placing the strapping at the back of the tank then bring it to the front and take it back to the wall. Experts recommend securing both the top and the bottom of the tank.
3. Secure this strapping to the wall studs or the wood block using several 1/4-inch x 3-inch or longer lag screws with oversized washers. If you are screwing the tank directly to concrete, use 1/4-inch expansion bolts instead of the screws.



For more information, please visit <https://doh.wa.gov/emergencies/be-prepared-be-safe/get-ready/water-heaters-how-secure-them>.

Get Prepared! (Continued from Page 1)

- There are many products on the market tailored to emergency planning. For example, LifeStraw by Vestergaard is a brand of water filters and purifiers that can remove bacteria, parasites, microplastics, dirt, sand, and cloudiness from water. LifeStraw has two (2) portable products, a straw and a water bottle that filter water and are compact therefore easy to store in an emergency kit. As you work through the planning process, do your research for other products like these that may make emergency preparedness easier.

Remember, planning is just the first step in being prepared for a disaster. The government's <https://www.ready.gov/plan> website is a great resource to assist you in getting prepared.



You can learn about local disasters. Utilize the Map Your Neighborhood program, and view any training opportunities Thurston County Emergency Management is offering on their website at <https://www.thurstoncountywa.gov/departments/emergency-management/get-prepared>.

The American Red Cross Northwest Region also offers trainings to learn lifesaving skills. Check out their website for these opportunities at <https://www.redcross.org/about-us/our-work/training-education.html>.

The Capital Surcharge and 2024 Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs)

We know the importance of infrastructure investments and planning for infrastructure replacements. The Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) are funded in part by Capital Surcharges, per the PUD’s Asset Management Plan (AMP). Our staff strives to provide up-to-date information on these projects to help customers better understand the work needed to keep safe drinking water flowing. To help answer some of the most frequently asked questions about replacements, the AMP, and the CIP, a list of this information has been compiled below for your review.

What is an Asset Management Plan? An Asset Management Plan (AMP) is a financial planning tool we use when water system components will reach the end of their life cycles. We predict costs which helps us determine how much we need to budget each year. Staff has created an AMP for each of the 276 water systems owned and operated by the PUD.

What is a Capital Improvement? 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 a 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. This means if your water system has a component failure, the cost is covered through your rates and capital surcharges.

What capital projects or improvements does my system need? As stated previously, the PUD has created an AMP for each of the PUD’s 276 water systems. Based on a water system’s AMP, we projected and budgeted several Capital Improvement Projects for 2024. You can find the current year’s Capital Budget on our website at www.thurstonpud.org/our-rates.htm.

Below is a list of some CIPs that have been completed through June 30, 2024.

Category	Affected Water Systems	Cost
CI-44 Pumphouse	Offut Lake 735, Reserve CP 3 739	\$13,432
CI-50 Mainline Replacement	Pattison 500	\$48,519
CI-62 Treatment Replacement/Upgrades	Marshall 228, C Muck 1 256, Eastridge 2 347, Walczak 620, Violet Meadows A 747, Violet Meadows B 748, Violet Meadows C 749, Violet Meadows D 750, Violet Meadows 1 751, Violet Meadows 2 752, Violet Meadows 3 753, Violet Meadows 4 754, Violet Meadows 5 755	\$208,348
CI-65 Pressure Tanks	Brookhaven 1 287, Horsfall 608, Maxvale 618, Foron 629, 141st Ave KPN 661, Riverwood 680, Hawley Hills 686, Silver Fox 693, James C 727, Violet Meadows A 747, Violet Meadows C 749, Violet Meadows 1 751, Violet Meadows 3 753, and Violet Meadows 5 755	\$29,438
CI-75 Service/Source Meter	Walczak 620	\$1,050
CI-76 Pump Replacements	Brown S Prairie 249, T Muck 3 261, Nisqually Highlands 364, Coppermill 520, Highlands 1 623, Foron 629, Spanaway 192nd 669	\$35,579
Total		\$336,365

2024 Great Washington ShakeOut on 10/17 at 10:17 a.m.

For the past several years, the PUD has participated in the International ShakeOut Day on the third Thursday of October. The Great Washington ShakeOut is a statewide opportunity to practice how to be safer during large earthquakes and will occur on October 17, 2024. The PUD plans to participate with our own drill.

While staff are performing the drill, you may be disconnected while speaking with us or you may be unable to reach our office around 10:17 a.m. on Thursday, October 17, 2024. However, once the drill is completed, our staff will be available to answer any questions or concerns you have. For more information on ShakeOut Day, please visit www.shakeout.org/washington.



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, 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, or return the form below with any payments mailed to our office at Thurston PUD, 1230 Ruddell Road SE, Lacey, WA 98503.

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

(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: _____