



The Water Line

Volume 4
Issue 1
April 2024

Summary

- Welcome new District Manager
- Thank you to retiring Board Commissioner
- Welcome new Board Commissioner
- Machinery & equipment updates
- Backflow season
- 2024 budget summary
- Irrigation & water-saving tips for water conservation this summer



SWD office on Woodcock Road

Contact Information

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Sequim, WA 98382
www.sunlandwater.com
Office: 360-683-3905
Email: Judy@sunlandwater.com

Office Hours

Monday—Friday 9 am—1 pm

SWD Board of Commissioners

Jim Larison—President
Al Frank—Secretary
John Lewis—Commissioner

SWD Staff

Management & Office Staff

Tim Berger—District Manager
Judy Gamble—Office Administrator and Accounts Receivable
Karen Shay—Bookkeeper & Accounts Payable

Water Team

Scott Garner—Lead Water Operator
Rocky Burbank—Water Operator I
Joe Beeson—Utility Operator and Building & Grounds Maintenance

Water Reclamation Team

Willy Burbank—Wastewater Treatment Plant Supervisor
Rich Sleeper—Lead Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator
Pat Osborne—Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator

Check Out Our Website

www.sunlandwater.com

SWD's website has a lot of information including:

- New service and cross connection permit application forms
- Minutes from monthly Board of Commissioners' meetings & District Manager reports
- Staff bios
- District policies and regulations
- Current rates and due dates
- Pay your bill online

Please Conserve Water

On Tuesday, April 16th, the Washington Department of Ecology issued a statewide drought emergency, with the exceptions of Everett, Seattle, and Tacoma. Snowpack currently is only 61% of normal, with warmer temperatures and minimal rain forecasted. Even though the past winter seemed unusually wet, the mountains snowpack remained below normal all winter. Sequim only receives about 17 inches of precipitation per year, and with more days of sunshine, the need to conserve is of the utmost importance.

See page 8 for water-saving tips.

PERSONNEL UPDATES

Welcome District Manager Tim Berger

Tim Berger joined the SWD team in October 2023 as our District Manager. He's a SunLand neighbor living in Southern View Estates.

Tim was raised on a grain farm in Eastern North Dakota. Upon graduation, he moved to Colorado and started a career in water distribution. After 6 years, he switched gears and started working in the water treatment field with 33 years' experience.

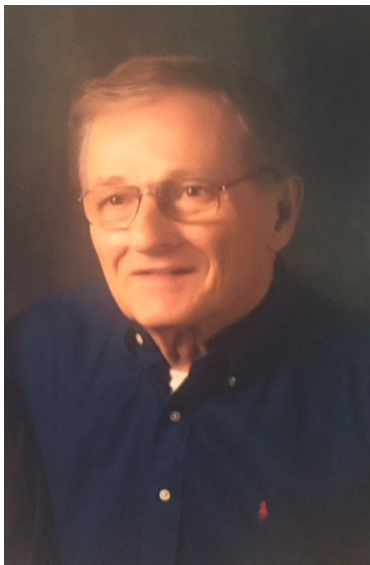
His certifications include Water Distribution Manager II, Water Treatment Plant Operator 4 and Cross Connection Specialist. He has an Associate Degree in Water Quality Management & Technology from Red Rocks College in Lakewood CO and a BA degree in Business Administration from Regis University in Denver.

Tim, and his wife Kelli, enjoy exploring the area, gardening, and spending time with family and their granddaughter.



Thank you Board Commissioner Gary Fortmann

Commissioner **Gary Fortmann** stepped down from the Board at the end of 2023. For six years, Gary was the leading Commissioner advocate for employee pay and benefits, ensuring our valuable staff salaries and benefits have parity with workers in similar jobs at local Sequim and Port Angeles water and sewer districts. Before being elected as a Commissioner, Gary has championed District employees in public and private meetings.



Gary was a leading proponent of investing part of our reserves in CDs to increase our earnings and lead our efforts to increase emergency reserve funds for the District. He had been instrumental in upgrading our equipment to ensure safety and functionality in all our maintenance operations. In the words of Gary—**"Cash is King!"**

PERSONNEL UPDATES

Welcome Board Commissioner John Lewis

John Lewis and his wife, Anita, have been residents of Sunland for the last 7 years. Before moving here, they lived on Camano Island, then McMinnville and now they are back home in Washington.

As a licensed civil engineer (now retired), John has had many and varied work experiences with emphasis on utilities design and management of facilities, construction, and manufacturing in five states and three Canadian provinces. He spent his last 15 years with the Snohomish County Public Utilities District and retired as Manager - Substation Engineering.

In addition to engineering work, John has served on a number of volunteer boards including a community advisory committee for planning and zoning, the Skagit Bay Power Squadron, the Yamhill County Historical Society and served two terms as a member of Sunland North's Division 17 HOA Board of Directors.

He believes in public service and giving back to one's community and commits to work as a team member on our Board of Commissioners.



Board of Commissioner Meetings

Our Board of Commissioners meet the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 9 am PT in the SWD office. This is an open public meeting and you are welcome to attend.

New Email Address or Phone Number?

If you have changed or added an email address or phone number in the past year, please share this new contact information with our office. Our emergency contact system should have the best contact information for you so we are able to reach you with any alerts that arise. This also includes renters' contact information.

Email or call Judy Gamble with your updated contact information:

judy@sunlandwater.com / 360-683-3905 x1

MACHINERY & EQUIPMENT UPDATES

Ford Maverick replaces 20-Year-Old Ford Ranger for the Water Team

The Water team's fleet was in need of an updated, decent vehicle since much of their time is spent in the field. SWD purchased a new light-duty Ford Maverick.

This truck:

- Can manage 90% of the callouts our team receives
- Saves the district money because it gets over double the gas mileage when compared to our old Ranger: 32-34 mpg when driving around SunLand
- Holds double the weight of the old Ranger
- Holds four people so the team can drive together
- Has front-wheel drive
- Is a nice-driving truck

*Photo:
Ford Maverick Water
team truck*



Our Ford Ranger is now used at our Wastewater Treatment Facility for occasional local trips.

Treatment Plant Blower

Our Wastewater Reclamation Facility (WRF)'s blower was aging out at 25 years old. A blower provides aeration for the basins' treatment process. This one blower now does the work of two older blowers.

*Photo:
Treatment plant
blower*



MACHINERY & EQUIPMENT UPDATES

Reservoir Cleaning

Our water reservoirs are deep-cleaned annually.

This process includes:

- Inspecting the structure
- Dusting all surfaces including roof rafters
- Replacing air ventilation filters
- Wire brushing
- Recoating cell distribution piping if there is any sign of rust or deterioration
- Inspecting cell wall epoxy coating for deterioration
- Scrubbing all walls
- Washing the walls
- Disinfecting cells before being put back into service



Photos:

Scott, Rocky & Joe cleaning the upper reservoir

Irrigation Season & Backflow Prevention Assembly Testing

Now is a great time to test your irrigation's backflow assembly

Call your local backflow assembly tester

Call your local backflow assembly tester now before irrigation season is upon us. They will test your backflow to ensure it's working and send SunLand Water District your home's report, so we have it on file. While SWD cannot recommend backflow testers, there are only a few that service the SunLand area. The testers who have provided their certifications to the SWD are listed on our website under "News & Issues".

What is a backflow prevention assembly (BPA)?

Backflow preventers are devices installed on your home's water pipes that only allow water to flow in one direction and not the opposite. Their purpose is **to prevent drinking water from being contaminated with other sources because of backflow.**

How does backflow occur?

Backflow occurs when the normal flow of water in your home's pipes or plumbing system suddenly reverses direction. If this occurs, the clean water you drink or shower with can come into contact with used water that may contain chemicals, bacteria and other harmful contaminants.

Without getting too technical, backflow occurs when different levels of pressure exist within two different points in a plumbing system, such as water of high pressure flowing to water of low pressure. Backflow typically results from one of two processes: backsiphonage and backpressure.

Where is the BPA located?

The BPA sits within 10 feet of the water meter and is attached to your irrigation line.

Installing a New Irrigation System?

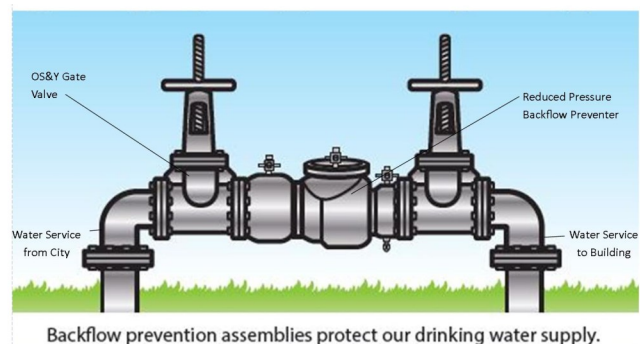
You must obtain a Cross-Connection Permit from the District Office before installation. The permit fee is \$25.

Do I need a BPA?

If your home has an underground irrigation system, it requires a BPA installation and annual testing. Washington State law requires that your backflow assembly be tested annually to ensure that it is working properly and to protect public health. **(WAC 51-56-0600 Section 603.4.2)**

Read SWD's Backflow Prevention Policy for detailed information.

<https://sunlandwater.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Res-125-Scan-10-24-25.pdf>



Real life backflow examples:

<https://www.backflowcases.com/>

SWD Budget—The More You Know

Five-Year Budget

SWD’s Board of Commissioners and District Manager budget in a 5-year view. We budget the upcoming year in detail; and the outyears using an inflation multiplier, in addition to any major changes we are aware of. Capital expenditures are budgeted on a 20-year basis to reduce surprise costs. Our 2024-2028 budget is shown below.

This consolidated budget view shows we’re planning positive net revenue over the next 5 years, even after \$800,000 in budgeted capital purchases. Net Revenue will increase our Reserve for unforeseen capital needs and long-term planning, such as the inevitable replacement of our 50+ year-old asbestos-concrete water main pipes. Personnel Costs include payroll, overtime, retirement, health insurance and payroll taxes. Budgeted Admin Costs include our annual \$94K public works loan payment for our Waste Water Treatment Plant lagoon upgrade and disinfection.

Our 2024 capital budget of \$216K pays for:

- * Epoxy the lower reservoir
- * Replace the Fawnwood Sewage Lift Station
- * Replace the roof on our Water Reclamation Facility lab building

SWD 2024-2028 Budget

	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
TOTAL REVENUES	1,465,480	1,488,115	1,533,033	1,578,856	1,626,580
EXPENSES					
Personnel Costs	762,560	780,251	798,367	816,922	835,926
Admin Costs	371,477	381,417	408,805	399,039	407,675
Operating Costs	108,300	116,877	109,465	112,631	115,575
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,242,337	1,278,545	1,316,638	1,328,593	1,359,176
Less: Planned Capital Expenditures	(215,657)	(164,289)	(165,257)	(78,113)	(178,062)
Net Revenue (Expense) after Planned Expenditures	7,486	45,281	51,138	172,150	89,342

Have a budget question? Email our Bookkeeper, Karen Shay, at karen@sunlandwater.com

Water Conservation Tips

IRRIGATION TIPS

Talk to your irrigation specialist about the level of water to use on your lawn. SWD recently learned that not all irrigation specialists review your water usage when they turn on the system.

- ◆ Ask your irrigation specialist what the current level of water usage your system is pumping out and whether that is appropriate for your yard size.
- ◆ Shorten each zone's run time by 5 or more minutes. Recently, a SunLand resident reduced their small irrigation system run time by 5 minutes, saving 50 gallons per day / 1,500 gallons per month. Imagine what the impact would be on a larger system.
- ◆ The day after your irrigation runs, check your yard for pooling water and/or soggy soil, this usually means the irrigation system is overwatering that area. This may be an opportunity to reduce run times in those zones.
- ◆ Look for broken or leaking sprinkler heads and make repairs as quickly as possible.
- ◆ Irrigate or water your yard every other day at most, many yards can go three days between watering. Watering between the hours of 7 pm and 7 am reduces water loss from evaporation during daylight hours. This also lowers the stress on lawns and plants.

OTHER WATER-SAVING TIPS

- ◆ Attach and use a spray nozzle on the hose when washing vehicles.
- ◆ Cut shower times by a few minutes and reduce the number of baths taken. A shower uses approximately 2.5 gallons per minute and a bath uses about 50 gallons of water.
- ◆ Do not let water run while doing tasks such as brushing your teeth, handwashing dishes or shaving.
- ◆ Wash your dishes in the dishwasher when possible. Dishwashers use as little as 3 gallons of water while handwashing uses upwards of 25 gallons of water.
- ◆ Repair faucet and toilet leaks. Check on that toilet in your home that you don't use. SWD has found quite a few leaky toilets causing 2,000+ gallons of wasted water every month.
- ◆ When possible, wash full loads of laundry.

BROWN SPOTS IN YOUR YARD



Often, people assume a **brown spot** in their lawn means the lawn needs more water, when actually the opposite is often true. Too much water saturates the soil, filling up all the air space between the soil particles with water. This results in an anaerobic condition; basically the plant drowns, as it does not have enough oxygen to survive.