

## A Newsletter of the Holiday Hideaway Water System

**Volume 8**

**Fall 2010**

### FROM YOUR BOARD

The HHA Board wants to thank our members for their support over the years. Keeping our quality of water high and making improvements to the delivery system has been an interesting learning experience for Board and Staff alike.

Temperatures are dropping, leaves are falling and Mark and Cec Spahr are retiring into the background. Cec has retired from teaching and Mark is still very active with FEMA projects. They are not going away but will continue to serve our community, when needed, as Engineering Consultant and ever-faithful Skilled Assistant.



Our thanks to them can never be adequately expressed.

Former Board Member Gerry Francis has successfully completed his training and passed the Water Works Operator Certification Exam and now serves as our Water System Operator. Congratulations, Gerry, and Thank You.

Gerry now has his own assistant, Quinn McDill, who will be studying to pass his certification exam and be our back-up Operator. Welcome aboard, Quinn.

A former associate of Mark Spahr has agreed to serve as Business Manager. Kathleen "Cas" Hancock is also a Certified Water Operator, but will be spending her time ensuring that all required paperwork is completed in a timely manner and that we continue to stay ahead of the ever-increasing costs of operating our system and working toward financing the much needed improvements to our system. Welcome, Cas.

Our special thanks to former Board members Gerry Francis, Mike Jackets and Dixon Elder who have moved on to different endeavors. Board service is a necessary part of having a responsive, effective water system.

The regular date for our 2011 Annual Membership Meeting falls in the middle of the Ferry Haul-out. We are scheduling the Annual Meeting for a different date. We will send everyone a notice and post this information on our website: [hha.octopia.com](http://hha.octopia.com) as soon as date and place are firm.

The Board is still working hard on the revisions of the Policy Manual. We anticipate completion by end of winter. The Manual will then be posted on the internet.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact us.

Enjoy your Holiday Season.

### Your HHA Board:

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### FROM CAS, YOUR NEW MANAGER

Hello Everyone. Mark and I met when I was serving as a Water District Commissioner in the early 1990's and have worked on-and-off together ever since. I have 20 years of experience working with water systems in Washington State. I am a native of Sedro-Woolley and now live in the Concrete area with my husband, and when not working on water systems or volunteering for our neighborhood Board of Directors, enjoy reading, word games and our grandchildren.

When one moves into a new home, one tends to change it, no matter how much one likes it the way it is. Taking over a new position sees the same phenomena: making it one's own. I have a "thing" about everyone playing on the same page.

Many of you have seen the growing pains of this water system from the very beginning and can be very proud of the "young adulthood" that it now enjoys. The members of the Board (past and present), along with Manager Mark Spahr, have worked very hard to bring the system up to fine quality.

As your new Manager, I would like to put some finishing touches on the administrative system. Rules and requirements have grown over time: very lenient in the beginning and growing more complicated as time has worn on. In 2005, the Board adopted a new Water Connection Agreement that must be signed before water is connected to a parcel. I would like to make sure that all of you have the same agreement. We have many customers who were never required to sign a Water Connection Agreement; some who signed the predecessor(s) to the Agreement we have now; and, of course, some who have signed the current version.

The Board also adopted new policies that are published in a manual. The latest version of the Water Connection Agreement is at the very end of the Manual. I would like to make sure all of you have received a copy of the Policy Manual. The Manual is available to all new customers when they sign the Agreement. As well as posting the Manual on our website, we will have copies available at the Annual Membership Meeting in Spring 2011.



We will also have copies of the current Agreement available for you to sign when you attend the meeting.

## FORGET SOMETHING?

Now is the time to prepare your home and grounds for winter – don't forget to winterize your water pipes, too.

If you plan to be off-island for the winter your best bet is to turn off your water service at the meter; open a faucet or two long enough to drain the water from your pipes; wrap all exterior or exposed pipes with heat tape or insulation of some sort and tape it down. I wrap my exterior pipes with foam pipe insulation from the hardware store, then an old towel, cover that with a plastic trash bag, to keep the towel from getting wet, and tape the bag securely so the wind and rain can't get in. I also take advantage of the youth and enthusiasm of my Grandchildren. We have made a game of winterizing Nana & Papa's house. It also instills, or nurtures, a sense of conservation and of helping others. Best of all, it involves laughing, loving and being together.

If you have already flown the coop and didn't turn off your water before you left, please contact a neighbor who is home and ask them if they could do you the favor; or contact the Business office for suggested assistance. Remember, frozen pipes thaw out and create enormous leaks. That not only costs you money on your water bill, but it squanders our most fragile Holiday Hideaway resource – good quality drinking water. Over-pumping the aquifer could result in Sea Water Intrusion and, as you know, sea water is destructive to many things, including our well water and your plumbing and appliances.

Wrapping your exterior pipes is a must if you stay home all winter, too; one really hard freeze (like the week before Thanksgiving) could spell disaster for you and a serious loss of water for all of your neighbors. During the winter season, if you will be gone overnight or longer,

PLEASE,  
TURN OFF YOUR WATER AT THE METER

After the threat of freezing is over, if you leave your home for a week or more,

PLEASE,  
TURN OFF YOUR WATER AT THE METER

You never know when your plumbing may spring a leak or when an appliance like your hot water tank, a toilet tank or even a faucet might develop a drip. If you do not have a "key" or valve wrench to turn off your water, you may purchase one at Sebo's for a nominal price.

It is easy to turn off and then on again, even for those who may think they are "mechanically challenged".

If you do need help, please contact the Business Office for suggested assistance.

## UNREPAIRED LEAKS CAN BE COSTLY

Drinking Water – It's Worth Saving

Department of Health Office of Drinking Water  
Water Loss in Gallons at 50 psi\*

\*pounds of pressure per square inch

Leak this Size	Loss per Day	Loss per Month	Loss per Year
	120	3,600	43,200
	360	10,800	129,600
	693	20,790	249,480
	1,200	36,000	423,000
	1,920	57,600	691,200
	3,096	92,880	1,114,560
	4,296	128,880	1,546,560
	6,640	199,200	2,390,400
	6,984	209,520	2,514,240

## WATER RESTRICTIONS

The most driving force in H2Water's Conservation and Water Use Efficiency programs is not just "saving water", it is preventing **Seawater Intrusion**.

Fresh water, being less dense than seawater, will float as a lens on top of seawater. The lens of freshwater is thinnest at the coastal edges and thickens landward.

Fluctuations occur depending on seasonal rainfall (aquifer recharge) and tidal movement. Over-pumping of these sensitive aquifers, which are under the influence of seawater intrusion, will further degrade the aquifers and pull in more seawater, thus increasing their salt content. Chloride, sodium and conductivity levels are all elevated as more seawater is pulled into the fresh water. We test for these constituents regularly to keep us informed of the least change in their levels.

Part of the regulation placed upon our water rights permits is a limit on the amount of water we are allowed to pump per minute from each of our wells. This is most critical in the warmer months because more of us are on-island and have family and friends over to enjoy our beautiful island.



They all use the water.

Our wells are in serious danger of Seawater Intrusion. If we want to maintain our current level of drinking water supply we must all participate. That is the reason for calculating your water bills using "Increasing Block Rates". The more you use, the more you pay, not because we are greedy, but because the more water you use, the more treatment techniques and storage facilities we must include and maintain in order to provide you with the amount of water you need.

The threat of Seawater Intrusion is also the reason we placed Maximum Usage amount restrictions on each home. 342 gallons a day is really a very fair amount of water to be used in a single family residence.

We arrived at that number by tracking the usage of fifteen of our typical full-time residences from 2004 through 2008. We were able to determine that on average each household used 342 gallons per day. A demographic survey of our community shows that our typical household consists of 1.7 to 1.8 persons.

## NEW COST FOR WATER SHARES

At the beginning of each year, our water rates and other charges are adjusted according to the actual and anticipated costs of inflation and operation, maintenance, new equipment, treatment, labor, sampling, and on and on.

As a result of the improvements already made this year and those that will be added in 2011, the new cost to purchase a share will be ~~\$12,213~~ **\$11,895.00\*** beginning January 1, 2011.



## NEW SHARE PURCHASE WAIT LIST POLICY

As most of you know, we have not had additional water shares to sell for some time. In order to have more to sell, we must construct additional storage tanks and modify some of our existing infrastructure. Mark Spahr recently completed a Small Water System Management Plan requesting permission from the State for an additional number of connections to be made available. Cas put the final touches on the plan and hand-delivered it to the Department of Health in Kent in October for their approval. We are awaiting their response and gearing up to get the process started.

As most of you know, we have a "Wait List" for those who wish to purchase Water Shares. The list has been in existence for years and may not be up-to-date. The following process will take effect immediately.

Those of you who wish to remain on the wait list will now be required to pay a \$1000.00 deposit to remain on the list. We want to honor those who have indicated in the past that they want water shares, but we need to determine which of you wish to remain on the list.

After we have accommodated those on the existing wait list then, to the extent that additional shares are available, we will offer new shares to new purchasers. Individuals will go on the wait list in the order that their \$1000 is received and the \$1000 deposit will apply to the cost of a share when it is purchased.

Those of you who are already on the wait list should have received a letter regarding this issue.

## Cross Connections Can Create Health Hazards

Briefly, a cross connection exists whenever the drinking water system is or could be connected to any non-potable source (plumbing fixture, equipment used in any plumbing system). Pollutants or contaminants can enter the safe drinking water system through uncontrolled cross connections when backflow occurs. Backflow is the unwanted flow of non-potable substances back into the consumer's plumbing system and/or public water system (i.e., drinking water).

There are two types of backflow: **backsiphonage** and **backpressure**.

**Backsiphonage** is caused by a negative pressure in the supply line to a facility or plumbing fixture. Backsiphonage may occur during waterline breaks, when repairs are made to the waterlines, when shutting off the water supply, etc.

**Backpressure** can occur when the potable water supply is connected to another system operated at a higher pressure or has the ability to create pressure. Principal causes are booster pumps, pressure vessels and elevated plumbing. Backflow preventers are mechanical devices designed to prevent backflow through cross connections. However, for backflow preventers to protect as designed, they must meet stringent installation requirements.

The biggest Backsiphonage enemy of a public water system is the dreaded **Garden Hose**. Yes, you read that correctly,



the ordinary Garden Hose.

Every water system has cross connections

but you can help prevent them in the Hideaway.

- Don't leave a hose in a bucket or children's wading pool to let it fill. If you do, whatever is in the bucket or pool could be sucked into the water lines in case of a loss of pressure.
- Be sure there is at least one and one-quarter inches (1-1/4 ") of gap between the end of a garden hose and the top of the bucket or pool. If your hose is bigger around than a garden hose, the gap above the top of the container needs to be at least 1-1/2 times the diameter of the hose (a 2" hose needs a needs a 3" gap).

- Don't use liquid weed killer or fertilizer kits (aspirators), that contain chemicals or radiator flush kits that screw onto the end of your garden hose. Even though some claim to have "check valves" to prevent backsiphonage, they may not work and cannot be tested.

Cross connections are found in all plumbing systems. It is important that each cross connection be identified and evaluated as to the type of back-flow protection required to protect the drinking water supply. Some plumbing fixtures have built-in backflow protection in the form of a physical air gap. However, most cross connections will need to be controlled through the installation of an approved mechanical backflow prevention device or assembly. American Water Works Association® (AWWA) lists some common cross connections found in plumbing and water systems which include:

1. Wash basins and service sinks
2. Hose bibs (faucets you hook a hose to)
3. Irrigation sprinkler systems
4. Auxiliary water supplies
5. Laboratory and aspirator equipment
6. Photo developing equipment
7. Processing tanks
8. Boilers
9. Water re-circulating systems
10. Swimming pools
11. Solar heat systems
12. Fire sprinkler systems
13. Hot tubs
14. Decorative ponds/fish ponds

Every water system has cross connections. Plumbing codes And State drinking water regulations require cross connections to be controlled by approved methods (physical air gap) or approved mechanical backflow prevention devices or assemblies.

The various types of mechanical backflow preventers include: reduced pressure backflow assembly (RPBA), reduced pressure detector assembly (RPDA), double check valve assembly (DCVA), double check detector assembly (DCDA), pressure vacuum breaker assembly (PVBA), spill resistant vacuum breaker assembly (SVBA) and atmospheric vacuum breaker (AVB).

For a backflow preventer to provide proper protection, it must be approved for backflow protection, designed for the degree of hazard and backflow it is controlling, installed correctly, tested annually by a State certified tester, and repaired as necessary. Our state requires mandatory backflow protection on certain facilities where high health hazard-type cross connections are normally found.

## WATER QUALITY ISSUES IN 2009 REQUIRED AN AGREEMENT WITH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Each month, a water sample is collected from a different location in the distribution system for bacterial analysis by an independent, state-certified laboratory. From September through November 2009, the sample results came back as “unsatisfactory”, (coliform bacteria present, e-coli absent). This result is an “alert” because the presence of coliform bacteria could mean that a more serious bacteria may be in the System (coliform bacteria are present in many areas of the environment and are generally harmless to humans, but they are used as an “indicator” of possible problems). Our ordinarily “Green” Operating Permit classification was changed to “Red”, which meant a moratorium on building permits and possibly to refinancing or home sales.



Even though all results after December 2009 had been satisfactory, in February 2010 we were required to sign a Bilateral Compliance Agreement (BCA) with the Department of Health Office of Drinking Water. With quick and decisive action by the Board and your Manager, Mark Spahr, the Operating Permit classification was turned to “yellow”.

In addition to our regularly scheduled monthly bacteria samples we are also required to collect a monthly sample from each well that has been active during that month. Through January 2011, all such samples must have satisfactory results or we will be required to install continuous disinfection (chlorination).

As of completion of sample collection through December 2010, all results have been satisfactory. We anticipate continued satisfactory results for January and a satisfactory completion of our BCA with the Department of Health. At that time, our Permit classification changes from “Yellow” to “Green”.

The Board (many of whom volunteered their time in

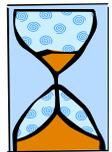


numerous instances), Mark Spahr and his then assistant, Gerry Francis (now your Operator) did a great job to isolate the probable cause of the contamination and take care of the situation.

## FOCUS OF THE WATER USE EFFICIENCY RULE

In 2003 the Washington State Legislature directed DOH to establish requirements to increase water use efficiency. A great deal of flexibility is given to water systems in this rule because of the complexity of the factors that influence water consumption, and the water system’s limited ability to influence those factors. The rule is focused on what a water system can do to increase water use efficiency. Maximizing efficiency is critical because water is a limited resource and the water system has limited ability to increase the overall amount of water available for its customers. However the water system has much more influence over consumption, and therefore more opportunities to improve the efficiency of how water is delivered from the source to the customer.

The legislation defines key water use efficiency requirements to be established that are designed to ensure efficient use of water while maintaining water system financial viability, improving affordability of supplies, and enhancing water system reliability. The Legislature stated that it also intended for the requirements to be tailored to water system size, forecasted water system demand, and supply characteristics.



**Don’t wait until it’s too late!**

The water use efficiency rule is a proactive approach to protecting public health, preserving our state’s water resources, and ensuring the efficient use of water. We are in a better position to provide sufficient water to you when we take action to reduce the amount of water taken from the resource. Water efficiency becomes even more important in the event of a drought, as climate changes become more evident, as the state’s population grows, and as fewer water rights become available to water suppliers.

We will be setting Water Use Efficiency Goals at our Annual Membership Meeting in Spring. As you think about setting your goals, consider the water supply in the Hideaway and what challenges we face. Show your neighbors your commitment to protecting the resource. Demonstrate good stewardship by helping establish goals that use water in the most efficient way possible.

Exploring what type of goals to set for H2Water begins with stating a clear objective. We encourage you to adopt the most effective and water efficient goals possible. Every goal should be specific to our system. Our objective involves different motivating factors such as water supply (con’t pg 6)

Characteristics (Seawater Intrusion), infrastructure upgrade needs, reducing outdoor water use, and the need to obtain additional connections to meet future demand. We must evaluate and re-establish our goals every six years **and** any time we submit a water system planning document to the Department of Health for approval. We have the flexibility to determine goals that make sense for you, our customers and we may set as many goals you want. These goals can be as simple as committing to repair the leaks in your own plumbing.

Come to the Annual Meeting with some Water Use Efficiency ideas that everyone can do and that help us all use our water more efficiently.



HOLIDAY HIDEAWAY WATER  
7885 Guemes Island Road #36  
Anacortes, WA 98221

**\*Price for New Water Share quoted  
on page 3 has been adjusted to  
\$11,895.00 based on new  
Construction Inflation Index.**

## WaterSense can help!

WaterSense is a voluntary public-private partnership program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Its mission is to promote the value of water and help you make smart decisions about water use and water-using products.

For more information, visit their Web site  
<http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/>  
or contact the WaterSense Helpline by email at  
watersense@epa.gov or call 866-WTR-SENS  
(987-7367)