



Thurston PUD Newsletter

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

December 2024

“What’s Happening at The PUD?” That’s a Wrap on 2024!

2024 is coming to a close, and it’s been quite a year! While we close out the year, we wanted to provide a list of items and tasks our teams within the PUD focused on in 2024:

Accounting and Finance

- ◆ The annual financial audit has begun! Every year, the PUD is audited by the Washington State Auditor’s Office as part of normal operating procedures. This is a major occurrence each year, audit results will be published in the newsletter and online at the beginning of 2025.
- ◆ In June 2024, the Finance & Accounting Team welcomed Dannie King as the District’s Accounting Assistant, primarily responsible for cash receipting and full cycle accounts payable. District staff is working on cross training on key tasks to ensure that our staff can take time away from work when planned and unplanned.

Administrative Services

- ◆ Administrative Services assists with recruitment activity. The PUD hired several new employees this year for the Accounting and Finance, Planning and Compliance, and the Field Operations Teams.
- ◆ This team also assisted with updating the PUD’s website. Check out more information at www.thurstonpud.org/projects.htm to review a list of our current projects!
- ◆ The PUD received several requests for public records in 2024, and the Administrative Services Team has assisted with processing these requests.

Customer Service—This team continues to assist customers by processing payments, managing customer accounts, troubleshooting high usage, auditing customer’s consumption, and handing monthly billing. In between their regular tasks, this team also completed a few big projects in 2024:

- ◆ Restructuring the Project Help Customer Support Program.
- ◆ Discontinuation of Equal Payment Plan Program.
- ◆ Cross training on critical tasks within the Department.

Field Operations—Our crew is still busy with meter reading, infrastructure/equipment replacement, routine operations and maintenance, and necessary repairs to provide customers with safe and reliable drinking water. A few of the other major projects they worked on this year are:

- ◆ Completed 75 water system Lead Service Line Inventories. Staff were required to excavate and inspect water service lines for each Group A water system. Staff completed 806 visual inspections of a combination of PUD lateral lines and customers’ service lines. *(Continued on Page 3)*

Thurston PUD Commissioners

District 1

Linda Oosterman

District 2

Russell E. Olsen

District 3

Chris Stearns

In This Issue

- ◆ Want to avoid frozen pipes? Check out Page 2
- ◆ Learn more about our Generator Program on Page 4.
- ◆ Does your community have an HOA? We want to know! Read Page 4 for information.

Thurston PUD will be closed for Christmas Day on Wednesday, December 25, 2024.

For water emergencies after normal business hours, call us at (866) 357-8783, your call will be routed to our answering service and on-call staff.

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Having Company for the Holidays? Your Water Usage May Increase



One of the best parts of the holiday season is getting together with friends and family members to enjoy each other's company. If you are hosting a holiday party or have company staying with you for the holidays, you may see a spike in your water usage on your bills for the next few months. Here are a few tips to help conserve water during the holiday season:

- * When washing dishes in the sink, plug your drain to utilize a sink full of hot, soapy water instead of leaving the faucet running. Also, be sure to run your dishwasher with a full load of dishes.
- * Do you need to defrost meats or veggies for your holiday meals? Consider thawing in the fridge the night before instead of running water over your food the day you are going to cook.
- * Try to scrape all or most of leftover food and scraps into your garbage to avoid using water to run your garbage disposal.

Water Quality Issue? Water Outage? – See Something, Say Something!

Our Field Technicians visit each water system as often as they possibly can. However, there may be an issue that occurs during a time when a technician isn't in your neighborhood. Many of our water systems do not have remote monitoring that would report the water quality concerns to us, so our customers often are the first ones to experience issues when they arise, such as water outages or quality issues. When issues are reported to us, we take them seriously and dispatch staff to investigate.



If you experience any issue with your water service, call us immediately at (360) 357-8783 or toll-free at (866) 357-8783. We have technicians on-call 24 hours a day. We are committed to providing our customers with safe and reliable utility services, so your questions and concerns are very important to us. We appreciate the opportunity to serve you.

Avoid Frozen Pipes

Chillier temperatures are upon us and can lead to frozen pipes which can also lead to significant property damage and costly repairs. In order to help you prepare for winter, we compiled a list of tips to avoid frozen pipes:

- **Keep your house warm.** The general recommendation for thermostat temperatures during the day is between 68 and 72 degrees Fahrenheit. At night, you may want to set your thermostat between 62 and 66 degrees Fahrenheit.
- **Heat colder spaces in your home.** Set up fans to blow heated air into colder spaces, and open vanity or cabinet doors so heated air can reach pipes under sinks or anywhere you may have exposed pipes. You can also purchase space heaters for areas in your home that are more at-risk for freezing.
- **Disconnect garden hoses from outdoor faucets and install faucet covers.** Even frost-proof outdoor faucets can burst if a faucet is connected.
- **Seal leaks.** Locate and thoroughly seal leaks that allow cold air inside. Use caulk or insulation to keep cold air out.
- **Keep your garage door closed.** Prevent heat from escaping your home by keeping your garage door closed.
- **Insulate exposed pipes.** Generally, exposed pipes are the most prone to freezing in the winter. Look for pipes in your attic, basement, garage, and any exterior water lines that may be exposed.
- **Let your faucet drip.** A trickle of hot or cold water may be all it takes to keep your pipes from freezing. Let warm water drip overnight when temperatures are below freezing, preferably from a faucet on an outside wall.

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- ◆ Swapped out aging water meters with new ones. Over 600 new meters were installed in 2024!
- ◆ Assisted the Washington State Department of Health in producing internal training videos for Sanitary Surveys.
- ◆ Rebuilt or refurbished several pump houses.

Planning and Compliance—This team works very closely with the Field Operations Team to complete necessary work at our water systems. This year was another packed year for them as they worked on several major projects planning, organizing, and securing funds. Here is a list of some of the major projects they worked on this year:

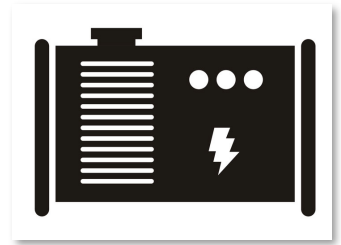
- ◆ **Lead Service Line Inventories** - Water purveyors were required to develop and submit a Lead Service Line Inventory (LSLI) to the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) by October 16, 2024, for all Group A water systems.
- ◆ **Cross Connection Control** - Completed the required follow-up for the Cross-Connection Control Program customer questionnaires and backflow testing received this year.
- ◆ **Sanitary Surveys** – A sanitary survey is a review of a public water system to assess their capability to supply safe drinking water. Staff completed 14 Sanitary Surveys in 2024.
- ◆ **Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) Remediation** – Secured Department of Health grants for remediation of PFAS at six (6) water systems. We are working on funding for two (2) more water systems.
- ◆ **Country Club Estates 521** - Completed Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) project to complete necessary upgrades to the water system.
- ◆ **Glen Alder 522** - Completed DWSRF project to complete necessary upgrades to the water system.
- ◆ **Pattison 500** – Continuing on the DWSRF project: completed the replacements of the Tri-Lakes booster pump station, drilled a new well, and started the replacement of the Christmas Tree booster pump station and reservoir.
- ◆ **Timberline 628 Upgrades** – Completed and received approval of the Water System Plan adding 60 new connections to the system.
- ◆ **Tanglewilde 600 ShakeAlert** – Installed a new seismic protection system to conserve the water supply during a large earthquake.
- ◆ **Tanglewilde 600 Main Line Replacement** – Received a Public Works Construction Loan for \$10 million to begin Phase 1 of a water mainline replacement project at the Tanglewilde-Thompson Place 600 water system, the District's largest water system, serving over 1,900 families, parks, schools, and businesses. This multi-year project, one of the largest in Thurston PUD history, will include replacement of the aging water mains, valves, hydrants, service connections, and service meters, and will start in 2025.
- ◆ **Green Cove Fish Barrier Removal** - This project is being completed with Thurston County Public Works to remove a culvert that blocks fish passage and will to facilitate salmon passage at Green Cove Creek. Thurston PUD is responsible for providing temporary water service to our customers during construction and reinstalling permanent water service after the County's work is completed. Temporary water service was installed in August 2024. We received funding for 80 percent of the PUD's estimated cost for this project with Congresswoman Strickland’s help.



Many of these projects were featured in newsletter articles throughout 2024. Want more information? You can review previous newsletters on our website at www.thurstonpud.org/newsletters.htm.

Generator Program

Storm season is here in the Pacific Northwest which means power outages are more likely to occur. During a power outage, you may not have running water if your water system does not have a generator. During this time of the year, we are often asked to install a generator for customers' water systems. The PUD created a Generator Program that can help secure financing for interested water systems through a vote of the property owners on that system. For Thurston PUD to create, manage, and administer backup power at your water system, the following criteria must be met:



- The District will provide a petition template to obtain the signatures of at least 25 percent of property owners on the water system to the requesting customer.
 - If 25 percent of property owner signatures are received, the District will send a ballot to all property owners on the water system.
- Owners of the properties served by the water system will have an opportunity to vote to determine whether they want to pursue a back-up generator for the water system.
 - To approve the generator, 66 percent of property owners must vote in favor, and residents will be required to pay for the initial cost of engineering and installing a backup generator system. The generator system costs include any required engineering, the cost of the generator itself and any installation costs. If approved by property owners and the PUD's Board of Commissioners, the PUD will purchase, install, operate, and maintain a generator.
- If 66 percent or more of the property owners votes in favor of generator, the PUD will hire an engineer to analyze the power needs of your water system. For some water systems, installing generators may create problems for customers who have septic systems. We will examine your water system to determine any potential issues.
 - Based on the engineer's findings, a cost analysis will be completed to estimate a range for the customer surcharge that includes the required engineering, the estimated cost of the generator itself, and any installation costs. Next, the property owner approved generator ballot and engineer cost analysis will be presented to the Board of Commissioners. If the Board of Commissioners approves, the generator would be purchased and installed and a surcharge implemented that would be "trued-up" once the project was completed and the actual costs were known. The generator would be serviced, maintained, and replaced by the PUD when it reaches the end of its life cycle.
- If the vote does not pass, a follow up letter will be sent to the community to summarize voting information. Water systems are limited to a vote once every two years to help alleviate the administrative costs of these initiatives as well as allowing communities to bolster advocacy and promote buy-in.

The PUD commits to working closely with customers on water systems that are interested in seeking a generator. For more information about the District's Generator Program, please call our Customer Service Team at (360) 357-8783 or email us at PUDCustomerService@thurstonpud.org.

Does Your Community Have a HOA? We Want To Know!

If your community is governed by a homeowners association (HOA), we would like to know about it. Please contact 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**
- **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.