

WATER LINES

BIRCH BAY WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT

Serving the Greater Birch Bay Area Since 1968

Spring Newsletter 2009



BP Completes Water Efficiency Audit

BP Cherry Point Refinery has completed its first water efficiency audit for the District under an agreement the District negotiated with BP and PUD #1 in 2008.

The audit was initiated on July 29, 2008 and evaluated potable water use and potable water facilities at BP's Cherry Point Refinery. The audit revealed that more than 52% of Cherry Point's potable water use facilities are already efficient according to US EPA Water Conservation Guidelines and identified areas where BP could achieve more water savings. The report recommended BP evaluate replacing existing 1.6 gpf urinals with 1.0 gpf urinal flush systems and replacing existing faucet aerators with lower flow aerators. If both recommendations are implemented, BP has the potential to save up to 6,000 gallons per day, or about 19% of the refinery's total potable water usage of 32,000 gallons per day. BP's water use efficiency improvements will make an important contribution to District-wide conservation efforts.

This audit marks the first Water Use Efficiency (WUE) audit for the District since the WUE rule went into effect January 2007. The WUE rule requires all municipal water purveyors to use water more efficiently and implement water use efficiency measures such as conducting water audits and installing water saving hardware. "We really appreciate BP's leadership and cooperation throughout the audit process," says District Water Conservation Specialist Emily Resch. "This work can serve as a model to help future efforts to manage our water supply efficiently." BP's next water efficiency audit is due in 2013.



Conservation at the District

The District just approved its 2009 Capital Improvement Projects and Operations & Maintenance Budget. The approved budgets included projects called out in an in-house conservation audit to make District facilities more water and energy efficient.

The District is the fifth highest water customer in its service area, averaging 748,621 gallons per two month billing cycle to operate the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). The following areas of energy and water saving opportunities at the District were identified:



Process Water System and Chlorination Upgrade

The District's existing process water system (recycled plant effluent) is in need of immediate repair. The upgrade will allow the District to expand the use of recycled plant effluent for other WWTP processes onsite such as chlorination. Currently the District uses approximately 8gpm of potable water 24 hours a day seven days a week for chlorination at the WWTP. Utilizing recycled process water for chlorination will reduce potable water use at the District by 90% or 4 million gallons per year.

District Welcomes Mike!



The District welcomes Mike Trueblood as our newest Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator. Mike is a lifelong Blaine resident and has 22 years of experience as a WWTP operator. His motto is "work hard, have fun!"

Use Reclaimed Water to Heat & Cool District Facilities

The current heating and cooling system at the District is also due for replacement (18+ years old) and presents another opportunity to conserve at the District. The switch to heat pumps from the existing propane furnaces would amount to \$12,750 a year in energy savings and \$200,000 over the 15+ year life span in energy savings.

Groundwater Awareness

The National Groundwater Association has designated March 8-14 as Groundwater Awareness week to promote education about groundwater as a valuable resource.



An Important Resource

- More than 90% of fresh water in the U.S. and the world is located in groundwater aquifers.
- 50% (about 140 million people) of the United States drink groundwater each day.
- Groundwater supplies over 13,000 people in NW Whatcom County and has been utilized since the early 1900s.
- The District and City of Blaine draw on groundwater supplies as their source of drinking water.

Protection & Conservation

- Do not dump, pour or flush hazardous substances on the ground, down the drain or in the toilet. Contact local waste authorities for proper disposal of antifreeze, oil, pesticides/herbicides, paint/paint thinner and cleaning chemicals
- Practice WATER CONSERVATION at home!

World Water Day

The Whatcom Water Alliance is participating in "Walk for Water" on March 22nd hosted by the City of Bellingham. Participants will walk 3 miles to demonstrate the equivalent distance a person will walk in a day for safe drinking water. The walk is followed by activities and booths at Bellingham's Depot Square. The event is being held to honor World Water Day which focuses attention on the importance of freshwater and advocating for the sustainable management of freshwater resources. For more information contact Emily at 360-371-7100.



Fix a Leak Week

EPA WaterSense program is sponsoring "Fix a Leak Week" March 16-20 to remind Americans to check their plumbing fixtures and irrigation systems for leaks. The WaterSense website www.epa.gov/watersense offers useful tips and videos about leak identification and repair.



SAVE THE DATE!

"Walk for Water"

Date: March 22nd

Time: 12pm

Place: Village Green in Fairhaven (10th & Mill St)

Details: Event details provided under World Water Day

Commissioners Approve Rate Increase

The Board of Commissioners has approved a 1% rate increase beginning April 1, 2009. With this change, an average utility bill will rise 76 cents per 2 month billing period, or \$4.56 a year. This increase reflects forecasted higher costs of power and a 4.85% wholesale water supply increase from the City of Blaine, as well as lower revenues from new development and decreased interest earnings in the coming year. After a careful review, the commissioners determined that the increase was needed for operation and maintenance of our water and sewer system and to help retain the District's excellent credit rating.

Published by

Birch Bay Water & Sewer
7096 Pt. Whitehorn Rd.
Birch Bay, WA 98230
Phone: (360) 371-7100
Fax: (360) 371-2806
Website: www.bbwsd.com

Commissioners:

Don Monfort
Carl Reichhardt
Patrick Alesse

General Manager:

Roger M. Brown