



Water Lines

BIRCH BAY WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT
SERVING THE GREATER BIRCH BAY AREA SINCE 1968

FALL

NEWSLETTER

2016

Meet Your Commissioner - Patrick Alesse

Patrick Alesse has served as a District Commissioner for 19 years. His first term as District Commissioner began in 1997. Alesse believes that government is needed to provide the necessary environment for both business and community to grow.

Commissioner Alesse's favorite part about serving is public involvement and being a public servant to the Birch Bay community. He annually participates in the Blaine Fourth Grade Water Awareness Poster Contest and other District community outreach programs. One District community program created during Alesse's time on the Board is the partnership with the Crisis Assistance Program of Blaine (CAP). The Crisis Assistance Program of Blaine, provides financial assistance to individuals and families facing utility termination. The District allows customers to donate toward the CAP on their utility bill.



Commissioner Patrick Alesse

Alesse was a school teacher at Blaine School District for 30 years and has worked in the private sector for 46 years as owner of The C Shop. In addition to serving as Commissioner for the District, Alesse is an appointed member of the BBWARM Citizens Advisory Committee and a frequent participant at Whatcom County Council meetings.

District Achieves Clean State Audit Results Again

Earlier this year the Washington State Auditors performed a routine accountability and financial statement audit for the years 2014 - 2015 and the District achieved a clean audit. The Auditors reviewed accountability areas such as payroll, safeguarding of assets and utility billing. They noted the District has a very proactive attitude towards accountability and internal controls. The District also achieved a clean audit for the years 2012 - 2013. The State Auditors published report can be found at www.sao.wa.gov.

The State Auditor's Office is an elected agency and have independence to objectively perform audits. Their audits are designed to comply with professional standards as well as to satisfy the requirements of federal, state and local laws. The District is audited every two years by the State Auditors. The next audit is scheduled for 2018.

Thanks For Helping Us Conserve!

Birch Bay experienced a moderately hot, dry summer with warm temperatures and little precipitation. Thanks to our customers' support for the Water Wisely Voluntary Watering Schedule and other conservation practices, usage did not significantly spike and helped keep peak day demand within our historical peak day average. This enabled the District to serve our customers while keeping enough water in storage to provide for fire fighting and other contingencies, despite the challenging weather pattern. **THANKS AGAIN!**





Winterizing Your Home



Are you leaving for an extended period of time during the winter or do you have a vacant home in Birch Bay? Most residential water leaks result from pipes breaking during winter freezes and homeowners are responsible for ensuring their houses are protected from the Arctic blast that the Pacific Northwest occasionally gets. Fall is a good time to double check your water and sewer pipes to ensure everything is still protected before winter sets in regardless if you are leaving or not. Water damage can cost you thousands of dollars.

If Your Home Will Be Vacant for an Extended Time Period:

- Turn off water at the main supply point
- Drain all water: indoor and outdoor
- Make sure you have no exposed water pipes
- Leave furnace on a low setting (55°F) - lack of heat can freeze pipes in the wall and basement

General Winterizing Tips

- Insulate outside pipes and faucets
- Insulate pipes and faucets in unheated areas such as attics, garages and crawl spaces
- Check to see that vents under your home are closed.
- Inspect your water system closely during and immediately following cold weather, to verify that your water pipes are still in good shape.

Stealing Water is a Felony!

Stolen water costs the District's customers much more than just the loss of the water itself. It is expensive due to damages caused from improper connections, vandalism, and improper operation of hydrants and valves. These actions can lead to significant damage to the distribution system and residences.

Contractors and others who need a temporary water source must apply for a hydrant permit. The District supplies a backflow prevention device and hydrant meter so the distribution system is protected and water consumption is monitored. Fire Departments have access to fire hydrants and must also let the District know when and where water is utilized, particularly for non-emergency events.



Example of a Hydrant Meter Assembly

All other use of water that does not occur through a water meter and/or that wasn't explicitly approved by BBWSD is considered theft. Theft will be prosecuted to the maximum extent of the law, including all damages and labor costs that may have occurred as a result. Stealing water is NOT a petty offense, it costs everyone.

Please report suspected theft immediately. Customers are encouraged to take pictures and report any suspicious activity in and around fire hydrants to District staff at 360-371-7100.

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