

On Tap

Utilizing Your Funds

Tuolumne Utilities District takes the management of your water rate dollars very seriously. The District's management staff continuously assesses the District's finances and upcoming projects to best utilize funds available for operations, maintenance and infrastructure improvements.

Recently, Tuolumne Utilities District's Board of Directors on June 12, 2012 approved a new water rate plan which includes a water rate increase for its water customers. Although approved by the Board this month to be effective July 1, 2012, you will see a change in your water rate customer billing statement after August 1, 2012. To view the approved water rates please visit the TUD website at www.tudwater.com. If you have any questions or would like a personalized estimate on your new water rate, please contact one of our friendly customer service staff members at **209-532-5536** (Monday through Friday, 7am to 4pm).

Every dollar you pay TUD for water service is spent on operating, maintaining and improving your water supply service. As a governmental agency, TUD does not make a profit and relies on money received from water rates as the source of funding to keep a very complex water system in compliance with strict state and federal drinking water standards, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 day a year. The dollar bill listed to the right is based on the the projected water revenue and costs for the next fiscal year of 2012-13.

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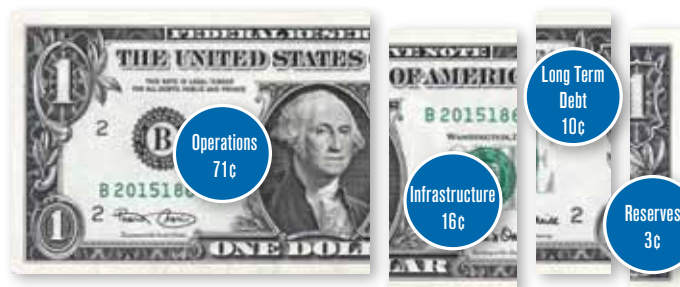
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Tuolumne Utilities District (TUD)



Where your water bill dollar goes...

- **Operations:** treatment, supply, maintenance, administrative, regulatory compliance
- **Infrastructure:** system improvements
- **Long-term Debt:** principal and interest costs on various loans
- **Reserves:** funds set aside for emergencies and future needs



Prevent Sewer Overflows and Save Money!



In recent years TUD has noticed an increase in the number of sewage overflows into homes and businesses caused by roots, grease and general sewer pipeline deterioration. When a

sewer blockage occurs in a private sewer pipeline or in a public sewer main, sewage backs up until it finds the lowest point to escape. The costs associated with a sewer backup in a home or business is staggering and **estimated costs range from \$5,000 to \$30,000**. In general, you own the sewer pipeline from your home to the street and TUD owns and operates the portion of the piping in the street.

Prevention: Damage resulting from sewage backing up into a home or business can easily be prevented by installing a Sewer-Relief Valve in the sewer pipeline serving your property. The Sewer-Relief Valve allows sewage to flow away from your building outside your home or business instead of inside. Sewer-Relief Valves are available **free of charge**, one per customer, at the TUD office at 18885 Nugget Blvd in Sonora. TUD staff would be glad to assist you (*free of charge*) in locating your sewer cleanout and if not found, can identify the location where one should be installed.



Staff Spotlight - Inside TUD

Lise Lemmonier

Lise started with TUD in March 2006. She began her water career at AquaLab as a glass washer, performing analysis, sampling and preparing reports. Lise is just one of the 12 certified Water Treatment operators on staff at TUD that oversees the complex 17 water treatment systems. Not only does Lise hold an advanced water treatment certification (level 4) issued by the State of California, she also serves as the District's Regulatory Compliance Specialist. Lise collects samples at our numerous water treatment plants and reports back to the California Department of Public Health, monthly, quarterly, annually and tri-annually depending on the type of water system.

You may have recently received the "Annual Water Quality Report" (consumer confidence reports) for 2011 in your mailbox. Demonstrating its commitment to public health protection and the public's right-to-know about local environmental information, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires community water systems to put **annual drinking water quality reports** into the hands of their customers. Lise works on this report every year to make sure it is distributed to all of our water customers by July 1st as required by the State.

Water Treatment Operator Responsibilities

A treatment plant operator is responsible for operating and maintaining a water treatment plant. This includes adjusting chemical feed systems, performing maintenance on pumps and other equipment. The number one responsibility of a treatment operator is to make sure the water that is being served to the community is safe, which includes prohibiting any water borne diseases from entering the water system. Each treatment plant is different; each has its own oddities, depending on its location and water source. TUD operators have the knowledge to operate any given treatment plant at any time, seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

Certifications

- Water Treatment Operator IV
- Water Distribution Operator II
- Lab Technician I
- Waste Water Operator II

Personal: Lise has four grown children and has lived in the Twain Harte area since 1975.



California Friendly

Plant of the Month

Featured plant: *Eriogonum umbellatum*, commonly known as "**Sulfur Buckwheat**," "Sulfur-flower buckwheat" or simply "Sulfur Flower" is native to the western U.S. It loves to grow on hot, dry, rocky, sunny slopes and makes an excellent addition to a rock garden. It will not tolerate wet or clay soils, but it grows beautifully on slopes with good drainage. Its natural range is from 2500 to 10,000 feet in elevation, but it can grow well as low as Jamestown, if given a naturalized environment of rocky, sloping soil. According to a description by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the seeds are an important source of food for many birds and small mammals. Quail and grouse will also feed on the leaves. Sulfur buckwheat can be planted from seed or by purchasing native plants, in the fall just before winter rains begin.

Sulfur Buckwheat

Size:	Up to 18 inches tall
Color:	Flowers, bright sulfur yellow in summer
Water:	Low water, drought tolerant
Exposure:	Full sun

Gardening Tips from Rebecca Miller-Cripps

of the University of California Cooperative Extension Natural Resources Program

Summer Garden Tip: During our hot California summer, the question is often asked, "**How much water does my plant need?**" The answer: "**It depends.**"

Effective irrigation depends on several factors – type of soil, slope, elevation, type of plants, where the plant is growing, etc.

In general, during July and August, plants evaporate (from the soil) and transpire (breathe out from their leaves) about two inches of water per week. This is called "evapotranspiration," and needs to be replaced to keep the plant healthy.

However, this is a very general rule and depends on what kind of plant it is. For example, many California native plants go into a type of dormancy during the hot, dry summer. Their growth spurt is during the cool, wet winter when water is more plentiful. By slowing growth during the summer, they

also reduce their water needs. Efforts to "help them grow" by watering them can cause root rot, which will kill the plant.

Even in the hottest part of summer, most lawns don't need to be watered every day. Less frequent, deeper waterings encourage turf grass roots to grow deeper into the soil, insulating them from the heat.

You also need to know how much water your sprinkler system puts out. There's an easy test to determine "application rates" at www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/TOOLS/TURF/MAINTAIN/output.html

Here's a calculator to help you determine how often and how much to water: www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/TOOLS/TURF/MAINTAIN/irrsched.html (and there's even a link to help you identify what kind of turf is growing in your yard).



General Manager's Corner

by Peter J. Kampa,
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July 2012

It is my pleasure to begin to bring you behind the scenes of TUD so that you can better understand how efficiently we spend your money. Starting with this issue of On Tap, with each edition we will introduce you to a new aspect of TUD finances. As you know, TUD is a governmental agency and therefore is not managed like PG&E, Comcast, AT&T or other for profit California Public Utilities Commission regulated utilities. TUD, which is regulated by you, the state laws and constitution, can only charge a fee high enough to cover operating expenses plus equipment replacement and upgrades; no profit.

The District will be starting its next fiscal year this month, July 1, 2012. Now that the new water rates have been adopted, your dedicated TUD staff can continue to make positive progress on improving the condition of your water and wastewater infrastructure. With the continued support of the TUD Board of Directors, we are energized and positive about achieving even more efficiencies and completing additional major infrastructure improvements over the next few years. We encourage you to take the time to understand TUD, as we are viewed in the industry as one of the more creative and innovative rural utilities, finding the best solutions to the significant challenges that we face.

This reminds me of how long the District has been supplying water to Tuolumne County. TUD and its predecessors have a long history that demonstrates our ability to serve the public and meet its changing needs. Just think, the District and its predecessors have been providing water services utilizing the South Fork Stanislaus River water since 1852. Our predecessors and the District have demonstrated flexibility by transitioning from providing water for mining purposes to providing water and wastewater services to meet all needs within our county.

TUD's Anniversary

As we move forward, we need to recognize an important milestone for the County and TUD; the 20 year anniversary of TUD. TUD was created 20 years ago, July 1, 1992, when voters approved the consolidation of Tuolumne Regional Water District #2 and Tuolumne Water Systems, a department of Tuolumne County, to form TUD. I look forward to working with our staff, Board members and the community as we work on mapping out the future of the District for this coming year and years to come.



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On Tap is published to keep Tuolumne Utilities District customers informed about issues and upcoming events. If you have any story ideas or suggestions, please mail them to Lisa Westbrook, at 18885 Nugget Blvd., Sonora, CA 95370 or email at lisaw@tuolumneutilities.com.

