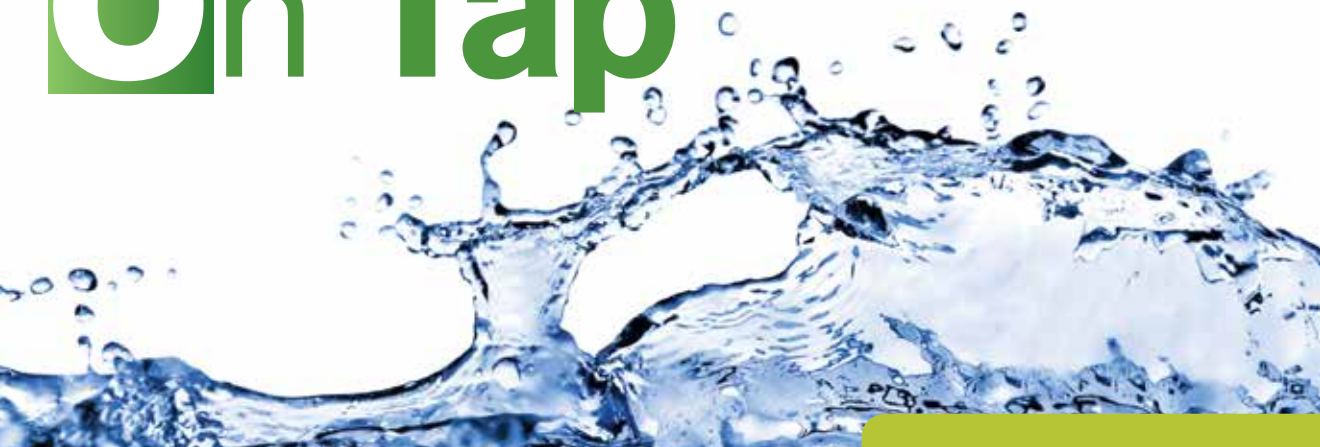


On Tap



Emergency Repairs

TUD's Construction/Maintenance crews have the challenging job of responding to emergency main line water breaks at all times of the day, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. You may wonder why they didn't schedule a better time to fix a water repair. Why are they fixing this problem now? TUD is responding to an emergency water line break – these are not scheduled and can happen at any time.

Water is an essential and critical resource to this community. Our crews strive to respond as quickly as possible to save this precious resource. We are responsible for continuing to deliver quality drinking water to over 44,000 residents in Tuolumne County through an underground network of pipes that span over 112 squares miles, which include 330 miles of water pipes that stretch from above Sierra Village down to the Jamestown and Columbia areas.

There are many issues facing the TUD water distribution system that include aged infrastructures, with some pipe that is over 100 years old, and substandard or poor quality pipe that was already installed when TUD acquired certain water systems. In 2012, TUD responded to nearly 200 water emergency main line and service line breaks and leaks throughout the County. Seventeen of those occurred on the weekend.

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Tuolumne Utilities District (TUD)



Main Line Water Break - Willow Springs

Phoenix Lake Project Update

TUD customers along the Phoenix Lake watershed will be receiving an informational brochure in January on ways they can help protect Phoenix Lake as part of The Phoenix Lake Preservation and Restoration Plan. Phoenix Lake is the primary drinking water source for Sonora, Jamestown, Scenic View, Mono Village and East Sonora. Constructed in 1852 to support hydraulic mining, the 88-acre lake today is one of several reservoirs in the Tuolumne Utilities District (TUD) distribution system. A loss of one third of Phoenix Lake's water storage capacity has occurred over the past 100 years.



The Phoenix Lake Preservation and Restoration Plan has developed conceptual plans for lake restoration (including a lake dredging plan), water quality improvements, wetland habitat improvements, public access, and fire management. Ultimately, the Plan will be used to prepare an engineered project design, environmental review, secure community support and construction grant funding.

More information on the Phoenix Lake Preservation and Restoration Plan can be found on the District's website at [www.tudwater.com/projects-development/phoenix lake plan](http://www.tudwater.com/projects-development/phoenix-lake-plan). The District is currently seeking funding to complete the environmental process, permitting and design for the Phoenix Lake Plan. A grant application will be submitted through the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) this Spring.

Staff Spotlight - Inside TUD

Leonard Mauro, *Operations Manager*

Leonard started his long career with TUD in 1987 as a Wastewater Operator, Grade 1. He quickly advanced in the Wastewater Department and by 1989 he was promoted to a Grade III Wastewater Operator. In 1991, Leonard was promoted to Electrician/Instrumentation Technician and three years later was promoted to Operations Manager where he has served to this date.

Being an Operations Manager at TUD is no easy task. Leonard oversees all the field crews in Construction/Maintenance, Water Distribution, Wastewater, Communications and Water Operations. With his 25 years of experience, Leonard has a vast array of experience of all levels of the District.

Leonard also oversees Emergency Operations. **What was the most difficult emergency situation that you had to respond to as your role of Operations Manager?**

Most recently we had a major failure at the Columbia ditch in 2011. Due to extreme weather conditions it caused an overflow and a ditch slide in a remote area. Once this happened we knew we had to respond quickly or the residents of Columbia would be out of water. In about four days, with the aid of a helicopter, TUD had this ditch repaired and had water flowing again to Columbia.



Leonard with
Richard Ibarra of KCRA3



TUD repairing Columbia Ditch slide
2-2011

There have been a lot of changes facing water and wastewater agencies in California in the past 25 years. What are the biggest challenges you see facing the District?

One of the most critical issues will be keeping up with the increasing federal and state regulatory requirements in both water and wastewater. Each year these regulatory requirements add more costs to the District. The annual regulatory costs for wastewater is approximately \$50,000 a year in permits and for water the costs are about \$57,000. The increased costs not only pertain to TUD but will also impact other smaller water and wastewater agencies in the County.

Planting Preparation:

Soil structure takes years to form but can be broken down rapidly through mismanagement, improper tillage, or intensive cultivation. Working your garden's wet soil or even walking on it leads to compaction and loss of structure. If winter storms have soaked the soil, do not consider tilling, working, or walking on it until the soil has had several days to dry—the more clay content in your soil, the longer it will take to dry to a workable level. Soil should be crumbly, not sticky before you dig. Compaction creates plate-like, horizontal structures in the soil which can block the penetration of air and water, both of which are necessary for the growth of plants. Once compaction has occurred, it's extremely difficult to "un-compact" your garden soil.

One technique used to improve garden soil structure is to add 3"-4" of mulch to the soil surface. Over time, organic matter from the mulch will create pores between soil particles, allowing water and air to penetrate. Increased penetrability in heavy (clay) soils increases its "tilth," the ability to grow plants.



Gardening Tips from Rebecca Miller-Cripps

of the University of California Cooperative Extension Natural Resources Program

Instead of working the soil, it's the time of year for pruning. At lower elevations, prune fruit trees and ornamental trees now when branches are bare and branch structure is visible. Wait until a little later (a month or two) at higher elevations, depending on weather. Do not prune spring-flowering shrubs at this time—you'll cut off the developing flowers. At lower elevations, roses can be pruned now; at higher elevations, wait until March. Strip off and discard any remaining rose leaves to discourage fungal diseases. Attend a UC Cooperative Extension Master Gardener pruning class on February 2: Rose and Fruit Tree Pruning, or March 3: Grapevine Pruning. Classes are held at the Master Gardener demonstration garden, 52 South Barretta Street, Sonora. Demonstrations begin at 10:30 a.m. and are free to the public.





General Manager's Corner

by Peter J. Kampa, pkampa@tudwater.com

On December 7, 2012 four new members were sworn in to serve as District directors. As soon as they were seated on the Board, Kent

Johnson, John Maciel, Jim Grinnell and Michael Sarno set out to immediately learn more about the District and discuss policies and other procedures of the District they would like to see clarified and/or changed. Three additional special Board meetings were called by the new Board members on December 13 and two meetings on the 18th, to discuss such items as legal representation for the District, possible revisions to the District financial reporting to the Board and public, how Board committees are assigned and their role in decision making, and how items are submitted for the agenda by the public and Board. In each meeting, the Board and management had vibrant discussion on these items, came to agreement on concepts and will likely review revised policy language at the first Board meeting in January. One item that the new Board immediately raised was the possibility of holding TUD Board meetings during the day, instead of at night. Attendance at 7:00pm Board meetings is typically very low, ranging from one to four audience members. Many other districts in the region conduct their meetings in the daytime, and have seen higher attendance than TUD has seen in the past. In addition, members of the business community have voiced the opinion that they would be more inclined to be involved in TUD meetings if they were

held during the day. On December 13th the new Board voted to change the regular TUD meeting schedule to 2:00pm on the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month. Moving the meetings to regular office hours will also save money, as it will allow more TUD staff the opportunity to participate in Board meetings, provide presentations on projects and issues without incurring overtime costs, etc.

All in all, the Board's discussions thus far have been intended to make it easier and faster to get items on the agenda and make decisions, increase public outreach and understanding of TUD finances, ensure that all actions and activities are conducted in accordance with law, increase efficiency and reduce costs. TUD management staff met with the Board during a public meeting on December 18th in the afternoon to present an overview of each TUD department, manager's area of responsibility, staffing, services provided, legal issues, as well as Board member and management roles. The Board is scheduling in January and February four additional study sessions to get an in depth understanding of the District's water and wastewater services, projects and finances. These sessions are open to the public and will be publicized once the final schedule and agenda is developed. Please plan to be involved with the District in the future as we discuss and decide on critical infrastructure issues. We look forward to a productive new year in 2013!

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