

# ***STRAIGHT FROM THE TAP***

JANUARY 2016

ISSUE 19

## ***Proposed City imposed Utility Tax***

At the end of October 2015 the Des Moines City Council contacted the Water District telling us that they were going to impose a utility tax on the independent Water and Sewer Districts and that this new tax would go in to affect January 2016. At the last minute in mid-December the City Council decided to wait until early 2016 to raise the issue again. The new tax would add up to between 11% to 16% increase in your water

bill. The Water District is required by law to pass this tax onto the rate payer otherwise it is considered a gift of public funds.

King County Water District #54 strongly opposes this new tax. We believe the tax to be regressive for an essential life service, will cause financial hardship for many District customers, and not in the best interest for the rate-payers. The City of Des Moines is the first and only City to try

and impose this tax on an independent publicly owned Special Purpose District.

There are five independently owned public Special Purpose Districts (water/sewer) within Des Moines. Recently Lakehaven Utility District negotiated a franchise agreement which makes them exempt from paying any utility tax for the next 20 years. The other four Districts will pay this tax if passed. We feel

Lakehaven Utility District is getting preferential treatment and you as a citizen should be very concerned about the fairness of this exemption coming from your City Council.

We ask you as a rate payer to be aware of what is coming in the following months and to voice your opinion to your City Council. Feel free to let them know how you feel about this new tax by contacting them at [www.desmoineswa.gov](http://www.desmoineswa.gov).

## ***Many of you have been asking...***

“What’s the status of our continuing to add chlorine to the water”.

In September of 2013 we had a routine water sample that indicated the presence of e-coli in the water. Since then we have been injecting chlorine. The District has made many changes and improvements to the procedures of how

we are monitoring and testing our water.

King County Water District #54 is required to draw 6 routine water samples a month to check for the presence of coliform. These coliform tests are inexpensive and the presence of coliform in the water does not indicate that the water is unsafe to

drink. If coliform is found in the water sample, further testing is done to determine if harmful bacteria is present.

We have installed water sampling stations throughout the district. In the past we had always taken our water samples from homes or businesses. These are not ideal

places to draw routine coliform samples from. We have also added a permanent chlorine injection system that helps us deliver a more consistent dosage of chlorine. Although this does not insinuate that we intend on continuing to chlorinate our water.

***Continued on page 2***

## Many of you have been asking...

*Continued from page 1*

This chlorine injection system was installed to provide an additional layer of protection for the customers of the system and will be used for possible emergency situations.

In addition we are improving our cross connection program. This means multi-family and businesses will need to install a reverse pressure backflow assembly (RPBA). This

gives the District added protection from water that could flow in a reverse direction and could possibly have harmful contaminants.

We are hoping that by this summer The Department of Health will allow us to turn the chlorinator off so that we may return to the unchlorinated water that our customers have overwhelmingly stated they prefer.

## CodeRED Sign Up

To insure that you are included in the emergency "CodeRED" call system we are asking that you go to the website and add your contact information.

Fill out the form and submit it. There is no charge for this service. If you do not have a computer with internet service, we are including a signup sheet in this newsletter, please fill it out and re-

turn it to us, we will also have forms available at the District office. Our office manager will input the information for you. The District office has a drop box in the door so you can return your form at your convenience.

This is very important to complete if you wish to be included in the robo-call system in the case of an emergency.

## Your Board of Commissioners

King County Water District is guided by a Board of three Commissioner, elected by the citizens of the water system. Each Commissioner is elected to a 6-year term. This year we have two new and one returning Commissioner.

**Yoshiko Grace Matsui** currently holds Position #1. Yoshiko is newly elected this year. She works for the City of Seattle in the Human Resource Department.

**John Rayback** currently holds Position #2. John

has been a Water District Commissioner for 15 years, he was originally appointed in November 2000. He is a lifelong resident of Des Moines and is a semi-retired Attorney.

**Jim Langston** currently holds Position #3. Jim is a

retired school teacher And is involved in many local organizations such as the Historical Society. Jim is also a lifelong resident of Des Moines.

We welcome John back and look forward to Yoshiko and Jim joining us.

## District Staff

King County Water District No. 54 is a small water purveyor therefore our staff only has 3 employees, with contractors filling in when necessary.

**Eric Clarke** is the District Manager and worked for the District

since 2001. He has worked in the water purveying field since 1984. A priority of Eric's is working with our contract engineer in getting the chlorinator turned off so we can return to our unchlorinated water.

**Patti Clayton** is the Office Manager and has been here since 2001. She has been a long time resident of Des Moines and lives within the Water District. Most of the visitors to the office are greeted by her.

**Dammiean Wolkenhauer** is in charge of Field Maintenance. He has been busy replacing meters and maintaining the reservoir facilities. Dammiean started with the District in February of 2015.

## *Be Vigilant*

Western Washington has just went through one of the driest seasons on record. In Western Washington the dry season usually begins in June and last through September. You don't have to be a scientist to recognize that this year was exceptionally hot and dry and was not a normal weather year. As you would expect water usage throughout the District was substantially higher during this period than we typically experience.

Even though the District has sufficient resource to permit unrestricted use year round, we want our customer to not be wasteful of the resource. One of the more common ways of wasting water is to over water your yard and plants. Experts recommend that you water

your yard and garden with a single soaking a week of about one inch of water. The best time to water is either in the evening or early morning to minimize evaporation. growth and conserves water. If temperature goes above normal, then additional watering may be needed.

Another common way water is wasted is through leaks. These occur from time to time in both our distribution lines and in customer plumbing systems. The District has an active program to keep the District's distribution system leaks to a minimum and we encourage customers to be vigilant with the home systems. As a result, The deep watering encourages deep root mind-er, customers are respon-

sible for the water that goes through the meter and thus leaks occur on the customer side of the meter is the responsibility of the customer.

Be aware of leaks that can happen in toilets and faucets. While they may seem small, they can waste a tremendous amount of water over time. If you suspect you have a leak it is recommended that you turn off all fixtures and look at the water meter. If the small triangle is turning, it is likely that there is a leak. Large leaks are more likely to be evidenced by wet spots on the property, wet crawl spaces or by a significant drop in water pressure, if you find a significant leak in your system, it is recommended that you turn off the water at the meter and have

the leak fixed as soon as possible. The District has a policy of reducing the bill for leaked volume of water if the leak is outside and goes undetected until the meter is read at billing time by the District. If you have question about the District's policy contact the office.

King County Water District No. 54 reads approximately 750 meters which we mail to the customers every other month. Since each meter must be visually inspected or tapped with our remote meter reader to determine its usage, it is very important to have the area around the meter free of obstacles allowing easier access and is much appreciated.



## *Spring Projects*

This spring King County Water District No. 54 will pressure wash the elevated reservoir. The reservoir needs extensive repairs to the interior where the water resides. We will also need to do

some seismic upgrades. In the meantime we will just wash and do some spot repair. This should hold the other upgrades off for a few years.

Early this new year we will be starting our flush-

ing program. This program is a unidirectional flushing, which is the staff creating a dead end and pulling water as quickly as possible to pull all of the mineral/manganese out of the pipe by scour-

ing the pipe with the moving water. This should take about a month and the most of the work is done during the night hours.

# KING COUNTY WATER DISTRICT NO. 54

922 South 219th Street  
Des Moines, WA 98198

Phone: 206-878-7210  
Fax: 206-824-1909  
Website: www.kc wd54.org

Presorted Standard  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Seattle, WA  
Permit No. 4136

## **Water District 54 Hours**

Office: M-F 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Answering Service: Available  
24 hours a day, 7 day a week.

Board of Commissioner  
Meetings held 1st and 3rd  
Tuesdays at 4:00 pm at the  
District offices.

### **PAGE 1**

***..PROPOSED CITY IMPOSED  
UTILITY TAX***

***..MANY OF YOU HAVE BEEN  
ASKING...***

### **PAGE 2**

***..CODERED SIGN UP***

***..DISTRICT BOARD & STAFF***

### **PAGE 3**

***..BE VIGILANT***

***..SPRING PROJECTS***

### **PAGE 4**

***..WATER EMERGENCIES***

### **PAGE 5**

***..CODERED SIGN UP FORM***

## ***Water Emergencies***

### ***Service Interruptions-***

Occasional service interruptions are necessary to repair, or install water mains. When possible, we will notify affected customers about scheduled maintenance or construction that requires temporarily turning off the water.

Crews try to schedule planned maintenance during off-peak water demand, but in the event of a main break, leak, or other emergency, water service may be interrupted without notice in

order to isolate the break, prevent flooding and repair the main. Most repairs are made within several hours.

***Discolored Water*** -You may occasionally experience discolored water out of your tap. This is caused by mineral and other deposits that settle out of the water and build up on the pipe wall over time.

The deposits become dislodged and dissolved in the water when pressure changes. This is not

harmful, simply let your faucet run until the water becomes clear.

To prevent the buildup of mineral in the water main, the District routinely flushes fire hydrant to clean the water main of these deposits.

***District Boundaries....*** The District boundaries are from approximately South 216<sup>th</sup> Street on the North to the Kent-Des Moines Road (SR516) on the South and from approximately 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue South on the East to the water on the West.



**KEEPING CITIZENS INFORMED**



Please print all information clearly

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Location type: \_\_\_\_\_ Home \_\_\_\_\_ Business

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone numbers you want associated with this address:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like an email contact also?: \_\_\_\_\_

I authorize personnel of King County Water District #54 to submit this information electronically

X \_\_\_\_\_ Please print name: \_\_\_\_\_

Turn this form in to the District office or go online and sign up at [www.ecnetwork.com/codered/](http://www.ecnetwork.com/codered/) Go to Resident Enrollment