

Water Currents

Highland Lakes Water District
Providing quality drinking water to residents of Highland Lakes

Volume 25 Issue 3

Fall, 2024

President's Message

Friends and neighbors, as the year is rapidly coming to an end and fall is in the air, it offers a time to reflect on the changes and progress that your board of directors have made in 2024 YTD. Many leaks in the raw / well system and in the treated / drinking water system have been identified and repaired. Many control valves have been located and exercised. Five well meter pits have been constructed. Seven wells have been brought back on line. Treatment monitoring and injection systems in the plant have been maintained and calibrated for optimal performance and dependability. And lastly, the ultra-filtration project has been progressing according to schedule. The team we assembled for this effort has been a pleasure to work with and have proven themselves to be true professionals. As I mentioned in my last president's message, we have a funding shortfall for this project due to additional state engineering requirements and an extensive review / approval process by the state engineers. We are very close in securing additional funding to make up this shortfall and expect to wrap this up before year's end.

As many of you are aware, we posted a notice that sought individuals to submit a letter of interest to join our board of directors due to a resignation. Since the time of the posting, one additional board member submitted their resignation due to moving out of state. Both of these "former" board members made significant contributions to the district and our community. I sincerely thank these terrific individuals (Evan Leskovec and Greg Winkler) for all their time and work as board members and friends.

New board members: We did receive interest from the community and I am pleased to announce the following changes to the Highland Lakes Water District Board of Directors. President – Sue Morford, Public Relations - Shelly Dolbeer, Treasurer - Brian Dillon, Secretary - Melinda Moyn and Operations - Ken Morford. I believe this realignment of board duties and responsibilities will provide our continued focus and direction in providing top quality drinking water service to Highland Lakes.

Lastly, a big THANKS to those individuals that have helped us with leak detection / repairs and testing. We thank you for your past assistance and will be very grateful for your continued support.

Ken Morford,
HLWD Operations Director

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I completely agree that the change in positions of the Board of Directors is to the great benefit of the District. Ken has worked diligently to get our water system back to where it was meant to be after several years of neglect by previous water operators. The Board was able to find and hire a new operator and, if you have not yet met Neal, please do not hesitate to introduce yourselves. Shelly Dolbeer, our new Director of Public Relations, has many years of experience in communications and marketing. She will manage the publication of the quarterly newsletter among her many other duties. There is a definite learning curve for much of the language and operations of the District so we will try not to bombard Shelly with everything all at once. With her experience and enthusiasm for this job, you will be hearing more from her as we move forward.

I previously served on the Board from 2011 to 2020, 8 of those years as President. During this time, the District was able to work through the construction and implementation of the new Treatment and Storage Facility. If you lived in the subdivision during that time, I am sure you remember the questions and concerns about communication and transparency that arose and what was done to mitigate those problems. I plan to continue the use of email messages to each household as our main source of communication. Therefore, if you are new to the District or have changed emails recently, please let me know so that I can update our records. Remember we do not sell or release your information to anyone. Be sure that my email address (smorford1453@gmail.com) is included with your allowed email addresses so important District information does not get thrown in with your spam email. Also please know that the use of social media is not allowed as a valid or approved form of communication so you will not see authorized information from the Water District posted on the

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Highland Lakes Residents/Owners Facebook page. Notices of board meetings and other permitted communications will be posted on the bulletin boards throughout the community. Also, hopefully by the first part of 2025, our State authorized website will be up and running and available as a legitimate source of all kinds of pertinent information for our residents.

We continue to ask for your vigilance in spotting and reporting unusual streams of water as you are out and about in the subdivision. Please call our business office line (719-687-7937) during regular business hours. After business hours or on weekends, please call our emergency line (719-247-1191). The information we have received in the past has been invaluable to us and we thank you for your help. Please be watchful for leaks in and around your home as well, especially in your toilets - they seem to be our biggest culprits. Remember to call the District office if you need some of the free tablets which, when placed in your toilet, can help to determine if there is a leak. Also, please check to be sure you have a pressure reduction valve (PRV) installed in your water line. Often, water will enter water-using appliances at fluctuating or very high pressures, especially in locations close to the water source. This pressure often needs to be kept within a certain range to avoid damage to appliances, or accidents involving burst pipes. Our water operator suggests 40-60 psi. In addition, we would like to remind you to check your water supply line and make sure it, and you, are protected from a break. This includes the Property Shut Off Valve or PSOV outside your home. It should be marked with a blue and white marker. Make sure it is visible to you or another driver when plowing snow or driving out of your driveway. Any damage done to the PSOV, the water meter or the MXU device is your responsibility as those items are owned by the District. Those of you who have water lines running through unheated spaces in your homes should protect and insulate those water lines. We recommend that your thermostat be set no lower than 55 degrees and leave the doors to all rooms open to allow the warm air to circulate. In particularly cold weather, you should also open the cabinets to expose under counter and outside wall water lines to the warmer inside air. If your service line enters the house in an unheated room, keep a heat source in that room to keep the line from freezing. Protective measures will vary depending on your particular situation and should be selected with advice from plumbing and heating specialists. These same procedures should be addressed especially if you are leaving us for the winter months or if you have your home up for sale and leave the water on. Incidentally, the Board's recommendation for these wintertime situations is to turn your water completely off and drain the lines before you leave. We have had several leaks occur inside of vacant homes during winter months and these can be extremely costly to you, the owner, not only with the cost of the large amount of water lost but also property loss damage to your home and possessions. PLEASE be sure to winterize your home and take advantage of the once per year "free water turn off and on" service offered by the District.

Our next newsletter will be delivered to you at the beginning of 2025 so until that time, please stay safe and have a warm and wonderful holiday season.

Sue Morford
HLWD President

Winterizing Your Home: Essential Tips for Snowbirds and Sellers

As winter approaches, preparing your water system to avoid costly damage is crucial. Whether you're heading south or selling your home, follow these best practices to avoid major headaches.

For Snowbirds: How to Winterize Your Water System

If you're away during winter, you have two main options:

1. **Shut Off Your Water Completely**
 - Turn off the main water valve.
 - Open faucets and flush toilets to drain remaining water.
 - Add non-toxic antifreeze to drains to prevent freezing.
 - Contact the District — you're entitled to one FREE shut-off/turn-on service per year.
2. **Keep Water Running with a Set Thermostat**
 - o Set your thermostat to at least 55°F to prevent freezing pipes.
 - o Open cabinet doors to allow warm air to circulate around pipes.
 - o Consider a smart thermostat for remote monitoring.

For Homeowners Selling During the Winter

If selling your home, take extra precautions:

- Shut off the water if no one will be there to avoid burst pipes.
- Notify the District if you plan to shut off the water for accurate billing. The District offers a free shut-off/turn-on service yearly.
 - If the home stays on the market, ensure the thermostat is set properly or arrange periodic checks.

Worst-Case Scenario: What Happens if You Don't Winterize

Burst pipes can lead to flooding, damage to drywall, flooring, and furniture, and costly repairs that may exceed \$10,000, but taking preventive steps can help you avoid these disasters.

Reach Out for Help

For assistance, call 719-687-7937 during business hours. We're here to help keep your home safe throughout the winter season.

HLWD Public Notice

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Highland Lakes Water District

Failed to Provide Adequate Treatment

Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua potable. Tradúzcalo o hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.

Our water system recently violated a drinking water requirement. As our customers you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

The State Drinking Water Program requires us to filter the water in addition to disinfecting by 3/15/2023. The District is maintaining a 2.0 chlorine residual to ensure the water is safe. We are required to install this filtration because our source water contains surface water (lake or stream). Alternatively, we can choose to use another water source that does not contain surface water. We have not yet met this requirement. We do not know of any cases of contamination. However, until improvements are made, there is an increased chance that disease-causing organisms could contaminate the water supply. Filtration with disinfection is the best method for removing these organisms.

What does this mean? What should I do?

- **You do not need to boil your water or take other actions. However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.** A home filter will not necessarily solve the problem, because not all home filters protect against parasites. Call NSF International at 1(800) NSF-8010 or the Water Quality Association at 1(800) 749-0234 for information on appropriate filters.
- Inadequately treated water may contain disease-causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches. These symptoms are not only caused only by organisms in drinking water, but also by other factors. If you experience any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to consult your doctor.
- If you have an infant, severely compromised immune system, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at increased risk and should seek advice from your doctor about drinking this water. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by bacteria and other disease-causing organisms are available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

What is being done?

- This situation is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately.
- The District has begun construction of the required GWUDI Filtration System but this did not occur by the deadline set by the CDPHE due to a delay with state engineering and funding procurement therefore we are required to distribute this Tier 2 Violation Notice to our customers quarterly. You will receive a public notice each quarter until completion of the project which will update you on the progress.

The District anticipates resolving this problem by June of 2025. For more information, please contact **Neal Yowell** at HLWDWater@gmail.com or Highland Lakes Water District at 719-687-7937.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

This notice is being sent to you by: Highland Lakes Water District - C00160200 Date distributed: **09/30/2024**

Don't Miss Out: Protect Your Home This Winter!

Check out the essential winterizing tips on the bottom of **page 2** to avoid costly damage.

Water Currents

The Highland Lakes Water District
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Newsletter Editor:

Shelly Dolbeer
Divide, CO 80814
E-Mail: shellyhlwd@gmail.com

Meetings

The HLWD Board of Directors meets at 6:00 p.m.
on the third Tuesday of every month in the HLPOA
Community Building. Highland Lakes owners and
residents are welcome.

Important Phone Numbers

Board Members

Sue Morford	President
Melinda Moyn	Secretary
Brian Dillon	Treasurer
Ken Morford	Operations Director
Shelly Dolbeer	Public Relations

HLWD District Office

Mary Schnierle	Office Manager	719-687-7937
Neal Yowell	System Operator	

Emergency Number 719-247-1191