



WATER CURRENTS NEWSLETTER

Summer 2025 • Volume 25, Issue 2

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Neighbors,

Good day and Happy Summer!

Summer has officially arrived, and I hope you're finding time to enjoy it! I wanted to take this opportunity to let you know that with the warmer weather, our District Operations Team has been hard at work catching up on essential maintenance projects. We're pleased to report that all but two of our wells are now in full production, and the new GWUDI treatment system is nearly complete.

On behalf of the Board, thank you for your patience and support during construction at the treatment plant on County Road 512. We're especially grateful to those who joined us for the facility tour during the HLPOA Annual Meeting—it was a pleasure to connect with you in person. If you have questions or want to learn more, please feel free to attend our board meetings, held the third Tuesday of each month at 6:00 PM in the Community Building. You're bound to learn something new!

This month's newsletter also includes something new: our 2024 Consumer Confidence Report (CCR). We are now able to provide the report online, meeting all Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) requirements while saving on printing and mailing costs. You'll find the URL link and QR code in this newsletter to view the 2024 CCR at your convenience.

Lastly, a common question we hear is: "How can I catch a water leak BEFORE it causes expensive damage?" Beyond protecting against frozen pipes, it's important to monitor for leaks from aging plumbing, such as near toilets, water heaters, or appliances. Affordable leak detection systems—similar to smoke detectors or carbon monoxide detectors—can alert you to a problem. Many are smart devices that connect to your phone, while others offer more advanced features like auto shutoff valves for your main water line. We don't endorse specific brands, but we strongly encourage you to explore these options for peace of mind.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of the Highland Lakes Water District.

Sue Morford
HLWD President

PAVING PROJECTS: A REMINDER TO PLAN AHEAD

With warmer weather arriving, it's common for paving companies to offer deals to multiple households in the area—often lowering the per-driveway cost when several neighbors schedule work at once. While the savings can be appealing, it's important to **choose a reputable contractor and protect your property's critical infrastructure.**

In past years, we've seen instances where service lines or Property Shut-Off Valves (PSOVs) are accidentally paved over. This can create major issues down the line—especially if emergency access is ever needed. Locating and repairing buried components after paving is not only difficult, but often very costly.

Before any paving work begins:

- ✓ **Locate your PSOV.** It's usually marked with a blue and white utility marker near the road.
- ✓ **Clearly mark your service line and shut-off areas.** Let the contractor know these areas must remain uncovered and accessible.
- ✓ **Call the District if you're unsure.** We can help confirm the location of your PSOV or advise on how to protect it.

Taking these steps now can prevent unnecessary headaches and expenses later. If you're unsure where your shut-off or service line is located, contact the District—we're happy to help you identify it.

Protect your home and your wallet by making an informed decision. Not all contractors are created equal. We're not discouraging driveway improvements—just reminding everyone to stay informed and proactive to avoid problems later. If you're planning to pave this season, **do it smart, not fast.**

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

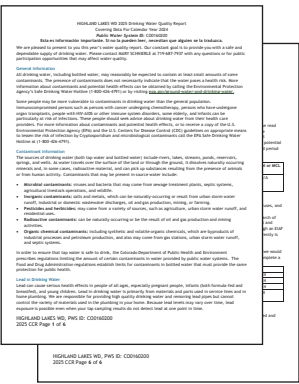
2025 DRINKING WATER QUALITY REPORT AVAILABLE NOW

Highland Lakes Water District’s annual Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) is now available. This report covers drinking water quality data from 2024 and is part of our commitment to keeping you informed.

The six-page report includes:

- Water source and treatment information
- Test results for lead, copper, and other contaminants
- Updates on our new GWUDI filtration system
- Details on any health or reporting violations

We encourage all residents to review the CCR to better understand the safety, quality, and ongoing improvements to your drinking water.



VIEW THE FULL REPORT

Scan the QR code
or visit us online at: qr.co.de/HLWD2024CCR

For questions, contact Mary Schnierle at 719-687-7937.

IS OUR WATER SAFE TO DRINK?

This is one of the most common questions we receive—and it’s completely fair to ask. Water safety matters, and we want to provide clear, honest information. The short answer is: our water continues to meet all current Colorado and federal testing standards, and we have not failed any required tests.

However, it’s also important to acknowledge that standards evolve as science advances. The EPA recently finalized new, more stringent regulations related to PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances), sometimes referred to as “forever chemicals” because they do not break down easily in the environment or the human body.

These chemicals are found in a wide range of household and industrial products, including nonstick cookware, waterproof clothing, food packaging, and firefighting foam. Once used or discarded, they can enter our water sources through runoff, wastewater, and landfill leachate.

Why PFAS Matters Here

PFAS and other contaminants can make their way into the groundwater. One often overlooked source is improperly maintained septic systems. If a tank is not pumped regularly and begins to fail, untreated waste—including PFAS from everyday household products—can seep into the soil and reach our water sources. **We all have a role to play in keeping our water clean.**

To proactively address this, Highland Lakes Water District received a grant to conduct initial PFAS testing. We now have the preliminary results and are working closely with state compliance officers to review and interpret the findings. This step is critical in determining whether any further action is needed under the new EPA standards.

What You Can Do

- ✓ **Maintain your septic system.** Experts recommend pumping your tank every 3-5 years, depending on usage.
- ✓ **Choose products carefully.** Reduce your use of PFAS-containing items like stain-resistant sprays, water-repellent gear, and some cosmetics.
- ✓ **Properly dispose of chemicals and medications.** Never flush them down the toilet or sink.
- ✓ **Research home filters.** Not all water filters remove PFAS. Look for systems certified to reduce PFAS (NSF/ANSI 53 or 58).
- ✓ **Stay informed.** Learn more at epa.gov/pfas or attend one of our board meetings, held the third Tuesday of each month at 6:00 PM.

We’re Committed to Clean Water

We understand that water safety is about more than just passing tests. It’s about long-term health, trust, and stewardship. The Highland Lakes Water District is committed to transparency and continued improvement. We are nearly finished with the state-mandated GWUDI treatment system and will continue to monitor and upgrade our infrastructure as standards evolve.

If you have questions or want to learn more, we invite you to attend our monthly board meetings (third Tuesday of the month, 6:00 PM at the Community Building) or visit our website for updates and educational resources.

Clean drinking water is everyone’s responsibility—and it starts at home.

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 required us to filter the water in addition to disinfecting by 3/15/2023. 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.
- Failed to Provide Adequate treatment of GWUDI. The certificate of substantial completion has been submitted. Also, a request for a 90-day extension of the project has been submitted. Treatment is currently being completed however, a design mistake was discovered and will be rectified. We expect the treatment process to be fully online by August 1, 2025.

The District anticipates resolving this problem by August 1, 2025. For more information, please contact Sue E Morford at smorford1453@gmail.com, 719-660-5148 or 3136 Blue Mesa Drive, Divide, CO 80814.

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 - CO0160200 Date distributed: 6/30/2025

5 SUMMER TIPS TO PROTECT YOUR DRINKING WATER

1. **Pump out septic tanks on a regular basis** - Tanks should be pumped every 3-5 years to prevent leaks.
2. **Flush smart** - Skip wipes and harsh chemicals that can clog or damage your system.
3. **Plant wisely** - Keep trees and deep roots away from your septic field.
4. **Watch water use** - Too much water can overload your septic system.
5. **Know what's where** - Don't drive or park over your tank or leach field.

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

- **August 1, 2025** - Estimated completion of GWUDI Filtration System
- **Monthly Board Meetings** - Third Tuesday of each month, 6:00 PM, Community Building

QUOTE OF THE QUARTER

"Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world."
- Desmond Tutu



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STAY IN THE KNOW WITH HLWD!

Our website makes it easy to find alerts, updates, and essential information.

Website

highlandlakeswaterdistrict.colorado.gov

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Newsletter Editor

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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.