



Newsletter

November 2021

Hartstene Pointe Water-Sewer District

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Pay Your Bill 24/7

Online: hpwatersewer.com
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Billing Office Hours

Mondays: 9:00 am—2:00 pm
Tuesdays: 9:00 am—2:00 pm
Thursdays: 9:00 am—2:00 pm

Board of Commissioners meetings are held on the 1st & 3rd Thursdays of the month at 1:00 pm via teleconference. Visit our website or contact the office for instructions on how to join. All meetings are open to the public.

Hartstene Pointe Water-Sewer District is not associated with or governed by the Hartstene Pointe Maintenance Association. Please direct water-sewer service related questions to the District.

Hartstene Pointe Water-Sewer District is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Staff Enrolled in “Q.U.E.S.T. 2.0”

“The Q.U.E.S.T. series of programs were developed to meet the growing demand for skilled operators to replace those retiring from the workforce. These programs are designed to provide the RIGHT STUFF needed to be a successful Water & Wastewater Operator and Manager.”

—*erwow.org*

Evergreen Rural Water of WA is excited to be offering new curriculum to give apprentices the information they need to successfully operate water and wastewater systems. The “Q.U.E.S.T.” program seeks to encourage high-school-age students to explore career options in these industries, while the “Q.U.E.S.T. 2.0” program is geared toward fast-tracking current operators into more advanced certifications by teaching at an intense pace.

The District has felt the impact of the shortage of certified operators in both water and wastewater industries. The Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator position has remained unfilled since the beginning of June.

Both the District’s Apprentice and Project & Accounts Manager were excited to begin classes last month. District employees are highly encouraged to cross-train so that operations continue to run the way they should.

It’s Time to Winterize



It’s time to start thinking of winterizing your home for the season. Freezing temperatures can cause pipe bursts that can cause major leaks. Major leaks can lead to major property damage.

The best way to winterize an unattended home is to turn off water service at the meter and drain the pipes—this is particularly easy to do for island home owners, but other homes can drain their pipes once water is off by opening the lowest water fixture in the home’s plumbing. Some homeowners leave a dripping faucet, which we discourage, but be aware that excess water consumption can incur extra monthly charges. It’s also a good idea for homes to maintain a 55-degree minimum to guard against pipes freezing.

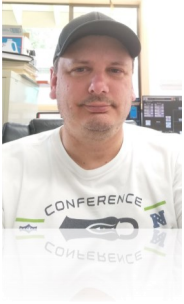
Many outdoor spigots actually house the valve body several inches inside a home’s insulation, thus preventing the need to cover them in the winter, but many (especially older spigots) house the valve body at the tap and could burst in freezing temperatures. If you’re unsure, it’s best to be on the safe side.

Take some time to winterize and save yourself from a headache later on!



General Manager's Report

Emergency Planning



It's important to plan ahead and be prepared for an emergency so that when one occurs, there are tools available to address it. Since Hartstene Pointe is at the far end of an island, it's even more important to be prepared.

While an emergency situation can present unforeseeable, unique challenges, advanced preparations can ensure there are plans and tools on-hand to help alleviate issues when they arise.

The board of commissioners discusses emergency preparedness regularly and HPMA has a committee devoted to emergency preparedness; I'm sure everyone agrees that it is important for emergency planning to be an ongoing topic of discussion. That's why I enrolled in a training course geared toward emergency planning for water & wastewater systems.

One way we are working toward improving our preparedness is through procuring generators and maintaining the ones the District already has in place. The wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) generator and the generator at Well #4 were recently inspected and preventative maintenance was performed. A time clock was installed on the WWTP generator as well to automatically exercise the generator monthly to keep it running properly.

The District operates several lift stations throughout the community. Lift stations pump *sewage* from low points in the system up to *sewerage* where wastewater can be transported by gravity to the treatment plant. To prevent sewage backups, these lift stations need to be operated by generator in the case of a power outage. While the District has a portable generator, we are planning to install dedicated generators at each lift station over the next three years as a more permanent preparation.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed!

—Jeff Palmer, General Manager

Accountability Audit Begins



Office of the Washington State Auditor

Pat McCarthy

The State Auditor's Office (SAO) is required by law to perform accountability audits for every government entity in the state at least once every two years (larger entities are audited every year). The auditor assigned to audit the District reached out to administrative staff and commissioners to begin the process of auditing fiscal years 2019 and 2020—she knows our District well, having worked with the District in previous years.

Auditors at SAO see themselves as educators. They share ideas and look for opportunities for governments to transact business cleanly and more transparently.

Although SAO is not permitting in-person audits, staff will be able to securely provide the auditor with any documents required. The auditor's main focuses will be reading board meeting minutes, reviewing payroll and examining the District's billing reports.

Once complete, the auditor will present findings to the commissioners. The District looks forward to working with SAO to learn and implement its recommendations.

Budget Process Underway

Budget talks have begun at board of commissioners meetings. For our District, like many other organizations, the past two years have presented unexpected challenges. As the District will not hold an in-person budget hearing/annual meeting due to covid concerns, please provide any questions or feedback through our website, email, or telephone.



Drippy the Droplet's Water-Saving Tip:

"At least once per year, it's a good idea to check all fixtures for leaks, even small ones. For instance, a toilet that has a small leak can waste 200 gallons per day!"