

CONNECTIONS

Recycled Water Project Update

Redwood City Recycled Water Project

July 2005

SBSA Construction Update

July will be another busy construction month at the South Bayside System Authority (SBSA) treatment plant as delivery of long concrete piles continues and pile-driving resumes at an active pace. The pile-driving activities are expected to be completed by the end of August. Don't forget that you can watch the construction of the facility from your own computer at www.redwoodcity.org/publicworks/water/recycling/webcam.html.



Summer Water Conservation Tips

Summer is here, and as the weather is heating up, be sure to practice good water conservation. Here are some tips to help you save water — and money!

- Verify that your home is leak free. Many homes have hidden water leaks. Read your water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter does not read exactly the same, there is a leak. For information on how to read your water meter, please visit <http://www.h2ouse.org/resources/meter/index.cfm>.
- Check for toilet tank leaks by adding food coloring to the tank. If the toilet is leaking, color will appear in the toilet bowl within 30 minutes. Be sure to visit <http://www.redwoodcity.org/publicworks/water/toiletprogram/index.html> to get information on getting a FREE low flow toilet!
- Using a layer of mulch around plants reduces evaporation and promotes plant growth. Water retaining basins also allow water to be concentrated around the plants.

Water Rates: Council Approves Water Rate Increases

On June 6, 2005, the Redwood City Council approved an increase in water rates that will take effect July 1, 2005. An increase of 3.8% will be applied to the residential monthly basic service charge, and increases at each water usage rate

tier range from 4% for the residential "lifeline" rate to 47% for the largest commercial users. The billing increase for an average residential user is \$1.65 per month, or 5.6%, while for irrigation and commercial users the billing increases ranges from 13-32%.

The approved rate increases are based on a blended recommendation that came out of three broad approaches that were critiqued at a Community Roundtable on Water Rates, which was held in April. Subsequent analysis and input by the City Council's Utilities Committee focused on how best to implement the Council's intent to raise water revenues in a way that would be the most equitable while encouraging more and better conservation by all water customers. A careful balance with the effect on lifeline and smaller customers, and the idea of "the more you use, the more you pay" was achieved in response to the ideas from the Community Roundtable. These themes are expressed in the approved rate package.

The increases are consistent with the City's long-range Water Financing Plan, which lays out a steady and predictable rate-setting strategy to deal with increasing costs to sustain the City's aggressive water conservation program and to fund the recycled water program. The Plan also addresses the expected tripling of wholesale water rates over the next decade from Redwood City's sole drinking water source, the San Francisco Hetch Hetchy regional water system.

For a detailed breakdown of water service charge and rates, please visit <http://www.redwoodcity.org/finance/utility/utilityrates.html>

Water Fluoridation

Beginning in September of 2005, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission will supplement naturally occurring fluoride in your drinking water to meet the levels recommended by the California Department of Health Services (1 part per million, or 1.0 milligram of fluoride per liter of water). Fluoride strengthens teeth and protects people of all ages against tooth decay. The majority of communities served by SFPUC already receive optimally fluoridated water. San Francisco and northern Peninsula communities have received fluoridated water for about 50 years.

Through those 50 years of extensive research, drinking fluoridated water has been scientifically proven to be safe and

effective. Health experts endorse water fluoridation as the single, most effective public health measure to improve oral health. Fluoride will not change the taste, smell, or appearance of your drinking water, however, health experts advise that if you are taking fluoride supplements, either tablets or drops, you must stop once you begin receiving fluoridated water. For more information, please visit www.redwoodcity.org/publicworks/water/flourideindex.html or the American Dental Association at <http://www.ada.org/public/topics/fluoride/facts>.

Water Allocation Target

Did you know the last drought occurred during 1988-1993? In the event of another drought, it is important to know how much water your family should normally be using. Because this figure can be difficult to quantify, Redwood City has developed the Water Use Allocation Program, a fair and equitable way to distribute water during possible future droughts, which takes into consideration individual customer needs and overall conservation efforts. The Water Use Allocation Program provides a simple way to calculate your family's unique water use target, allowing you adjust your water use to a reasonable level while also serving as an average to judge from during times of necessary severe conservation.

Whether severe or moderate water conservation is necessary, it is important to be conscious of how much water your family should normally be using to ensure that our scarce water resources are not being wasted. Just log on to <http://wapcustomer.redwoodcity.org/> to get more information and fill out the form, or call 780-7436 to have one sent to your home.



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