

Splash

Metro Water
Newsletter
Winter 2012-13

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Board Approves Rate Adjustment

Metro's Board of Directors approved a rate adjustment at the October 22, 2012 public hearing. The Board acted after hearing public comment, receiving feedback from the Finance Oversight Committee, and having discussed the District's revenue since this summer. The new rates became effective November 1st for the Metro Main and Metro Hub service areas.

With the rate adjustment, a customer using 11,000 gallons or less a month will pay \$2.50 more. The \$2.50 increase is in the water availability (base) rate to add more reliability to the District's revenues and cover more of the fixed operating costs. The water consumption charges from 0 to 11,000 gallons did not change but the 3rd, 4th, and 5th tiers were increased each by 4 percent.

The Board also established a water resource utilization fee at 10¢ per 1,000 gallons, which will become effective March 1, 2013 and applies to all Metro service areas. This fee is to provide funds to develop, design, and construct projects that will put to use the District's CAP water and effluent.

(continued page 3)



PREPARE YOUR PIPES FOR COLDER TEMPERATURES



*Metro Water encourages our customers to be prepared for colder temperatures. Yes, we live in a temperate climate but the great freeze of February 2011 reminded us the importance of being prepared even when we believe Arctic temperatures would never happen in Tucson. **Check page 3** for a few tips to ensure you are ready for whatever winter brings.*

Chilean Water Professionals Tour Metro CAP Recharge Project

A group of Chilean water professionals toured the Avra Valley Recharge Project (AVRP) in October after visiting six other recharge projects in Arizona. The Chilean visitors wanted to learn from Arizona's experience in recharging water as they develop the Aconcagua River Recharge Project north of Santiago, Chile.

The Chileans were most interested in Metro's Avra Valley Recharge Project since it is comparable to their project. Their consultant, Mario Lluria, a hydrogeologist with HydroSystems, Inc., has been a Metro Water customer since 1998. He said he was glad Metro acquired the AVRP from the Central Arizona Project so Metro has more control and flexibility of operation.

Metro Water owns and operates the AVRP, where it stores Central Arizona Project water. The long-term goal is to recover the recharged water and deliver it into Metro's service area where it would be blended with groundwater. This is critical for utilizing our renewable water and reducing our dependency on groundwater. The AVRP was the first recharge project with spreading basins in Pima County in 1996.

Photo: District staff show Chilean water professionals the wier that delivers water to the rechrage basins behind them. Water was not flowing to allow for maintenance of the wier.



Congratulations!

20TH ANNIVERSARY DRAWING WINNERS!

**Congratulations to the winners of the
October 31, 2012 drawing!
Each winner received a \$50.00 credit.**

Michael D. Aleff
Dennis Bugajski
James Carey
J.N. Coulon
L. Dells
Michelle Gensman
Babs Goble
Jolin Guerin & Ronda Phillips
Dawn & Steve Hoffman
Elizabeth Hubbard
Caryle Leska
D.S. Linaker
Bobby R. Mahoney
B. Miller
James Miller
James Monterosso
Arthur & Patricia Paddock
Dorothy L. & Alan Thomas
James Walbert
Judith & Terrance Yokofich



Rate Adjustment *(continued from page 1)*

The Board of Directors wanted to make the rate structure more reliable to ensure more of the fixed costs are covered. Fixed costs are expenses that have to be met whether water is sold or not. Making up 75% of the District's fixed costs is debt service for improvements, including two Capital Improvement Programs, one \$28 million and the other \$23 million.

During its first 20 years, Metro water worked hard to improve and upgrade an aging water infrastructure. The District has been proactive in making improvements to interconnect the overall system, increase storage capacity from 4.5 million gallons to 16.5 million gallons, install miles of major transmission mains, improve flow for fire protection, and convert to a gravity system so water is delivered even during electrical outages and save power costs.

Many water utilities, nationwide, are struggling with aging infrastructure that will need repairs and upgrades at increasingly higher costs. Metro Water has avoided these problems by being proactive and in the long run has saved money. Unfortunately, the debt retirement must be made, which creates a financial challenge for the District.

Metro Water is always looking for ways to reduce costs. Overall expenditures have been minimized whenever possible. Current vacated positions are not being filled. Making further cuts beyond the existing budget would significantly reduce our responsiveness to customer service and our ability to meet required day-to-day operations.

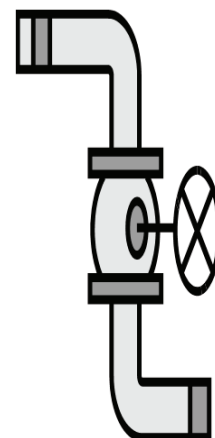
PREPARE YOUR PIPES *(continued from page 1)*

Protect your pipes. Take a quick survey for any water pipes exposed to the elements – typically, they would include the main water pipe entering the house (where the shut-off valve is), irrigation lines, backflow preventers, and, if applicable, swamp cooler lines and swimming pool lines. Any water line that is normally exposed to the elements, where water does not constantly move, is a potential candidate for freezing. There are a variety of ways to protect exposed lines with pipe insulation. Pipe insulation is a low cost solution to protect pipes from freezing and can be purchased at local hardware stores.

Know the location of your water meter. The meter to your house is located near the street curb in front of your house or in the alley behind the house. It is a rectangular box in the ground with a metal cover. The meter tells Metro Water District how much water flows through it, which means how much water you use. The meter is owned by Metro Water District. You are responsible for the pipes and water from the meter to your house and throughout your property.

If you need to turn off water to your house, please turn it off at the water shut-off valve at the house, NOT at the water meter. If you need the water turned off to your whole property, please call Metro Water District at 575-8100 and we will turn off the water at the meter.

Know where your water shut-off valve is. Most shut-off valves for water will be located on the front or rear of the house. It is usually attached to a pipe that rises from the ground and enters the house through an exterior wall. If you know where the water meter is for your house, either on the front of the street or in the back in an alley, then usually the main water valve will be on the same side of the house but nearer the house structure. It is important to know where your water shut-off valve is in case you need to quickly turn off the water to the whole house.





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Office Hours:
 Monday - Thursday
 7:30 am - 5:30 pm
 Friday 7:30 am - Noon
metrowater.com

Protect your Plants from Cooler Weather

With cooler weather, remember to change your watering practices. Most landscapes will do fine with less water during the cooler winter months. Too often plants receive more water than needed. The winter season is a great time to see how little water your plants really need. This also means changing your irrigation timer to water less.

Consider low maintenance and low water use plants for your yard. Once established, they should be able to sustain themselves with what nature provides except during exceptionally hot periods. This also means you can enjoy your yard more and spend less time working in it. Check out Metro Water's website for plant ideas, or better yet, come visit our demonstration garden.

Board of Directors:

Bryan Foulk, Chair
 Dan M. Offret, Vice Chair
 Richard Byrd, Member
 Jim Doyle, Member
 Judy Scrivener, Member

Winter Public Board Meetings (6:00 pm):

December 10, 2012
 January 14, 2013
 February 11, 2013

Metro Water District wishes you a holiday season of joy and gratitude



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