

### South Tahoe Public Utility District

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The South Tahoe Public Utility District is a special district formed in September 1950, and provides environmentally and fiscally responsible water and wastewater collection, treatment, and recycling for the community of South Lake Tahoe. Special districts are a form of local government that are usually created to provide specific services that are not being provided by other governmental entities. The District is governed by a five-member Board of Directors that are elected in staggered four-year terms. Directors must reside within the service area of the District. Special districts provide focused, specialized service and are considered, by many, the most responsive form of local government. Board meetings are held on the first and third Thursday of each month at the Board Meeting Room located at 1275 Meadow Crest Drive. The District welcomes your attendance and participation.

The District has over 18,000 sewer connections and over 14,000 water connections. Our unique and innovative recycled water export system transports an average of 4 million gallons-per-day of reclaimed water 27 miles to the Harvey Place Reservoir, where it is stored for agricultural land application to ranches, under contract, during the dry summer months. The District is proud of this cutting edge system.



### Shower Better!

October is Energy Action Month. What is one action you can take to save energy, water, and money every day? Try replacing your old showerhead with a WaterSense labeled model!

Showering accounts for nearly 17 percent of all residential indoor water use, or about 30 gallons per household per day. That's about 1.2 trillion gallons of water every year in the United States! What's more, it takes energy to heat the water when you shower.

This October, the South Tahoe Public Utility District is also celebrating Shower Better Month by encouraging consumers in South Lake Tahoe to replace old showerheads with WaterSense labeled models to save energy, water and other resources.

By replacing a showerhead with a

WaterSense labeled model, the average family can reduce its annual energy and water costs by more than \$70 and save 2,900 gallons of water per year—the amount of water it takes to wash more than 70 loads of laundry. What's more, because it takes energy to heat shower water, that family can save the amount of electricity it takes to power its home for 13 days every year just by switching to a WaterSense labeled showerhead.

Not sure if your showerhead is efficient? Contact the District's Water Conservation Specialist at (530) 543-6268 to schedule a Water Wise House Call. During the House Call, the Specialist will inspect your showerheads, measure their flow rates and provide a free water efficient showerhead upon request.

For more information and a full list of independently certified WaterSense labeled showerhead models, visit [www.epa.gov/watersense/products/showerheads.html](http://www.epa.gov/watersense/products/showerheads.html).

For more information on water conservation services and rebates available to District customers, visit [www.stpud.us](http://www.stpud.us).

WaterSense, a partnership program sponsored by EPA, seeks to protect the future of our nation's water supply by offering people a simple way to use less water with water-efficient products, new homes, and services. For more information, visit [www.epa.gov/watersense](http://www.epa.gov/watersense).



# District Digest

Fall Issue

October 2015

## South Tahoe Public Utility District

### District Exceeds Conservation Target This Summer

Congratulations to you, the customers of the District and community of South Lake Tahoe! The District met, and in fact exceeded, the California mandated conservation target for June, July and August.

After much negotiation with the State Water Resources Control Board, the District was tasked with a 20% mandated reduction in water usage, as compared to 2013. Over the course of the summer, the District achieved the following reductions:

- \* June: 24% reduction
- \* July: 27% reduction
- \* August: 21% reduction

The reduction in usage was better than expected, given the heat experienced in Tahoe this summer. While the rain earlier

in the season helped quite a bit, the District would not have seen these reductions without all of our customers making a conscious effort to conserve water wherever possible.

As we head into the fall and winter months, it will become increasingly challenging to continue these savings. The greatest potential to achieve water savings is with outdoor water use. We can reduce our irrigation run times, replace our grass with drought-tolerant plants, or eliminate unneeded sprinkler heads. Once winter sets in and we shut down our irrigation systems, we must look indoors to achieve our savings.

One of the best ways to reduce water use indoors is to replace your older, inefficient toilets and clothes washer with new, high efficiency models. The toilet and the



clothes washer are the two biggest water users in the home. The District currently offers rebates for replacing both of these appliances. Visit [www.stpud.us](http://www.stpud.us) for more information.

Thank you for all of your efforts to save water as this severe drought continues. Keep up the good work!

### Winterize Your Garden!

As we transition from summer to fall, it's time to start thinking about planning for the winter season. Properly preparing your garden is the best way to ensure your plants survive the coldest months, and thrive come spring time.

How can one prepare their plants for the chilliest time of the year? In so many ways! Here are some tips to make sure your garden is ready to flourish next year:

- 1) **Know your USDA hardiness zone:** This will tell you the average annual minimum winter temperature for where you live, and provides you with a great starting point for planning your garden. South Lake Tahoe's zone is 6b: -5 to 0 degrees F.
- 2) **Prune, clean, remove, and till:** Now is the perfect time to get rid of any dead or dying plant material and

debris, and remove any weeds that may serve as incubators for pests and diseases during the winter. If you identify invasive weeds in your yard, dispose of them in a garbage bin with a sealed lid to prevent their spread. Putting in this prep work now will save you from more work in the spring. Gently till your beds to

(Continued on Page 3)

#### Inside this issue:

Lending a Helping Hand	2
Have a Water Efficient Holiday Season	2
Do I Have a Water Meter?	3
Shower Better	4

#### Special points of interest:

- Keep your garden healthy through the winter
- How to help those in need
- Winterize your home

## Lending a Helping Hand



No one should have to live without running water. Yet, here in South Lake Tahoe, there are times when a family or a senior citizen may find himself or herself facing a financial emergency and unable to afford water and/or sewer service.

As a public agency, the District is prohibited from giving free service. But, as members of our community, in the spirit of outreach, we can provide funding for one-time emergency water and/or sewer service assistance

to local families and individuals experiencing hardship.

Helping Hands Outreach, or H2O, is a District sponsored, voluntary program that relies solely on charitable contributions for support. The District has partnered with El Dorado County Department of Community Services to work one-on-one with those needing help. It's your contribution that is most important!

Since its inception in 1998 the program has distributed over

\$53,000 to families and individuals ranging from single parents to two-parent families to single senior citizens.

Helping Hands Outreach is there to lend a helping hand up, not a hand out, to our neighbors. Please use the contribution form enclosed with your bill and a check made out to H2O if you would like to join other members of the community in contributing to this program to help neighbors in need.

## Have a Water Efficient Holiday Season

The holidays are great time of year, bringing together family and friends to celebrate the season! When preparing your next holiday gathering, remember that our region is still in a severe drought. Water is a vital part of any celebration; it would be impossible to put together a great spread without it. But did you know that a typical holiday dinner for eight requires more than 42,000 gallons of water to grow and prepare the food? That's enough water to fill a 30 by 50-foot swimming pool!

So how can you save water during such a hectic and busy time? By integrating water-wise behavior into your daily life, before the holiday entertaining begins. Here are a few tips to get you started:

- ◆ Defrost frozen foods in the refrigerator the night before they're needed
- ◆ Select the proper size pans for cooking. Large pans
- ◆ Rinse vegetables and fruits in a sink or pan filled with water, then use that water for houseplants
- ◆ Don't run the tap when washing dishes. Plug the sink, fill it with soapy water and scrub and rinse from there
- ◆ Brush food scraps into the garbage instead of rinsing them into the garbage disposal
- ◆ Run only full loads in the dishwasher
- ◆ Steam while you boil. You'll use less water and one less burner by steaming veggies over a pot that's already full of boiling water for another dish
- ◆ Never rinse grease down the drain; let it cool then

require more water than may be necessary

scrape into the trash

Bonus tip: Are you or your family looking to replace any water-using fixtures soon? They can make great gifts, and may be on sale this holiday season. Plus, the District offers rebates on high efficiency toilets and clothes washers. How's that for a functional holiday gift?

Make your next holiday meal a water-wise one. Enjoy the season, and give thanks for water!



“A typical holiday dinner for eight requires more than 42,000 gallons of water to grow and prepare the food.”

## Winterize Your Garden (Continued from Page 1)

unearth any pesky insects that may use your garden to overwinter. This will reduce pest levels in the spring.

- 3) **Add compost and mulch:** After tidying up your plants, gently till in 3-4 inches of nutrient-rich compost to your garden to build your soil before spring planting. Place a mulch layer of woodchips or pine needles on top of the compost to help insulate and protect plants from freezing winter temperatures.
- 4) **Plant bulbs now:** After amending and tilling the soil, plant bulbs before the ground gets too hard from frost. This way they have plenty of room to grow and soak up all those newly added nutrients. Protect bulbs from squirrels by placing chicken wire, bird netting, or landscaper's cloth over them.
- 5) **Plant/transplant trees and shrubs:** Fall is the best time to establish and transplant trees and shrubs. Deciduous species put on up to 80% of their annual root expansion in the fall, so get them in the ground while it's still soft and workable. Prune any vulnerable parts that may break under a heavy snow load. Save major pruning projects until the spring.



6) **Water seldom, but deeply:** Now is the time to “harden” your plants for the harsh winter weather ahead. Reduce your watering to no more than twice a week. However, don't let your plants completely dry out. Seldom, deep watering encourages strong root systems. If little precipitation falls over the winter, it's wise to water plants about once a month.

7) **Sit back and relax:** You're garden is ready for winter! Now is the time to get out and enjoy the fall colors while preparing your garden for a successful growing season next year. Happy gardening!

“Fall is the best time to establish and transplant trees and shrubs.”

## Do I Have a Water Meter?

Many District customers find themselves asking this question lately. Use the information below to help you determine if you have a water meter and, if so, what changes you can expect to see on your water bill.

### How do I know if I have a water meter already installed?

If you have a water meter installed on your property which is being read by the District, your bill will have a consumption figure on your bill. When your meter is first installed, you will be given a one-year informational period where you will continue to be billed on the flat rate, but your water consumption (in units of 100 hcf) will be printed on your bill for your reference. If your bill does not have a consumption figure, you do not yet have a water meter. If your meter was installed this summer, you will see a consumption figure for the first time on your January 2016 bill. If your meter is being read for the first time, the consumption figure may be for a time period longer than the normal three month billing period. Keep that in mind when making your calculations. Your future billing statements will reflect a three month consumption figure.

### How do I calculate what my bill would be if actually billed by consumption?

To calculate what your quarterly water bill would be on the metered rate for a single family residence, multiply the consumption figure noted on your bill by \$0.91 for the first 45 units, and by \$1.37 for the number of units over 45. Then add the Quarterly Base Meter Charge (dependent on the size of your meter) to the result. For example, if you have a 3/4" meter and your consumption is 29 units, your bill would be:

$$\$0.91 \times 29 = \$26.39 + \$118.30 = \$144.69 \text{ for the quarter}$$

### Where can I find more information on meters and metered water rates?

Visit our website at [www.stpud.us](http://www.stpud.us) and click on Meter Information. There you will find many FAQ's as well as more information on how to calculate your bill. If you would prefer to talk to a Customer Service Representative, please feel free to call (530) 544.6474.