

# District Digest

April 2017

Spring Edition

South Tahoe Public Utility District

## Let's Do the Numbers

The South Tahoe Public Utility District is currently in the process of preparing the 2017/2018 budget. We invite the community to participate in a **Public Meeting and Presentation on the Proposed Budget and Capital Improvement Plan at the District Offices on May 4, 2017 at 6 pm.**

In 2014, the District sent a five-year Proposition 218 notice to all customers; this permitted the District to increase water rates up to a maximum of 6.5% and sewer rates up to a maximum of 6.0%.

**Water** - In the proposed water budget for 2017/18, District staff is recommending that the Board approve the 6.5% increase in order

to fund the necessary water infrastructure projects. In 2015, the District began installation of extra fire hydrants to meet the fire department's desired 500 foot maximum spacing. This effort will continue with approximately another 40 fire hydrants in 2017.

Work will also continue on replacing water lines and installing water meters. Water lines that are less than six inches in diameter will be upsized to increase fire protection and firefighting capabilities. The Ponderosa Street area is the next location scheduled for a sizing upgrade this summer. Water meter projects will continue with the installation of approximately 1,450



meters 2017. Visit [www.stpud.us](http://www.stpud.us) for details on where meters will be installed.

**Sewer** - In the proposed sewer budget for 2017/18, District staff is recommending that the Board approve the 6.0% increase in order to fund the necessary sewer infrastructure projects. Sewer funding

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## 2016 Consumer Confidence Report

The 2016 Consumer Confidence Report, which contains valuable information regarding your drinking water, will be available for viewing at [www.stpud.us/2016\\_CCR.pdf](http://www.stpud.us/2016_CCR.pdf) on

July 1, 2017.

If you do not have access to the internet, you may request to have a hard copy mailed to you after July

1, 2017 by contacting the Customer Service Department at 530.544.6474 during regular work hours (M - F 8am to 5pm.)

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### Special points of interest:

- How to be as water efficient as possible this summer
- Don't forget, designated watering ways are in effect
- We want to hear from you! Complete our short communication survey and send it in.

## Sprinkler Spruce Up!

"Cracks in pipes can lead to costly leaks, and broken sprinkler heads can waste water and money."

Spring has arrived! Before you ramp up your watering, be sure to spruce up your irrigation system. System maintenance can help save you a lot of money and water! Cracks in pipes can lead to costly leaks, and broken sprinkler heads can waste water and money. You could be losing up to 25,000 gallons of water and more than \$90 over a six-month irrigation season!

Now is the perfect time to spruce up your irrigation system. To get started, follow these four simple steps—*inspect*, *connect*, *direct*, and *select*.

**Inspect.** Check your system for clogged, broken, or missing sprinkler heads. Better yet, *go with a pro*—find an irrigation professional certified by a

WaterSense labeled irrigation program to do the work for you.

**Connect.** Examine points where the sprinkler heads connect to pipes/hoses. If water is pooling in your landscape or you have large soggy areas, you could have a leak in your system. A leak as small as the tip of a ballpoint pen (1/32 of an inch) can waste about 6,300 gallons of water per month.

**Direct.** Are you watering the driveway, house, or sidewalk instead of your yard? Redirect sprinklers to apply water only to the landscape.

**Select.** An improperly scheduled irrigation controller can waste a lot of water and money. Update your system's schedule with

the seasons, or select a [WaterSense labeled controller](#) to take the guesswork out of scheduling.

Don't forget to add "sprinkler spruce-up" to your spring cleaning list this year. Learn more about maintaining a water-smart yard by visiting the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's WaterSense website at [www.epa.gov/watersense/outdoor](http://www.epa.gov/watersense/outdoor), or get local tips and information at [www.stpud.us](http://www.stpud.us).



## Let's Do the Numbers

will continue to replace facilities that are reaching the end of their expected life due to age and the corrosive nature of the sewer environment. An example of this at the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) is the rehabilitation of concrete treatment tanks; two were done in 2016, two more are scheduled for 2017.

Another example of this is the two year project of replacing the electrical equipment and motors at the Luther Pass Pump Station, the station which pumps all of the recycled waste water

from the District to Alpine County. Not only will the new equipment be more reliable, the new, high efficiency motors will reduce power used and reduce localized brown outs in the neighborhood upon motor startups. The requested funding will also allow for the replacement of equipment that no longer meets current standards, such as air quality regulations. The standby generator at the WWTP, which allows the District to continue full operation in the event of an electrical utility outage, is the prime example of this necessary work. This

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two year project will commence in 2018, and be completed in 2019.

Finally, funding will allow the District to improve its reliability in meeting all the requirements of collecting sewage in the basin, and recycling it in Alpine County, with as minimal spills as possible. Improvements/upgrades to pumping facilities in the Fallen Leaf Lake area, and expansion of areas available for the use of recycled water in Alpine County, are examples of this improved reliability.



## Water the Right Day...and the Right Way!

Summer is just around the corner, so make sure you start the season right by remembering your watering days!

**The Right Day is:**

**Even-numbered street address:** water Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

**Odd-numbered street**

**address:** water Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday

No landscape irrigation on Saturday. Designated watering days do not apply to micro irrigation and drip systems.

**The Right Way is:**

Properly amend soil before planting any vegetation.

Water the appropriate amount for the vegetation type and soil conditions.

Tahoe soils have limited water holding capacity; be careful not to overwater.

For more information on how to water the right way, visit [www.stpud.us](http://www.stpud.us).



## Smart Irrigation Systems, A Greener Idea

If you're a typical homeowner, you probably put your automatic sprinkler system into the same category as your home's heating and cooling system. You expect it to work reliably and efficiently with minimum fuss. The latest technology offers just that — and more.

Automated irrigation systems offer convenience while protecting your landscape investment. A well-maintained system keeps your lawn and landscape beautiful and healthy, while minimizing water waste.

Make time this spring and summer to be sure you're getting the most out of your irrigation system, while keeping utility bills low and helping to protect the environment.

**Sprinklers Get Smart**

The new generation of "smart" irrigation systems monitor weather, soil conditions, evaporation and plant water use and automatically adjust your watering schedule.

The secret to smart systems is the controller. Smart controllers use weather and/or site data to determine when and how long to water. Then, sprinklers apply just enough water at exactly the right time in each zone of your yard.

**Smart controllers:**

**Save water.** Smart systems automatically suspend watering during rain, freezing or high wind conditions. Careful scheduling minimizes evaporation and encourages water to soak in, reducing the total amount of water needed. Preventing overwatering actually keeps plants healthier by encouraging stronger roots and discouraging weeds, disease and fungus growth.

**Save money.** Smart systems can reduce your annual water bill by as much as 30 percent by preventing water waste. Plus, the District offers rebates for increasing the efficiency of your irrigation system. Visit

[www.stpud.us](http://www.stpud.us) for more information.

**Save time.** Once an irrigation installer has programmed your site data into the smart system, the controller adjusts the watering schedule based upon weather conditions and soil moisture without manual intervention.

**Add convenience.** Smart controllers adapt to seasonal weather changes without requiring reprogramming. And their "set and forget" technology is perfect for complying with any local watering restrictions, as well as for frequent travelers and vacation or second homes.

You may be able to upgrade your current irrigation system with a smart controller. Some new components are designed as easy add-ons to existing systems. Visit [www.stpud.us](http://www.stpud.us) for information on water efficiency programs and rebates.

**"A well maintained system keeps your lawn and landscape beautiful and healthy, while minimizing water waste."**

## 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.

## Communication Survey—How Are We Doing?

The District is working to improve how we communicate with you. You can assist the District with this effort by taking a few minutes to complete the following survey. Simply detach the survey, send it in with your payment, or drop off it in Customer Service Office Monday thru Friday, between 8am and 5pm. The survey is also available online at [www.stpud.us](http://www.stpud.us).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Full Time or Part Time Resident \_\_\_\_\_

1. How would you prefer to receive information about the District? Please circle all that apply.

Email    Text Message    Billing Insert    Social Media    Other

2. Do you read the District Digest, STPUD's quarterly newsletter?                      Yes    No

3. Please circle what you feel is your level of understanding on the following topics, with 1 being the least amount of understanding and 5 being the highest level of understanding:

Water/Sewer Rate Structure	1	2	3	4	5
Capital Projects (CIP)	1	2	3	4	5
Water Conservation Info/Services	1	2	3	4	5
State of Your Water Supply	1	2	3	4	5
Wastewater Operations	1	2	3	4	5

4. How often do you visit the District's website?    Once a day    Once a week    Once a month    Never

5. Do you have any suggestions for improving communications? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_