

BPUD PIPELINE



Fall 2006

Ever wonder if a puddle of water in the road or water running in a ditch at a usually dry time of year could be a leak on the BCPUD water distribution system? Do you live near a home with an irrigation system that seems to be running continuously?

If so, PLEASE CALL 868-1224 at any time of day or night and we'll come check it out. Recent diligent calls from our customers enabled us to locate several significant leaks and prevent further water loss.

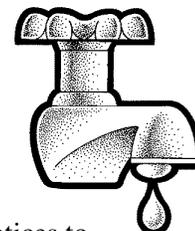
PLEASE NOTE: the BCPUD no longer will reduce high water bills resulting from leaks on private properties; we simply cannot afford to absorb these costs. Please, help your neighborhood and your community by reporting potential leaks asap.

YOU are our best leak detectors!

Thank- you,
Bolinas!!!

A Reminder of Our Limited Water Supply

On November 26, 1971, the Board of Directors of the Bolinas Community Public Utility District declared a water shortage emergency condition to exist within the area served by the district and imposed a moratorium on new or additional service connections to the municipal water supply. Despite historic improvements to the district's water storage capacity, water treatment plant and water distribution system in the years since the moratorium was imposed, the district's water shortage emergency continues due to the limited nature of our water supply from our primary water source, the Arroyo Honda Creek. As witnessed by district customers this summer, the BCPUD periodically issues water conservation notices to alert you of the need to cut back on water usage when customer demand outpaces the district's ability to supply water — particularly during the dry summer months when creek flows drop and we are forced to turn to our back-up water sources, the Woodrat reservoirs. As many of you know, the water from these sources is more costly to treat to drinking water standards and is often slightly discolored due to the clays naturally occurring in the reservoir basins — this discoloration does not pose any health hazards, but prompts many of you to call us and ask why the water appears to be “yellow” . . . or “green” . . . or “brown” . . .

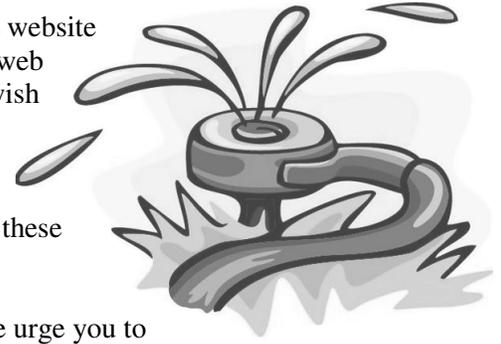


This summer when we issued our water conservation notices we regrettably did not see the drop-off in consumption which historically has followed the issuance of such notices. Despite the BCPUD's efforts to publicize these notices on the public bulletin boards downtown and in the *Hearsay News*, many of our customers seemed unaware of the water supply problems our community was facing. To those of you who did read our notices and made efforts to conserve — thank you! To those of you who did not see our notices — we would like your feedback. **How can we more effectively notify you when we need to ask you to cut back on water usage?** We recently began including requests for your e-mail address in the form of an enclosure to your quarterly water bills; if you have an e-mail account, please fill out this enclosure when you receive it with your bill, provide your written authorization for BCPUD to electronically send you important notices, and return the enclosure to us as soon as possible. If you have other ideas as to how we can more effectively notify you of the need to conserve (and other important district matters), please let us know.

An internal analysis of our customers' water usage suggests that garden irrigating may be responsible for a significant and perhaps increasing amount of water usage within the district. If so, we suggest that customers investigate methods by which they can reduce their need for BCPUD-supplied drinking water for this purpose. For example, the County of Marin approves and permits the installation of irrigation wells on private property; you can call the



County's Environmental Health Services office at 499-6907 or visit the County's website at www.marin.ca.gov and follow the links to the Environmental Health Services web page for more information about this possibility. Alternatively, customers may wish to consider the purchase of one or more water storage containers to capture and store winter rains (ideally directly off your home's roof) for use during the dry summer season. Our local landscapers are knowledgeable about water storage container suppliers and can provide you with good advice about how to integrate these containers into your garden design and function.



If you elect to install an irrigation system in all or part of your garden, we urge you to diligently and regularly monitor and maintain it. Irrigation systems that are not regularly monitored and maintained can lead to unnecessary over-watering (which counter-productively leaches nutrients from the soil); worse, they can and do fail, leading to catastrophic water losses (tens of thousands of gallons) in our water distribution system and/or irreparable soil erosion. Ideally, customers should emphasize native, drought-tolerant plants in their gardens and rely primarily on occasional deep watering (by hand) where necessary to establish younger (or non-drought-tolerant) plants and to encourage deeper roots. Applying mulch and/or wood chips to your planting beds will help reduce water evaporation; locally-produced mulch is readily available through the Resource Recovery Center. Native plants are adapted to our Bolinas soils and weather conditions; many require virtually no watering and minimal soil amendment; in contrast, grass lawns are the single-greatest plant consumers of water and are not appropriate for our local landscape. There are a myriad of other ground covers that thrive in our climate and will provide you with a beautiful, drought-tolerant (and often aromatic — think of wooly thyme!) alternative to a grass lawn. **If you are a part-time resident of Bolinas (especially if you have an automated irrigation system), please arrange for a local resident to check on your property when you are not here; we recently have experienced serious water leaks at unattended properties.**

Did you know??? The average water consumption in Bolinas is approximately 200 gallons per household per day. Check your next water bill for your average daily water usage. If your consumption is below this average—congratulations! If your consumption exceeds the average, please try and do your part to reduce your consumption and preserve this limited natural resource. Check out the following helpful water conservation tips:

Water Conservation Tips

1. **Be smart when watering your garden.** Water during the coolest part of the day. Water plants according to their water needs. If you use soaker hoses or trickle irrigation systems for trees and shrubs—*make sure to check your systems regularly for leaks, missing or damaged spray heads, etc.*
2. **Use your appliances wisely.** Wash only full loads. Scrape rather than rinse dishes before loading them into the dishwasher. Replace old clothes washers with Energy Star qualified appliances that use less water. Newer clothes washers use less than 20 gallons of water per load, whereas older washers can use 45-50 gallons per load!
3. **Don't flush your money down the drain/toilets.** A leaky toilet can waste 200 gallons of water per day. Check your toilet for leaks by adding food coloring to the tank. If the toilet is leaking, color will appear in the bowl within 15 minutes. When replacing your toilet, look for high-efficiency models that use less than 1.3 gallons per flush.
4. **Conserve around the house.** Keep drinking water in the refrigerator instead of letting the faucet run until cool. Turn off the tap when brushing teeth or shaving. Don't pour water down the drain if you can use it for other projects such as watering a plant or cleaning.
5. **Stop leaks.** Many homes have hidden water leaks that can waste more than 10 percent, costing both you and the environment. Read your water meter before and after a two-hour period where no water is being used. If the meter does not read exactly the same, you probably have a leak. Repair dripping faucets and showers. If your faucet is dripping at the rate of one drop per second, you can expect to waste 2,700 gallons per year.

from www.epa.gov/OWM/water-efficiency/pubs/simple.htm