

Bolinas Community Public Utility District
Board of Directors
P.O. Box 390
Bolinas, CA 94924

Date: July 17, 2025

Dear Members of the BCPUD Board,

I am writing to respectfully request your consideration in forgiving a recent large water bill our farm received due to an unusual and unforeseen leak.

For context, our farm has historically used approximately 300 gallons of BCPUD water per day. However, during the droughts, we worked hard to re-plumb much of our irrigation and cleaning systems to operate primarily on our own well water. Through this effort, we successfully reduced our BCPUD water use to about 100 gallons per day—a significant reduction reflecting our commitment to conservation.

The small amount of BCPUD water we do use primarily supports our farm stand, which is an important food source for the community. This water runs a few misters, a hand-washing sink, and drinking water for our crew.

Unfortunately, over the past few years, we noticed our well pressure had been steadily declining, and it took a great deal of troubleshooting to determine the cause. This summer, we experienced an unusual combination of problems that resulted in the leak:

Our well is located in our neighbor's yard, and the underground suction pipe there developed a break.

To maintain pressure for certain tasks like washing counters, we have on occasion needed to temporarily link the well system with the BCPUD system.

Without realizing it, the systems were left connected during this period when the suction pipe failed.

As a result, BCPUD water began leaking into our neighbor's yard—a location where I could not easily see pooling or moisture that would normally alert me to a problem. Even after my neighbor mentioned the wet area, it was hard to believe it could be a BCPUD leak, because under normal circumstances, a broken suction pipe simply prevents the pump from holding prime.

Eventually, I disassembled our pump system and discovered severe corrosion in the well fittings, which had narrowed to a pencil-sized opening and restricted our water flow. Compounding this, the pump had settled into soft earth and cracked the intake pipe.

Once these issues were identified, I fully repaired the well intake, replaced the corroded fittings, and ensured the systems were properly separated to prevent any recurrence.

I am sharing this level of detail to illustrate the complexity of what happened and to reaffirm that our farm has always strived to be conscientious stewards of local water resources. We take our responsibility seriously and have consistently maintained low BCPUD water usage, especially considering the scale of our food production.

In light of our longstanding record of conservation and the truly accidental nature of this leak—which resulted in a bill of approximately \$600—I am respectfully requesting that the Board consider waiving or forgiving this charge.

Thank you very much for taking the time to review this situation. I would be glad to provide any additional information or answer questions.

Sincerely,

Mickey Murch
Gospel Flat Farm
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