Bellevue Utilities News

Information about your water, drainage, wastewater and solid waste utility services.

January - February 2016

General Information **425-452-6932**
Customer Service/Billing **425-452-6973**
Drinking Water Quality **425-452-6192**
Utilities Maintenance & 24 Hour Emergencies **425-452-7840**
(flooding/water main breaks/no water/sewer overflows/ pollutant spills)
Email: **Utilities@bellevuewa.gov**
Web: **www.bellevuewa.gov/utilities.htm**
Non-city phone numbers: Republic Services (solid waste service) **425-452-4762**

Utility Rates Support Quality of Life

Bellevue Utilities provides high-quality drinking water, sewer and stormwater drainage services that sustain and improve your quality of life.

Utility services are funded through rates. The City Council approved new rates for Bellevue Utilities that will go into effect on January 1, 2016. Rates are reviewed regularly to ensure the level of service expected by customers continues to be provided.

Our purpose is simple – we provide efficient, daily essential services that keep Bellevue one of the the best place to live while remaining competitive with what neighboring cities charge for similar services.

Visit **www.bellevuewa.gov/utilities_rates.htm** to learn more.

Customers Get Essential Utility Services for Around $5 a Day

$2.07 Water purchased from Cascade Water and sewage treatment costs from King County

$1.38 Maintenance of pipes, reservoirs, pumps, meters, etc.

$0.93 Repair and replacement of pipes, reservoirs, pumps, meters, etc.

$0.77 Taxes/Other governmental costs

What Your Rate Dollars Support

- Delivery of some of the best tasting and safest water – **www.bellevuewa.gov/drinking-waterquality.htm**. Utilities does this with its 620 miles of water mains and 25 reservoirs that have a storage capacity of over 42 million gallons.
- Waterways that are free from raw sewage and polluted stormwater runoff. Utilities is responsible for protecting over 80 miles of open streams and more than 800 acres of protected wetlands.
- Protection of your safety and health by preventing flooding and sewer backups. Utilities safely delivers your wastewater to King County treatment facilities using 520 miles of sewer mains.

Average Customer Bill to Increase About $5.98 a Month

To continue providing you with high-quality services, the average single-family residential customer will see an increase of about $5.98 a month. The following rate increases have been approved for 2016:

- Drinking water will increase by 5.2 percent for the purchase of water supply from Cascade Water Alliance, investment in infrastructure and operations.
- Wastewater will increase by 3 percent for investment in infrastructure and operations.
- Stormwater will increase by 4.1 percent for investment in infrastructure and operations.

Several Factors Affect Your Rates

- Bills that we pay others are increasing. Over half of Utilities' budget includes payments to Cascade Water Alliance to purchase drinking water, King County for wastewater treatment, and payment of city and state taxes.
- Delivering utility services requires miles of pipes, pumps and other infrastructure, and investment is needed to protect it. Much of it is well past its midlife – constructed in the 50s and 60s – and requires greater maintenance or replacement. Delaying maintenance is not cost-effective as it will cost much more to replace in the future.
- Cost for day-to-day operations are increasing due to inflation.

Help Bellevue Win $5 Million

The City of Bellevue is a finalist competing for the $5 million Georgetown University Energy Prize! The goal of the competition is to reduce residential energy use. If we win, the prize money will be spent on energy efficiency programs for our residents. Help by taking simple actions like installing water-efficient showerheads – less hot water use means less energy waste down the drain. Get other great energy-saving tips by clicking on the GUEP banner at **www.GreenWa.org**.

Winter Collections

Garbage, recycling, and food and yard waste pickups can be delayed during snowy and icy weather. If carts aren't emptied, please remove your carts from the street by the end of the day. On your next regularly scheduled collection day, up to twice the regular amount of materials will be collected at no additional charge.

Collections will be on normal schedule for Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Monday, January 18, and Presidents Day, Monday, February 15.

Questions: Contact Republic services at **425-452-4762** or **www.RepublicBellevue.com**.

Free Gardening Classes

Cascade Water Alliance, which the City of Bellevue is a member, is offering free gardening classes to help you have beautiful, healthy landscapes while using water efficiently.

From February to April 2016, 30 free classes will be taught by a team of expert gardening professionals on a wide range of topics. Classes are FREE, but registration is required.

For more information, to register, and a list of classes, visit **www.cascadewater.org/classes.php** or call **1-800-838-3006**.

Cold Weather Can Burst Your Pipes!

Below-freezing temperatures can burst water pipes around your home, potentially causing serious property damage and wasting large amounts of water.

While burst pipes are usually easy to spot, smaller breaks often go unnoticed, so regularly check these areas for leaks:

- Make sure outdoor faucets aren't dripping and if you can access the pipe that feeds the faucet, inspect it for any leaks.
- Check sprinkler heads for leaks, and look for unusually damp sections in your garden, which may point to an underground leak.
- Pipes in your basement, crawlspace or garage are often subjected to freezing temperatures so look for wet spots or puddles on the ground.
- Inspect the pipes for tankless water heaters that run along the exterior of your house for leaks.
- Check any indoor sink pipes that are against exterior walls.

Know Where Water Shut-off Valves Are in Case a Pipe Breaks

The water shut-off valve is usually in a basement, garage, or outdoors by the foundation, but your property may not have one. You can also shut off the water by turning a valve in the meter box with a wrench. The water meter box is near the curb - look for a white stripe six- to eight-inches long. Crews use this stripe to quickly find the shutoff during emergencies. If you need help finding your shut-off valve or if you need a white stripe painted near your meter box, call Bellevue Utilities at **425-452-7840**.

Learn more at **www.bellevuewa.gov/shutting-off-your-water.htm**.

Congratulations Spiritridge Elementary – Recycling Champions!

Spiritridge was one of 13 Bellevue elementary and middle schools that took the challenge to generate the least amount of waste as a part of America Recycles Day this fall.

Participating schools launched campaigns to educate parents, staff and students on ways to reduce waste in the cafeteria. Common ways to reduce waste included: finishing lunch, bringing leftovers home for snacks, composting food scraps, recycling and using reusable containers for packed lunches. The contest winner was decided by holding a measurement day. Spiritridge's 658 students placed first by generating only six grams of garbage per student, the equivalent of one quarter coin per student.

With 8,000 students and staff participating, the contest also included the following schools: Ardmore, Bennett, Chinook Middle School, Clyde Hill, Highland Middle School, Jing Mei, Newport Heights, Phantom Lake, Puesta del Sol, Sherwood Forest, Somerset, and Woodridge.

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