



TCPUD

QUARTERLY

NEWS

75 Years of Service 1938-2013

A Report to Our Community

January 2014

Winter Sports Park is Back!

After a successful pilot season last year and positive feedback from the community, the Tahoe City Winter Sports Park recently re-opened for the winter season.

The Winter Sports Park is centrally located in downtown Tahoe City at the Tahoe City Golf Course and offers recreational opportunities for the entire family. From cross-country skiing to sledding, snowshoeing, and dining, there is something for everyone.

The park offers dog friendly groomed trails with a dedicated loop for snowshoers and walkers. This season it is open Friday through Sunday and daily during the President's Week holiday. Night skiing and sledding, and dinners in the clubhouse, are offered every Saturday throughout the season. As an added community benefit, the trails are groomed daily. Donations are encouraged on the park's "closed" days to help offset grooming costs.

The restaurant and bar at the Golf Course are open and guests can enjoy food, drinks, and the outside fire pit.

Schedule of Operations (WEATHER PERMITTING):

Winter Schedule: 3 days a week: Friday-Sunday, through March 30, 2014; Park: 10am-5pm; Restaurant & Bar: 10am-6pm

Holiday Schedule: 7 days a week: New Year's week through January 5, and February 15- March 2, 2014

More Winter Sports Park news on page 2

TCPUD Board Adopts 2014 Budget

The Board of Directors approved the 2014 budget at the November 2013 board meeting. The budget includes rate increases for both sewer and water that remain lower than the Proposition 218 adopted rates. This translates into a smaller rate increase for customers (only \$1.73 per month for sewer rates and approximately \$3.27 per month for water rates, based on a typical consumption of 112,000 gallons of water per year.)

TCPUD remains committed to its long-term objective of rebuilding water and sewer infrastructure with the rate revenue. The 2014 capital budget for infrastructure improvement projects is \$9.1 million, with approximately \$3.5 million coming from grant funding. There are numerous capital projects planned and to accomplish this the Board approved the addition of an Associate Civil Engineer who will work primarily on planning and management of seven capital projects. This will allow the District Engineer to focus on long-term master planning projects for the District's infrastructure and oversee the full capital project load. The budget also includes the third year of employees picking up a greater share of their benefit costs.

The overall operating budget for 2014 is \$8.7 million. This represents an increase from 2013, which is largely due to non-recurring special studies and additional staff devoted to capital projects. The newly adopted budget also includes the District paying down \$715,000 in debt, which funded previous capital infrastructure improvements.

\$500,000 budget savings projected for 2013!

TCPUD staff always strives to do their jobs as efficiently and effectively as possible, and as a result the District is projecting operating costs \$500,000 below the 2013 budget.

Protect Your Home, the Lake, and the Environment

Fats, oils, and greases are not just bad for your arteries and your waistline; they are bad for sewers too. Sewer overflows and backups can cause health hazards, damage homes, and threaten the environment. An increasingly common cause of overflows is sewer pipes blocked by grease. Grease gets into the sewer from household drains and from poorly

maintained grease traps in restaurants and other businesses. Once in the sewers, grease hardens into a solid, clinging to pipes and building up similar to how cholesterol forms plaque and clogs your arteries.

Too often, grease is washed into the plumbing system, usually through the kitchen sink. The results can be raw sewage overflowing in your home or your neighbor's home; raw sewage overflowing into streets

... continued on page 2

TCPUD Mission: To serve the people, our community, and its environment by providing safe and reliable water and sewer service for the protection of public health, and parks and recreation services to enhance quality of life.



Tahoe City Winter Sports Park

Upcoming Events at the Winter Sports Park:

- Saturday, January 4: Evening Relays
- Saturday, February 1: Family Biathlon
- Sunday, February 2: Super Bowl Sunday
- Saturday, February 15: Full Moon Skiing and Sledding, and Bonfire
- Saturday, February 22: Cobblestone Relays

For information on passes and pricing, visit www.wintersportspark.org or call 530-583-1516.

More Winter Sports Park news on page 1

Upcoming Parks & Rec Special Events

• Father/Daughter Dance

Friday, February 7, 6pm-9pm, Tahoe Biltmore, Crystal Bay

• Mother-Son Laser Tag

Saturday, March 15. 11am-4pm, Rideout Community Center

• Spring Eggstravaganza and Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 19, 10am, Commons Beach

... continued from page 1

Protect the Environment

and potentially the lake; potential contact with disease-causing organisms; and an increase in operation and maintenance costs, which causes higher sewer bills for customers.

A kitchen grease container is available free of charge at the TCPUD Administration office. Pick one up and help eliminate the grease clogging problem.

Emergency Notifications

Send us your email address so we can contact you in case of an emergency. We will only send you emails on what you request. Contact us at 530-583-3796 or send an email to tviehmann@tcpud.org.

View Board Meetings Online

Interested in attending board meetings but can't make it in person? No worries! All TCPUD Board of Directors meetings can be viewed online via live streaming. Log onto www.tahoe-city-pud.com and watch the meeting anytime.

NEWS FROM PLACER COUNTY

Are you looking for ways to make energy efficiency or renewable energy upgrades to your home or business?

The Placer County Property Assessed Clean Energy Program (P.A.C.E.), mPOWER Placer, has reopened the residential portion of the program and is accepting both commercial and residential applications from Placer County property owners.

mPOWER Placer will finance water conservation measures (fixtures, smart irrigation systems), energy efficiency improvements, and energy generation systems to qualified Placer County property owners, with no upfront costs.

For more information, go to www.mpowerplacer.org or call 530-889-4174 to speak with an mPOWER Program Specialist.

Employee of the Year: Terri Viehmann

TCPUD is proud to have such a dedicated group of team players, committed to providing outstanding service to our community.

Each year, employees of the District nominate one of their fellow co-workers as Employee of the Year. This year's Employee of the Year award goes to District Clerk, Terri Viehmann.

Terri joined the TCPUD team two-and-a-half-years ago and has made a very positive impact during that time. In her role as the District Clerk, she interacts frequently with the public, Board Members, and the TCPUD staff. Terri is always looking for ways to improve the administrative functions of the District, and happily takes on additional tasks and responsibilities to make this possible.

Fellow employees made the following comments about Terri:

- She has a positive attitude all of the time and a great work ethic.
- Terri has a "team first" attitude. She has taken on numerous projects and tasks and is willing to step outside the comforts of her "role" and do what needs to be done.
- She is extremely hardworking, organized, helpful, and positive.
- Terri is passionate and committed to excellence. She is constantly looking for ways to improve everything in the office.

TCPUD Capital Projects Completed in 2013

- Reconstructed the entire Lake Forest Water System (grant funded)
- Constructed the Four Seasons Tank Line Replacement and Woodview-Woodhill Water Main Connection improving fire suppression for property owners (partially grant funded)
- Replaced water service to over 100 condos
- Installed a new transmission line to connect Tahoma Meadows Mutual Water Company's existing system to the TCPUD's distribution system and provide fire suppression (partially grant funded)

In addition, many operational and technological improvements were completed to provide better service to all District customers.



Cindy Gustafson, General Manager, shared, "many of Terri's responsibilities are visible to the public, and many more are behind the scenes. Regardless, she always puts the public and taxpayers first and sets an incredible example of work ethic, responsibility and support for her fellow staff, the Board and the public. She inspires all of us to go the extra mile in all that we do."

Terri has been a resident of the area since 1997. Before she joined TCPUD, she worked at Northstar for 9 years, and after that ran the homeowners association at Fleur du Lac Estates.

Terri lives in Tahoe Pines with her husband Russ, son Walker, and Milo the dog. She is an active member of our community and has volunteered for many local organizations including Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue and Excellence in Education. TCPUD is extremely proud to recognize an outstanding employee like Terri Viehmann, who works hard to serve our community.



Tahoe City Public Utility District

Celebrating 75 Years of Community Service

In honor of this milestone, the District commissioned a series of articles, written by Laura Read, to share the TCPUD's history and its role in Tahoe City and the community at large.

The following two articles were first published in August 2013, in the Sierra Sun.

75 Years: Conflict and Consolidation at the Tahoe City Public Utility District

Water issues trigger conflict all over the world, and things are no different in North Lake Tahoe. In 2010, home-for-sale signs cluttered Lake Terrace Avenue in the Lake Forest neighborhood of Tahoe City. The market glut was partly related to a crash in the nation's economy, but in this particular location, it was also keyed to something more basic: the delivery of drinking water.

Since the early 1900's, the Lake Forest domestic supply had been served by a private water company. As that system aged, and state and federal water quality regulations increased, the company did not keep up. By the 2000's, the system had repeatedly failed to meet these regulations. Customers occasionally had to boil water before drinking.

Lake Forest residents clamored for the Tahoe City Public Utility District take over, but the TCPUD and the water company could not agree on a purchase price. When the District considered starting Eminent Domain proceedings, debate surged.

Supporters argued that only the TCPUD could provide consistent, clean water. (In 2007, 72 percent of Lake Forest customers petitioned the District to take control.) Detractors accused the District of "empire building." Others said government should not put a private company out of business. In 2010,

responding to the opinion clash, the District's Board of Directors held a public workshop to review the acquisition policy.

They assessed the following facts:

1. Bringing systems into the fold had historic precedent. The TCPUD had acquired 14 systems since 1939, its first year in operation, when it bought Tahoe City Water from the Bittencourt Tract developers. Some mergers happened when developers or homeowners no longer wanted to run their systems; others occurred when water company owners could not afford upgrades. 2. The Environmental Protection Agency and the California Public Utilities Commission were asking small utility districts to save money and improve service by consolidating. 3. The TCPUD could secure outside funding to replace the aging Lake Forest infrastructure, saving the rest of its customers from having to foot the bill.

This and other battles occurring now and throughout history all over the world underscore just how precious water is to human

impossible to move. According to the World Health Organization, 800 million people worldwide have no access to reliable, clean water. In the U.S., the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ensures water safety with more than 90 different standards; an estimated 89 percent of U.S. communities have good drinking water.

In much of North Lake Tahoe, the good water is sourced, stored and delivered by the TCPUD. Annually, an average of 460 million gallons of water move through the District's water infrastructure, most of it coming from groundwater wells tapping runoff and snowmelt that has percolated into rock fractures and natural underground basins. On peak days of summer, the District handles up to four million gallons of use. Serving 4,044 customers, the network includes 11 storage tanks, 10 groundwater wells, one lake intake, six booster pump stations and 80 miles of water lines, most of them built by an entity that owned the system before the District assumed it.

As TCPUD acquired small companies that could not meet EPA standards, it has faced new challenges. The systems are not contiguous, and they were built from different materials at different times to different regulations. The TCPUD is, in effect, five districts in one.

"That creates redundancies that the District would like to diminish," says the TCPUD Director of Utilities, Tony Laliotis. But it is less redundancy than the existence of numerous small independent entities down the West Shore, which together own 16 storage tanks

and 18 groundwater wells that serve 3,500 homes. Those will have their own decisions to make in the future.

The Lake Forest Water Company battle is probably not the District's last. It etched



life. Water comprises up to 60 percent of the human body, 70 percent in the skin alone. A person losing 2 percent of body water has trouble doing basic math. A 5 percent loss causes a fever, and a 10 percent loss makes it

some scars in the community, but eventually served 118 homeowners with safe drinking water and fire suppression they could rely on. In 2010, a Placer County judge granted the TCPUD possession of the network in order to eliminate further health risks among customers. Arbitration then ruled in the District's favor, and the TCPUD bought the tanks, pipes and pumps for fair market value, \$370,000. The District is now putting the final touches on new pipes and hydrants for the neighborhood, paid for with funding from the California Department of Public Health.

The Lake Terrace properties on the market during the 2009 glut are now sold.

TCPUD Sewer System Keeps North Tahoe Healthy

Centuries ago, humans used pits, trenches and rivers to hide or take away the body's odiferous wastes. According to Jon C. Schladweiler, historian with the Arizona Water and Pollution Control Association, as early as 3200 BC, man-made sewers moved effluent into percolation fields or along street drains into waterways. In Crete there were terra cotta lines; in Egypt there were pipes of copper.

People didn't build precursors to today's complete modern systems until the 19th century. On his website sewerhistory.org, Schladweiler credits Hamburg, Germany with the first complete sanitary sewage. Tidal waters

flushed the main lines once a week, and pipes were vented through roof drains of connected buildings.

North Lake Tahoe had its first chance at a full-blown sewer collection system between 1963 and 1974 when the Tahoe City Public Utility District began to install a sewer network between D.L. Bliss State Park and Dollar Hill. Lake Tahoe had been discovered, and new subdivisions were proliferating. Scientists worried that seepage from septic tanks and settling ponds would harm the lake.

The 1963-74 system was designed at a time when the amount of development that would occur in the Basin was unknown. The system ended up being designed for ultimate build-out, numbers that will never be seen in

the Basin. This overdesign of the system would turn out to be an environmental benefit. In the same time period, the TCPUD built a treatment plant in Tahoe City and pumped the wastewater uphill to a site that would allow fluids to drain naturally through soil and rock to the Truckee River. The site was an old cinder cone of fractured volcanic bedrock.

The cinder cone arrangement was temporary, satisfying rules outlined in the new Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. In 1969 California legislators ratified the Act to regulate the discharge of waste into ground and surface waters. The Act required all sewage to be exported from the Tahoe Basin.

In 1972, the Tahoe-Truckee Sanitation Agency was formed to build a conveyance line and treatment plant that would comply with the Act's requirements to transfer all



effluent away from the North and West Shores as well as Alpine Meadows, Squaw Valley and Truckee. In the final design, the effluent would be transported from Tahoe City by an interceptor pipeline along the Truckee River to a state-of-the-art reclamation plant in Martis Valley.

In 1978, the \$32 million system was ready for service. Ron McIntyre, a longtime Director of both the TTSA and the TCPUD, recalled that the final interceptor pipe inspection was done by TTSA's Chief Inspector, Pete Meredith, who traveled for 17 miles through the 30-inch- to 42-inch-diameter pipeline lying on his back on a skateboard-like apparatus he designed and built himself. Upon the system's first flows, Tahoe City held a party.

"For the TCPUD sewer collection system and its ratepayers, it is lucky the TCPUD pipes and pumps were sized for a greater population, because the capacity has some important benefits," according to Tony Laliotis, the TCPUD's Director of Utilities. "The overdesigned system turned out to be a huge positive," he said. "The excess size and length of the gravity mains contributes to a large storage capacity." In an emergency, more room for storage means fewer chances for overflows.

A bulk of the District's sewer resources go to cleaning and maintaining its lines. Some of the biggest problems are powerful tree roots that sometimes enter and block the pipes. Earth movement from freeze/thaw cycles or earthquake tremors can fracture the pipes. Problems are detected with a closed-circuit TV camera that drives through the

lines on wheels. (Unlike the T-TSA inspector of 1978, who called out his findings to an assistant standing above ground with a notebook, the camera conveys images to a computer inside a van, where an operator scans the spooky movie for aberrations.)

Each year, the TCPUD inspects 20 percent of the lines, which means that every five years, they have examined the entire system. Every year, half of the system is completely cleaned when a 25-foot-long TCPUD Vactor truck blasts 80 gallons of water per minute through the pipes at 2,500 psi.

"It's like a home pressure washer on steroids," Laliotis said. With 130 miles of pipe and 22 pump stations, the TCPUD sends an average one million gallons of sewage per day to the TTSA plant. Peak summer loads surpass 1.5 million gallons a day.

In today's sewer systems, there are still pits, trenches and river channels, but thanks to new technology, as well as to collective brainpower and financing, wastewater is rarely a threat to human life. The TCPUD collection system and its TTSA partner pipeline and reclamation plant, continue to provide North Lake Tahoe with a system that Ron McIntyre calls "an elegant design."

The final installment of TCPUD history will run in the April 2014 newsletter.