



RON RICHMAN PHOTOGRAPHY

# SPECIAL ISSUE

## FIRE, WATER, BUDGET & RATES

The Board of Directors and staff of the TCPUD ask that you pay special attention to this issue of its Quarterly News. TCPUD strongly encourages your participation in determining the future direction of TCPUD, considering the convergence of these four significant topics. The following articles included in this issue will brief you on:

- [Governor's Declaration of a State of Emergency of Wildland Fire Danger in the Tahoe Basin](#)
- [Drought Conditions in Tahoe & Throughout California](#)
- [State of California's Budget & Implications to TCPUD's Budget](#)
- [TCPUD's Rate Setting Process](#)

Each of these topics significantly impacts the other issues, your local government, and the services it provides. TCPUD welcomes your participation in the decision-making process as it forges a direction to address these critical issues in the most responsible, cost-effective, and efficient manner possible.

# TCPUD QUARTERLY NEWS

A Report to Our Community

July 2008

## State of Emergency Declared for Tahoe Basin to Protect from Wildfires

A State of Emergency for Lake Tahoe was declared on May 27th by California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and Nevada Governor Jim Gibbons in order to help protect our area from catastrophic wildfire. This was done so the two states could immediately take action to make the Tahoe Basin safer and better prepared.

The declaration was recommended by the California-Nevada Tahoe Basin Fire Commission, which was established after the catastrophic Angora fire in 2007.

In May 2008 the Commission published their report, "The Emergency California-Nevada Tahoe Basin Fire Commission Report". One of the findings of the report is that "much of the Tahoe Basin public and private water distribution infrastructure is inadequate to provide the fire flows necessary to meet current fire codes and fire agency needs." The finding stated that the vast majority of the water distribution infrastructure was not designed to provide the fire pressure flows necessary to meet current fire codes.

The report continued to acknowledge that public agencies, such as the

TCPUD, have made significant investment in their water systems, but at the current funding level it will likely take 20 years or more to complete the improvements necessary to provide adequate protection.

TCPUD has completed a full analysis of its water systems and is prioritizing the capital improvements necessary to increase fire protection capabilities. Since a significant amount of the District's sub-regional water systems are more than 40 years old and were acquired at various times from developers or other companies, extensive infrastructure work is necessary to meet current standards. TCPUD is working with the local fire departments, state and federal legislators, and officials to help secure the millions of funding needed to implement recommended improvements.

For the full report published by the Commission and other information on the State of Emergency visit:

[www.resources.ca.gov/TahoeFireCommission/](http://www.resources.ca.gov/TahoeFireCommission/). For more information on wildfire protection for your home visit: [www.livingwithfire.info/tahoe](http://www.livingwithfire.info/tahoe).

## Drought Conditions Declared in Tahoe & Throughout California

### State of California Declares Water Emergency

On June 4th Governor Schwarzenegger proclaimed a state-wide drought after 2 years of below-average rainfall and very low snow-melt run off. The final California Department of Water Resources Snow Survey of 2008 showed snowpack water content at only 67 percent of normal. With the unknowns of drought and a globally changing climate, water conservation is critically important. Consider your own home water usage.

Water Conservation Tips (back page) can help you save hundreds, even thousands of gallons of water around your home. *Please conserve!*

Keep up to date on all Tahoe City Public Utility issues, the most current Recreation activities, and Parks news ... visit the website at [www.tahoecitypud.com](http://www.tahoecitypud.com)



## Water Meter Installation to be Completed This Summer

The final stage of individual residential water meter installation is currently underway.

## TCPUD 2008 Water/Sewer Rates Setting Process & Schedule

This summer and fall TCPUD will be concluding a comprehensive water and sewer rate study. Last fall TCPUD retained HDR, a nationwide engineering consulting firm, to commence the study. This comprehensive study looks at three components:

- Revenue Requirements Analysis – comparing the source of funds to the expense of the utility
- Cost of Service Analysis – allocating the total revenue requirements to the various customer classes of service in a fair and equitable manner
- Rate Design Analysis – designing rates to yield the revenue requirements and to meet the goals and objectives of the District

TCPUD's current water and sewer rates do not address the cost of new infrastructure needs and planned infrastructure replacement. Over 80% of TCPUD's existing sewer and water infrastructure is 30-50 years old. Standards and requirements have changed dramati-

cally since it was installed. Some facilities are nearing the end of their service life. A component of the rate structure will be assessing the capital needs and setting a process for planned capital investment.

Beginning July 24th the TCPUD Board of Directors will hold a number of public meetings to discuss setting water rates based on classification and consumption, and options for sewer service rates.

The Board and staff invite and encourage the public to attend and participate in the rate setting process. Below is a schedule of these meetings. Please try to attend one or all of these public meetings.

If you have any question about rate setting, metered rates, or how water conservation can help keep your costs down contact Alan Harry, Administrator of Planning and Public Works 530-583-3796, x21, and visit [www.tahoecitypud.com](http://www.tahoecitypud.com) for schedule updates.

DATE	TIME	TOPIC
July 24th	5 pm	Workshop – Five Year Water & Sewer Capital Plan; Setting Operating & Capital Reserve Levels
August 26th	5 pm	Workshop – Rate Study: Revenue Needs, Options, Use of Property Tax
September 25th	5 pm	Board Mtg – Water/Sewer Rates Approaches /Alternatives
October 23rd	5 pm	Board Mtg – Water/Sewer Rates Approaches /Alternatives
November 14th	8:30am	Board Mtg – Review/approve proposed new Water/Sewer Rates
February 20th	tbd	Noticed Public Hearing: Proposed Water & Sewer Rates

### Why do we need meters? Do I have to have a meter installed?

It's the law! Signed into law in September 2004, Assembly Bill 2572 requires the installation and use of water meters across the state of California by 2025. It also requires that by January 1, 2010, districts must charge those customers who already have a meter, a metered rate. This process would have created great inequity between neighbors. Based both on cus-

tomers equity and a significant need for conservation, the TCPUD Board agreed to move forward with meters for **all** residential customers.

Meters and conservation-based rates are a proven manner in which to urge conservation and charge those who use the most water for their fair share of the costs of providing the water and the associated infrastructure. Without a decrease in the rapidly increasing water consumption

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[Water Meter Installation](#)

within the District, millions of dollars would be needed to develop new water sources. Numerous studies indicate that it is much less expensive and more environmentally sound to conserve water and encourage efficiency than it is to develop new water supplies. Meters with conservation-based rates have proven to be an effective means of inspiring reduced water usage.

Water is one of our most precious resources. Protection and conservation of our natural resources is important for our environment and for our future. Not only does water conservation reduce the need for taking water out of the environment, it also conserves energy by reducing the associated pumping and treatment costs.

#### WATER METER INSTALLATION SCHEDULE

McKinney Quail	June 1- July 31
Tahoe City South	June 1- July 15
Rubicon	July 14 - August 19

The District is aware that summer is a busy time and we apologize in advance for the impacts. We are more than willing to coordinate special needs with you. Please contact the following TCPUD staff members for assistance:

- Tony Laliotis  
Director of Utilities  
530-583-3797, x36
- Alan Harry  
Administrator Of Planning & Public Works 530-583-3796, x21



For information on how to read your water meter visit  
[www.tahoecitypud.com/download/utilities/Howtoread.pdf](http://www.tahoecitypud.com/download/utilities/Howtoread.pdf)

## California State Budget Crisis May Impact Local Districts

With a \$14 billion dollar deficit, Governor Schwarzenegger has declared a fiscal emergency and has called a special session of the Legislature to consider immediate steps to try to get the massive state budget deficit under control. As in past budget crisis', revenues (property taxes) dedicated to local district's are considered "part of the solution".

While the Governor and the legislature wrangle out the budget, TCPUD Board members decided to work proactively to help prevent significant disruption of services. The Board directed staff to reduce all current expenditures by 8% annually. While it is clear that some, or all of the property tax revenues that you pay are at risk, it may be late in the summer before TCPUD knows the full impact. Staff and Board members are working with our State legislators and other state officials to inform and educate them on the potential impacts to your infrastructure and services if these revenues are reduced or removed. Whatever the state decides, TCPUD will be addressing the impacts during its budget and rate-setting process (refer to article in this newsletter).

## TCPUD Fills Utilities Superintendent Position

**Introducing Doug Olsen** – Tahoe City Public Utility District is please to introduce Doug Olsen as its new Utilities Superintendent. Doug joins us from the City of Sierra Madre where he was that City's Water Superintendent. Doug is filling the vacancy that was left by Tony Laliotis when he was promoted to Director of Utilities last winter. Doug has 18 years experience working in City Government. He and his wife Karen are excited to now be living in the Lake Tahoe area.



## Rideout Community Center

Open Monday-Friday 8am-9pm  
Saturdays 9am-5pm

Check us out at  
[www.tahoecitypud.com](http://www.tahoecitypud.com)

#### OFFERING:

- Free wireless internet service and a computer lab
- Lounge games (pool table, foos ball, ping pong)
- Summer camps and classes
- Playhouse Cubby Room
- Fitness Room
- Full size indoor gym
- Meeting rooms
- A safe fun place to hang out

# Water Conservation Tips

## SAVE WATER. SAVE MONEY.

There are many little things that can add up to big water savings. Here are a few tips to help homeowners save water in a variety of ways, adapted from *On Tap* magazine, Summer 2007.

### INSIDE THE HOME

- **Keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator** rather than running the tap until the water gets cold.

- **Fix leaks!** After your meter is installed, if you do have a leak the meter will be able to detect it.

The TCPUD will send a letter to all District water service customers when a leak is detected. Just by fixing a leaky toilet you can save as much as 500 gallons a day! Check toilets for leaks by putting a few drops of food coloring in your toilet tank. If the color appears in the bowl without flushing, you have a leak.

- **Repair dripping faucets** by replacing washers. One drop per second can add up to 2,700 gallons per year.

- **Don't let the water run** while brushing teeth or shaving. On average, you will save more than five gallons of water.



- **Take shorter showers.** A quick shower rather than a bath can save an average of 20 gallons of water. The EPA recommends taking a three to five-minute shower.

- **Use both sides of the sink when washing dishes** – one side to wash and the other to rinse. Don't wash dishes with the water running.

- **Use the dishwasher and clothes washer only when you have full loads.**

- **Never pour water down the drain** when there may be another use for it such as watering a plant or cleaning around your home.

### OUTSIDE THE HOME

- **Use mulch around trees** to keep soil moist and slow evaporation.

- **Use a broom instead of a hose** to clean sidewalks and driveways.

- **Wash cars with a bucket** and hose with a shut off nozzle.

- **Water lawns and plants in the early morning** or during the evening when there's less chance of rapid evaporation.

Water your lawn only when it needs it and adjust sprinklers so you're not watering the sidewalk or street.

- **Consider removing your lawn** and planting native trees and plants.

According to the EPA the typical single-family suburban household uses at least 30 percent of their water consumption outdoors for irrigation.

Refer to the TRPA "Recommended Plant List" for a variety of plants that have been "proven" to work well in the Lake Tahoe with minimal supplemental water. This list is available in the "Home Landscaping Guide for Lake Tahoe & Vicinity," published by the University of Nevada Reno Cooperative Extension available at [www.unce.unr.edu/publications/files/nr/2006/eb0601.pdf](http://www.unce.unr.edu/publications/files/nr/2006/eb0601.pdf)

These tips can help to keep your water consumption down around your house and save hundreds, even thousands of gallons of water! And save money too!

DESIGN & PRODUCTION BY WILD WEST COMMUNICATIONS GROUP, HOMEWOOD



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## SUMMER'S HERE!

Summer brings a variety of fun family activities at Commons Beach:

### FARMERS MARKET

Come enjoy the Farmers Market – with a view! Fresh fruits and veggies, fish, flowers, and other specialty foods and gifts.

Every Thursday through October, from 8am to 1pm

### MOVIES AT THE BEACH

Come with the whole the family for fea-

ture movies under the stars! Every Wednesday at dusk until Labor Day. Donations appreciated.

### CONCERTS AT COMMONS BEACH

Free summer concerts every Sunday afternoon from 4pm to 7pm. Bring a blanket or low-back chair, a picnic and enjoy music lakeside with friends! Sponsorship inquiries welcome.

Go to [www.tahoecitypud.com](http://www.tahoecitypud.com) for Movie and Summer Concert Schedules.