

DID YOU KNOW?

Winter Plumbing Tips

Avoid plumbing problems with these cold-weather tips:

1. Know the location of your water shut-off valve and test it annually.
2. Turn off outdoor faucets and disconnect the hoses. You will thank yourself in the spring.
3. Insulate water pipes that may be vulnerable to the cold or have caused problems before. Pipes close to exterior walls or in unheated basements can be wrapped with pieces of insulation.

But if a pipe freezes, it is important to be prepared. Do not wait for nature to take its course. Thaw the pipe as soon as possible or call a plumber for help. If you thaw the pipe yourself, shut off the water or test the shutoff valve. You do not want water suddenly gushing from the pipe when it thaws.

Remember: When thawing, slower is better. Pipes warmed too fast may break. A hair dryer trained at the frozen area of the pipe is appropriate. A blow torch is not.

Happy Anniversary

November marked Skagit PUD's 75th year of serving communities in Skagit County. The PUD was formed by a citizen vote on November 3, 1936.

SIGNS OF WINTER



Home away from home. Judy Reservoir, located above Clear Lake, is the one of the largest collector areas for trumpeter swans in the United States. Like clockwork in late-October, the swans begin arriving from their summer breeding grounds in Alaska and overwinter in the region until mid-March. As part of its stewardship for these magnificent birds, staff at Judy Reservoir's water treatment plant periodically mow swan resting areas to minimize cover for predators, while working closely with wildlife agencies to collect and report any swans that perish at the reservoir during the winter.

SAVE WATER, **Save Money**

According to studies by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the average household spends as much as \$500 per year on its water and sewer bill. By making just a few simple changes to use water more efficiently, you could save about \$170 per year. If all U.S. households installed water-efficient appliances, the country would save more than three trillion gallons of

water and more than \$18 billion dollars per year! Also, when we use water more efficiently, we reduce the need for costly water supply infrastructure investments and new wastewater treatment facilities.

Save Water, Save Energy

It takes a considerable amount of energy to deliver and treat the water you use

everyday. American public water supply and treatment facilities consume about 56



Save Money > [SEE BACK PAGE](#)

Water rates at work in 2012

Skagit PUD's Board approved, on October 25, a rate adjustment of four percent or approximately **\$1.32 per month** for the average residential customer for 2012.

Skagit PUD did not have a rate adjustment in 2011. The 2012 increase enables the utility to continue providing safe and reliable water while maintaining and replacing its existing assets.

Within Skagit PUD's distribution system, there are hundreds of miles of underground pipes, valves and pumps that help deliver water to homes and businesses every day. As your public utility, it is our obligation to adequately support and maintain this valuable, yet aging, infrastructure.

"The 2010 and 2011 budgets reflected the District's response to an uncertain economy and decline in construction activity," Auditor **Christine Blake** said during a public budget hearing on October 3.

"These budgets focused on



reducing expenses in order to provide the best service to District customers while keeping rates as low as possible."

Maintaining our system through replacement and rehabilitation is critically important in order to preserve a good level of service, ensure adequate fire flows, minimize outages and maintain water quality. Deferring needed maintenance can result in expensive system repairs.

The rate increase will be applied to all bills produced **January 1, 2012**, and thereafter.

Average Residential Customer

2011 Bill (Bi-Monthly)

Basic Fixed Charge	\$34.80
First 3 CCF (100 cubic feet)/month	11.52
4- 100 CCF	21.14
Total	\$67.46

Proposed 2012 Bill (Bi-Monthly)*

Basic Fixed Charge	\$36.19 (increase 1.39)
First 3 CCF/month	11.94 (increase 0.42)
4- 100 CCF	21.98 (increase 0.84)
Total	\$70.11 (increase \$2.64 or \$1.32/mo)

* Based on average residential usage (two months) of 9,724 gallons or 13 units of water. One unit equals 748 gallons of water.

Save Water, Save Money

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billion kilowatt-hours (kWh) per year—enough electricity to power more than five million homes for an entire year. For example, letting your faucet run for five minutes uses about as much energy as letting a 60-watt light bulb run for 14 hours.

By reducing household water use you can not only help reduce the energy required to supply and treat public water supplies but also can help address climate change.

In fact:

- If one out of every 100 American homes retrofitted with water-efficient fixtures, we could save about 100 million kWh of electricity per year—avoiding 80,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions. That is equivalent to removing nearly 15,000 automobiles from the road for one year!
- If one percent of American homes replaced their older, inefficient toilets with ultra-efficient models, the country would save more than 38 million kWh of electricity—enough to supply more than 43,000 households electricity for one month.

SOURCE: EPA WaterSense Program

Skagit PUD is a WaterSense Partner. WaterSense is a national program that offers people a simple way to make product choices that use less water—and perform as well or better than your existing products.



Water Curriculum Available to Schools



Skagit PUD is making available to elementary classrooms, grades 4-6, *The Story of Drinking Water* program—an exploration of water's role in our environment and society, with an emphasis on the importance of a safe and reliable water supply.

The program includes a teacher's guide with activities covering the hydrologic cycle, forms of water, water supply, water treatment, water distribution, conservation, weather, ecosystems, waterborne diseases, and more. For classrooms using the curriculum, every student receives a colorfully

illustrated booklet of *The Story of Drinking Water*. Additionally, we include a classroom copy of *The Story of Drinking Water* DVD. The DVD makes learning about water fun and brings the materials to life.

To enhance the learning process, Skagit PUD also offers student field trip opportunities to tour our water treatment plant, Judy Reservoir, and a stream in the Cultus Mountain watershed. For more information about the program, please contact Skagit PUD Community Relations Manager **Kevin Tate** at (360) 848-4477 or tate@skagitpud.org.