



# ROCKWOOD WATER LINES

THE ROCKWOOD WATER PEOPLE'S UTILITY DISTRICT 2020 **NEWSLETTER** ISSUE 1

## Groundwater Development

Rockwood Water People's Utility District is expanding its groundwater capacity to mitigate exposure to rising wholesale water rates imposed by the City of Portland.

**Q:** *Why does Rockwood Water need to expand its groundwater capacity now?*

**A:** Our primary source of drinking water is purchased from the City of Portland under the terms of a 20-year wholesale water purchasing contract which expires June 30, 2026. The cost of wholesale water is expected to increase significantly starting in 2027. The terms of the contract say we must inform them of our plans of whether or not to purchase water from them by June 30, 2021.

**Q:** *Why is the City of Portland increasing wholesale rates by so much?*

**A:** To build a water filtration treatment facility by September 30, 2027 to meet federal treatment requirements for *Cryptosporidium*. The City of Portland estimates the project to cost \$850 million. The costs will be shared with wholesale and retail customers of Portland.

**Q:** *How much water does Rockwood purchase from the City of Portland?*

**A:** Under the current agreement, we contract to buy 2.8 billion gallons per year, which cost \$3,165,984 in fiscal year 2019/2020. Projected costs at this time are estimated to be over \$12 million dollars per year by the year 2030.



*Cascade Well 7 Drilling Project. Drilling is scheduled to be completed by March 2020.*

**Q:** *How will Rockwood Water expand its groundwater capacity?*

**A:** Groundwater Development Master Plan has been drafted and is expected to be adopted in Spring 2020. This Plan will tell us what we need to do to reduce or replace the amount of water we currently purchase from the City of Portland. Under the Plan, Rockwood will be maximizing our water rights permits to reduce the need to buy all our water from the City of Portland. We do know we will need to drill at least two more wells and have started that process.

**Q:** *Does groundwater cost less than Portland's projected wholesale cost of water?*

**A:** Based on the current cost of operating groundwater, the cost is markedly lower. Our purchase price of wholesale water is \$0.829 per hundred cubic feet, ccf (748 gallons per ccf). The cost to produce groundwater averages \$0.578 per ccf. Wholesale purchase from Portland by 2030 is projected to be \$3.196 per ccf, an increase of 385%.

## It's Main Break Season

It's that time of year when cold and fluctuating temperatures can dramatically increase stress on water pipes. Our crews actively replace and repair aging and damaged water pipes throughout the year, but, changes in temperature can cause a water pipe to break. If you see water bubbling up from the street, call 503-665-4179. Our crews are ready to respond 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## Water Main Flushing Program to Begin

The District's annual Water Main Flushing Program is scheduled to begin in mid January and continue through April. The Program is part of the District's ongoing water quality and system maintenance work. This year we will be flushing the west half of the District from 181st/182nd Avenues west to 135th/133rd Avenues and Sandy Boulevard to Haig Drive, just south of Division Street.



Crews will typically place flushing signs in the neighborhoods two to three days prior to flushing the area, and maps of the area(s) to be flushed will be posted on our website. District Crews will perform the work from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Crews work at fire hydrants, in street intersections, and at the end of cul-de-sacs. Large volumes of water flow down the streets, while fire hydrants and the water pipes are scoured of built-up sediments and tested for faulty valves.

Residents will not be out of water during flushing; however, some residents in the immediate vicinity of the work may experience low pressure and temporary discoloration of their water. This does not pose a health risk; however, residents should check their water before washing any clothing.

If you notice our crews in your neighborhood, we recommend not turning on your water between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. unless it's necessary. This includes not running appliances using water, such as dishwashers and washing machines. If you have discolored water, turn on each cold water faucet and allow it to run until it's clear again and flush each toilet two times. Please call the District office at 503.665.4179 with questions.

## Payment Assistance

If you are unable to make your payment in full, please call our office **prior to your bill due date** to make payment arrangements and avoid late fees.

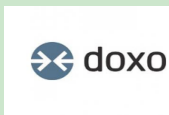
Rockwood Water's financial assistance program for qualifying customers is a one-time crisis assistance payment of \$132 **or** a bi-monthly discount of \$22 on water bills for one year (six bills). To find out if you meet our Customer Assistance Program income guidelines, contact Human Solutions, Inc. at 503-548-0217. Their offices are located at:

Rockwood Office:  
124 NE 181st Ave.

Portland Office:  
12350 SE Powell Blvd.

## Be Aware When Paying Your Bill On Line

Doxo.com is an online bill pay service that appears to be affiliated with Rockwood Water, but it is not. It is a third-party company that allows people to pay their utility bills if you sign up for their service; however, they charge fees for this service. Also, if your payment is not received by Rockwood Water on time, late payment fees or even disconnection may occur. To make sure you're paying us directly, please visit our website at [rwpud.org](http://rwpud.org).



## Budget Committee Vacancies

We are seeking residents of the District to fill 3 vacancies on the Budget Committee. Budget Committee members attend 1 or 2 Budget meetings, in late April and early May, and the June Board meeting to recommend the budget to the Board. The Board will be adopting the Budget Schedule at its January 22 Board meeting. The Board will appoint Budget Committee members at its March meeting. Applications will be available at the District office and online after the schedule is adopted January 22.

