

## Meet our New District Manager

On September 19th the North Salt Spring Waterworks District Board of Trustees was pleased to confirm Acting District Manager Ron Stepaniuk as District Manager.

A director with the Coastal Water Suppliers Association, Ron is a certificated Level 3 Water Distribution System Operator and a Level 2 Water Treatment Plant Operator, has a Certificate of Business Administration from the University of Victoria and is

working towards his diploma in Local Government Administration at Capilano University.

In his over 26 years with the District, Ron has been responsible for guiding many of the District's major initiatives. During our recent period of transition he has ably demonstrated his leadership skills and vision for the future of the District. The Board and staff look forward to working with Ron in the coming years as we plan and build our new treatment facilities.



Ron Stepaniuk

City of Beautiful  
 PO Box 430  
 Beautiful BC V4R 5R4  
 Phone: (555) 555-5555  
 Fax: (555) 555-5555

**January Utility Billing**

Account #: 000 00001000 000 Billing Date: 31-Jan-2012 Bill From: 01-Jan-2012  
 Service Address: 145 CARRIER CRES Batch #: 2012022301 Bill To: 31-Jan-2012

Due Date: 28-Feb-12

Waterworks Customer  
 761 Upper Ganges Rd.  
 Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 1S1

Account Balance Due By 01-Mar-2012 \$ 91.00  
 Account Balance Due After 01-Mar-2012 \$ 92.32

Account Details From: 31-Jan-2012 Access Code 11111

Code	Description	Date	Units	Amount
Balance Forward As Of: 31-Jan-2012				
				49.54
1	MS1 Metered Sewer	31/01/12	1.00	0.00
1	MW1 Metered Water UB1020	31/01/12	1.00	42.15
6423099	280/112 Current Reading: 201.00	2712/11	Pre-Reading: 182.50	Consumption: 19.00 Cubic Metres
Current Levy				42.15

**Consumption History**

**IMPORTANT NOTES**  
 BUSINESS HOURS ARE MON - FRI 9AM - 4PM  
 These messages are general messages and can be printed on all bills. There is no limit on messages, but remember too many will force bill to 2 pages.  
 This note is unique to this customer only. It is attached to the customer and flagged to print on their UB Bills.  
 Please update your phone number

Account Balance Due By 01-Mar-2012 \$ 91.00  
 Account Balance Due After 01-Mar-2012 \$ 92.32

Account #: 000 00001000 000  
 City of Beautiful DENNOVERS, GAIL  
 PO Box 430 145 Mailing  
 Beautiful BC V4R 5R4 Courtenay BC V4V 8R4  
 Phone: (555) 555-5555  
 Fax: (555) 555-5555

## A New Look in the New Year

We're modernizing our systems! Starting in January 2013 we'll be using new billing software. Customer invoices will have a new look and provide you with new information, including a consumption graph so you can track your usage. They will also clearly show the amount owing before and after penalty dates. While you will retain your separate

water and parcel tax account numbers, you will also be assigned a unique customer number so we'll be able to provide you with information about all your accounts at a glance when you contact us.

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Your new invoice will look something like this.

## 2013 Rates

As announced in May, our basic water toll rate has been raised 7% for 2012-13 and 2013 parcel taxes were raised 10%. They are still the lowest rates on the island.

We are also looking at re-structuring our toll rate system beginning in early 2013 to lower the minimum base rate threshold. Most customers use less than 10,000 gallons per billing period, while our current minimum threshold is 20,000 gallons. Lowering our minimum rate threshold to 10,000 gallons or less will not affect most customers, while those who use more water will pay more, making the rates more equitable. We will keep you posted about any changes to the rate structure.

Parcel Tax is assessed by lot size as determined by BC Assessment. All properties in the district are assessed on this same basis, including those that are not currently connected to the water main, as this is the fairest way to do it.

## Ratepayer Approval Process

Major capital improvements require the approval of our ratepayers. We expect to begin our ratepayer approval process for the new St. Mary Treatment plant in the new year. We will keep you informed about the process via our website and our newsletters.

## Who Regulates Our District?

All BC improvement districts are regulated by the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development, Local Government and Finance Branch. We follow the guidelines as set out in their *Improvement District Manual*, which is also governed by *Part 23 of BC's Local Government Act* and *BC's Community Charter*. Water quality guidelines are set by Health Canada in their "*Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality*".

## Capital Construction Fund Surcharge

Major capital expenditures in the form of a new plant are coming beginning next year as we enter the preliminary design and ratepayer approval phase for a new treatment plant on St. Mary Lake and other infrastructure improvements. However, many years of undercharging on our rates and recent district improvements have left our reserve building funds extremely low.

At the October 17th Board meeting Trustees voted to impose a surcharge of \$30.00 per parcel taxed lot, and \$5.00 per water toll billing (\$2.50 per month) to each District customer beginning in 2013, pending Ministry approval. These monies will be combined with some of our current

investment funds and invested in a specially created Capital Construction Fund account to begin accumulating interest, and eventually used to help pay for the new plant, either as a loan down payment or to directly pay for part of the construction costs. Excess operating surplus may also be channelled into this investment fund.

We're starting now with a small amount, as the Trustees felt, as the ratepayer's representatives, that the costs of the new plant need to be spread out as much as possible, and we can't keep postponing the fact that ratepayers will have to pay for the much needed new treatment plant. By starting small we hope to lessen the cost impact for all ratepayers.



St. Mary Lake

## St. Mary Lake Treated Water Safe to Drink

All our treated water from St. Mary Lake is perfectly safe to drink, and meets all regulatory guidelines for safe drinking water. We work very hard to ensure that we always provide you the best water we can.

If you don't like the taste of chlorinated water, we suggest you fill a pitcher with drinking water and let it stand uncovered for at least an hour. Chlorine will naturally dissipate into the air.

# Top 5 Reasons We Need a New Treatment Plant for St. Mary Lake



Interior of St. Mary Treatment Plant

A new modern treatment plant using a Dissolved Air Floatation (DAF) plus gravity filter process:

1. Reduces customer health risk from cyanobacteria toxins by up to 99%.
2. Reduces disinfection by-products by about 50%, and by about 75% if powdered activated carbon treatment is included.
3. Reduces Giardia and Cryptosporidium parasite health risk by at least 99.9% via UV primary disinfection.
4. Reduces the chlorine dosage needed.
5. Improves water taste – especially if powdered activated carbon treatment is included.
6. Produces sparkling clear water even during a cyanobacteria bloom.
7. Eliminates residuals discharge back to the lake, including cyanobacteria, their toxins, and phosphorus.
8. Provides a centrifuge “cake” of concentrated residuals that might be very useful fertiliser for local farms.
9. Replaces old equipment, thus improving reliability.

Many people ask us “Why do we need a new treatment plant? Isn’t the current one adequate?” The answers are both yes and no.

While our current treatment system meets our current needs and water quality requirements, our St. Mary Lake plant is forty-plus years old and has reached its volume capacity. Over the last few years Health Canada has introduced more stringent guidelines for water treatment and the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) has mandated that we must improve treatment at both St. Mary Lake and Maxwell Lake. New, more sophisticated treatment processes will reduce any taste and odour issues and provide much better control when dealing with algae blooms and any other water quality issues, and will meet our regulated mandate for provision of safe drinking water.



Exterior of current St. Mary Treatment Plant

## Learn more about us

Learn more about us and what we do on our website at [www.northsaltspringwaterworks.ca](http://www.northsaltspringwaterworks.ca)

Our **FAQs** (Frequently Asked Questions) page in the **About Us** section of our website is designed to help you learn more about our rates, what to do about water system leaks, water quality and many other things, including what others across Canada and around the world are doing about algae blooms.

## The Top 5 Reasons are:

1. In the aftermath of the Walkerton, Ontario incident the Canadian Drinking Water Guidelines are becoming more and more stringent and will continue to do so in to the future. NSSWD must be able to meet both the current and new regulations presented by St. Mary Lake’s water quality.
2. Due to the degrading water quality Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) has mandated treatment improvements for the St Mary Lake Treatment Plant.
3. Our original plant at St Mary Lake was built in 1974 and upgraded to present capacity in 1980. Present capacity will not allow us to withdraw our full licensed allotment.
4. Technology has dramatically improved over the past 38 years. The new plant will be more reliable and efficient, providing much improved peace of mind to our ratepayers.
5. NSSWD is one of three island water districts, along with many lakeshore owners who withdraw water from the lake. NSSWD does not own St Mary Lake or its watershed, so without this control we must have sophisticated technology to treat the degrading water quality to ensure that the water we provide to our ratepayers is safe for consumption now and in the future.

## Service Interruptions

Experiencing a sudden service interruption? There are two reasons for this – you haven't paid your bill for a while or there's an emergency in your area requiring a temporary shut-off.

For emergency interruptions we do our best to let our customers know what the problem is and how soon it will be fixed. You can also check our website or call our office to see if there's a problem in your area.

If you haven't paid your water bill your service won't be reinstated until you have brought your account up to date. If you are experiencing difficulty in paying we

will gladly work out a payment plan with you.

Please note that water meters are the property of North Salt Spring Waterworks District and, pursuant to Bylaw 92, it is unlawful for any person whose water has been turned off to turn their water back on themselves. Customers who tamper with the meter are subject to a fine of up to \$250.00 or to imprisonment not exceeding 30 days, or both, and if the offence is of a continuing nature to a fine not exceeding \$50.00 for each day the offence is continued.

## Interesting Facts

Did you know that the biggest single user of St. Mary Lake water is Mother Nature? She reclaims almost 180,000,000 gallons via evaporation each year - equivalent to a 0.45m (18") drop in lake level. While varying by year, on average  $\pm 615,000,000$  gallons exits annually via the weir and fish ladder.

NSSWD withdraws around 85,000,000 gallons annually, an average of 150,000 gallons a day in winter and up to 500,000 gallons on a peak summer day. Our license allows for a draw of up to 943,500 gallons a day year round. Total volume of the lake varies from around 3,540,000,000 gallons in winter to 3,260,000,000 gallons in a dry summer.

## Turn Off/Turn On Service

Leaving home for an extended period? Enjoy peace of mind while you're away. For the small fee of \$67 we can shut your meter off for you when you leave and turn it on for you when you return. Please call the office to book this service.



### General tips for when you're away:

- Turn off the water at the main valve inside and/or outside your house before you leave
- Turn off your water heater
- Have someone check on your premises regularly

### Holiday Hours

#### Office Closed:

December 24, 25, 26, 2012  
January 1, 2013

#### Regular Hours:

Monday to Friday  
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

### North Salt Spring Waterworks District

761 Upper Ganges Road  
Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 1S1

PH: (250) 537-9902

FAX: (250) 537-1956

info@northsaltspringwaterworks.ca

[www.northsaltspringwaterworks.ca](http://www.northsaltspringwaterworks.ca)

## Payment and Penalty Dates

Prior to July of this year all our invoices were due on receipt, and penalties were applied bi-monthly for water tolls and twice a year for taxes.

Please note that all invoices for water are now payable within 30 days, with the penalty date being the 31st day after billing. The same payment terms will apply to parcel taxes effective January 2013. The penalty rate is 10%.

Interest is charged quarterly on parcel tax accounts more than 12 months in arrears. The interest rate is set quarterly by the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development: Local Government Infrastructure and Finance branch. The current rate is 6%.

For tax payers who are more than two years in arrears on their parcel tax account the district may initiate proceedings as allowed under Sections 761 to 768 of the *Local Government Act*. Said *Act* allows us to attach and sell properties more than two years in arrears of payment of taxes.

## Available Payment Options

- In the office we accept: cash, cheques, Visa, MasterCard and debit
- Via mail: cheques \*
- Over the phone we accept: Visa or MasterCard
- Via major Canadian banks and credit unions: Online and telephone banking
- 24 hour drop-off box at the front of the office building at 761 Fulford-Ganges Road

\* When payments are made by mail, bills are considered as having been paid on the date they are received in the North Salt Spring Waterworks District office.