



September 2013

The Long Hot Summer



Salt Spring has enjoyed a wonderful, sunny, dry summer, which, for

some of you, has meant lots of extra watering to keep your gardens growing. This may have resulted in a bit of a surprise when you opened your water bill. However, in most cases your consumption is directly related to your watering activities.

Leak Allowances

If you had an actual leak in your water system you may qualify for a Leak Allowance.

Please visit the Policies section on our website to view our Leak Allowance Policy or visit our FAQs page for tips on how to check for a leak.

In general, here's how the Leak Allowance process works:

- When we are meter reading if, when entering the reading into our system, and bearing in mind the weather for the period, we notice excessive consumption compared to

the same period in prior years, we'll send someone out to double-check the reading before billing. (We keep the re-read records on file so we know who we double checked on.)

Please note that this summer we had a large number of high readings, so we were only able to double check those that were very high compared to normal and therefore might indicate a leak.

- When doing the initial read or the re-read, if we find your meter is slowly spinning, indicating a possible leak, we'll call you to let you know there may be a problem that you should immediately check for. If there is no indication of a current leak we'll file the re-read information in case you call us once you get your bill.

Please call us:

- Immediately, if you discover a leak.

- If you notice something might be wrong when you open your invoice. You have 14 days from the date of billing to notify us of a problem.
- To advise us that you have checked into a problem and/or fixed the leak.

We really try to catch the leaks before we do the billing, so the sooner you let us know about a problem the better.

In all cases where a leak is indicated we will start a Leak Allowance file for your account. If you did have a leak, and it qualifies under our Leak Allowance Policy, you may be granted a Leak Allowance for the billing period. Leak Allowances are limited to one per account in a three year period.



Irrigation problems do not qualify for a leak allowance.

Please be sure

your outside taps are turned off when not in use. The average garden hose delivers roughly 6 gallons of water per minute/360

gallons per hour or 8,640 gallons per day!

When found, a leak should be repaired immediately. If for some reason it can't be, you, or whoever is looking after your property, should shut off your water at your home's main shut-off valve or have the District shut it off at the meter for you. (Note: It is illegal to turn off the meter yourself.)

Turn Off/On Service

If you're going to be away for an extended period or need your water shut off temporarily for some reason, the District provides a turn off/on service to homeowners for a \$69 fee. Please call the office to book this service.

Emergency Contact Information

It's really important that the District has your emergency contact information on file so we can contact you in the case of an emergency, such as a leak on your property or a service interruption. If you don't live here year round, please ensure we have an island contact who can act on your behalf. If you can't be reached and we have to shut your water off for you a \$69 fee will apply.



Customer Information

Change forms are available on the Contact page of our

website or stop by the office.

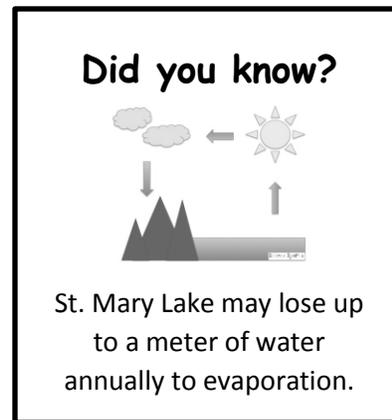
Service Interruptions

Emergency or scheduled service interruptions are posted on the Home Page of our website. For scheduled interruptions we'll also call you ahead of time to let you know what's happening and when.

Toll Rates

As noted in our last newsletter, effective this billing water toll rates have increased by 3%. The new four-tier structure will be implemented in December.

Visit the Regular Charges page of our Billing & Rates section on our website for more information.



Two Accounts Needed if Paying Online

If paying your accounts online, you need to set up one account for Water Tolls and one for Parcel Tax.

Water Toll and Parcel Tax account numbers are connected to the physical address of the property. If you move your account number changes to that of your new address. If you use online banking to pay your bills,

be sure to update your North Salt Spring Waterworks account numbers for your online *payees* so that your payment is credited to the correct customer – you.

Going away?

We are happy to accept your post-dated cheque(s) for deposit before the due date or you can pre-pay on your account. If you use online banking, most banks allow you to pre-schedule payment.

Maxwell Lake Watershed

The Board and staff would like to thank everyone, islanders and visitors alike, for supporting us in our ongoing efforts to protect the Maxwell Lake watershed.

Restricted activities such as swimming, camping and off-road vehicles place stress on natural ecosystems and slowly degrade the watershed. The result is increased nutrient loading to the lake which promotes algal growth and declining overall water quality.

Fire in the watershed is of particular concern. A fire would dramatically reduce ground cover and harden the earth. Both ash and accelerated runoff would cause significant water quality problems for many years. The cost of remediating the watershed and treating the water would be borne by the rate-payers so please continue to spread the message that this valuable resource needs to be protected for both current and future generations.