

# QUARTERLY UPDATE

## BOARD MEETINGS

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
Wednesday, November 20  
5pm

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
Wednesday, December 18  
5pm

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
Wednesday, January 15  
5pm

## What's Happening in the District?

All District Board Meetings are hybrid, so the public can attend either in person or join the meeting virtually. Here's the link if you'd like to join in: <https://tinyurl.com/bdezc5md>  
Meeting ID: 849 3064 6501  
Passcode: 474179

Do you need assistance with our On-Line Bill Pay Service? Please contact us at 503-292-2777 or at [customer.service@wswd.org](mailto:customer.service@wswd.org)

We're here to help you!

Check out our Water Quality Report at [www.wswd.org](http://www.wswd.org)

**CONTACT US!**  
3105 SW 89th Ave.  
503-292-2777

**On the web at:**  
[www.wswd.org](http://www.wswd.org)

**Email:**  
[customer.service@wswd.org](mailto:customer.service@wswd.org)

Also, check the website for our newsletters, past and present.

[www.wswd.org](http://www.wswd.org)



Serving the  
West Slope  
Neighborhood  
Since 1922

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October to December 2024

## Trust in Public Drinking Water

**THE RESULTS FROM A RECENT NATIONWIDE SURVEY CONDUCTED ON BEHALF OF THE AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION (AWWA) WERE RELEASED THIS SUMMER.**

The survey, titled "Public Perceptions of Tap Water," sampled the opinions of over 2,000 public water system customers across the U.S. representing an array of age, gender, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. The full results can be found on the AWWA Value of Water webpage (<https://news.awwa.org/Value-of-Water>), but we wanted to share a short summary of the survey. The survey found that 70% of the respondents trusted their water utility and 68% trust scientists to deliver accurate information about their drinking water. Also of note, 34% of the respondents claimed they struggled to pay their utility bills (including water) on time with 77% of those surveyed supporting a federal assistance program. Overall, 72% of those surveyed claimed they felt the tap water in their home was "safe."

We live in a culture of distrust with government, and that distrust can impact public water utilities. We see stories from around the country where public officials who are supposed to be serving the public with safe drinking water are cutting corners behind the scenes, siphoning off rate payer money for other non-approved expenditures, and failing to operate and maintain the treatment and distribution systems that bring safe drinking water into the customer's home. At West Slope Water District, that mindset is abominable to us. Instead, we want to build public trust by providing safe, clean, and reliable drinking water, quality operations, and excellent customer service. We hold dear to our responsibility as public servants to put customer service as a #1 priority in all we do. But saying it is never enough ... we must live it ... we must model and demonstrate our commitment to our customers every day

### What do you think? Please let us know.

Do you trust your tap water as safe to drink every day? Let us know.

Do you believe the District is well maintained and well managed to protect the integrity of the District's infrastructure and the needs of you, the customer? Let us know. Are you struggling to pay your water bill each month? Let us know. Has our staff been helpful with questions or problems with your water service lately? Let us know. We believe we do a good job bringing safe drinking water to your home, but we are always looking for ways to be better.

Please let us know how we can be better for you. Thank you!!!



### New Water Rate Structure coming in 2025

Over the last several months, the District has been working with consultants to develop a new water rate structure that will take effect in mid to late 2025. The new rate structure will be designed to cover increasing expenses for purchased water costs, personnel services, and replacement of aging infrastructure.

The proposed new rate structure will be divided into the three different classes of customers serviced by the District with costs allocated based on system use.

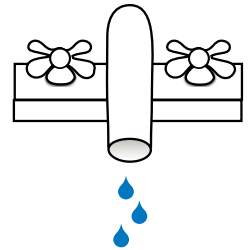
Residential and Commercial classes will have tiered consumption rates while the Multi-family class will continue to have a flat consumption rate. The residential class consumption rate will likely decrease for lower usage (first tier) and increase for higher usage (third tier) from the current flat rate. In addition, the monthly fixed meter charge for all classes will more than likely increase slightly. Our goal is to keep the District in excellent shape for future generations while making sure our customer water rates are equitable and affordable.

For further information on our new rate structure coming in 2025, watch for inserts in your monthly water bill, content posted to our website, and announcements of in-person and virtual public meetings.

## Did Your Water Pipes Freeze or Fracture after the January 2024 Storm?

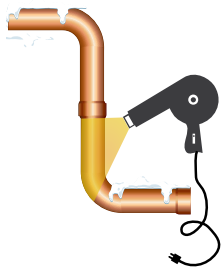
If not, you were one of the fortunate ones who insulated and protected your water pipes and irrigation system well. We all have learned a few things since the January 2024 sub-freezing storm. Here are some things you should take care of **BEFORE** the cold weather hits:

- 1 At the end of irrigation season, shut down and DRAIN your irrigation system thoroughly. With the irrigation system shut off, open the shutoff valve(s) to your individual sprinklers just a crack. A fully seated or sealed valve may freeze and then expand inside the pipe when it thaws. Also, you may want to place a covering over exposed sprinkler heads. Many customers reported in 2024 that plastic sprinkler heads froze and cracked even though they were drained and dry.
- 2 Locate your emergency water shut-off valve at the outside edge of your home's foundation or inside your house (crawl space or inside a wall or garage), keep your pipes safe and insulated, cover foundation vents, and disconnect and drain outdoor hoses, sprinkler systems, and backflow devices.
- 3 When temperatures plunge below freezing, temporarily turn on your faucet located furthest from your water meter so that it has a thin and steady stream, not just a drip. We found that a drip often was not enough water to keep water moving to prevent freezing in extreme cold or when a home has no heat.
- 4 Periodically, open kitchen and bathroom cupboard doors to allow pipes behind the interior walls that face the outside of your home and under the floors to get additional heat from inside your house.



### How to Tell if You Have a Frozen Water Pipe:

Turn on faucets located throughout your home; if some of them work and others do not, it is likely that you have a frozen pipe somewhere in the home. If there is no water to your home, the frozen area may be in your service line between the water meter at the street and your home. If you are not sure, please contact the West Slope WD office. We will respond after hours quickly with no additional charge to our customers.



### How to Safely Thaw a Frozen Water Pipe:

To thaw plumbing lines safely, use a hair dryer on a low setting. Move the hair dryer back and forth, moving in 12" – 16" sections until water flows freely from the affected tap. **NEVER** thaw a frozen pipe with an open flame like a blow torch. Remember to leave a thin stream of water on once the pipe has thawed so that it does not refreeze.

### When You Begin to Repair a Broken Water Pipe:

If you need the water to your home shut off at the water meter to fix a broken pipe or customer service line, please contact West Slope WD to shut the water off. We know how to do this safely, and we respond to customer calls when there is an emergency 24 hours/day. Otherwise, you can turn the water off and on to your home as needed during repairs at your own shut off valve next to your house's foundation or in a crawl space or garage.

To avoid more problems next Spring, conduct a careful inspection of your irrigation system for pipe and fitting breaks **BEFORE** you start using your system for watering your plants and lawn. Discovering and repairing damage to your irrigation system before it is turned on for the irrigation season will spare you a very large water bill next Spring.