

# Water Ways



## New water meters installed

Contractors working to bring automated meter reading to PUD water systems are installing about 250 new water meters per day and expect to wrap up by the end of October.

Workers from Professional Meters, Inc., a subcontractor of Badger Meter Inc., of Milwaukee, Wis., are installing the water meters and attached transmitters. If all goes well – and it usually does – each job takes only 10 to 15 minutes, with water off for just a few minutes.

Ron Slabaugh, senior water resource engineer and project manager, said some work may continue after October as PUD crews resolve any problems, replace large industrial meters, and continue testing equipment.

The new automated metering reading system uses electronic transmitters, so meters can be read from a distance. Meter readers will drive by homes and businesses once a month. Water-use figures will be transmitted to a laptop computer in the vehicle.

In the past, water consumption has been estimated during the winter because snow made it hard to reach the underground vaults where water meters are located. Automated meter reading will eliminate the need for estimates while improving safety for meter readers.

The system provides advantages for leak detection as well. If an excessive amount of water flows through a meter, an alarm will alert system operators to a potential problem.

If your water bill seems higher after a new meter was installed, that may be due to increased accuracy. More than half of the PUD's meters were over 10 years old, and some customers have been undercharged for water use due to meters running slow.

Questions about the project should be directed to Customer Service Director John Stoll at 661-4539 or [john.stoll@chelanpud.org](mailto:john.stoll@chelanpud.org).

## Find us on the Web

Chelan County PUD has updated its Web site with more news and information about water conservation and drought-tolerant landscaping. You'll find seasonal tips that are updated weekly to help you save water – and money. There's a complete catalog of the Xeriscape™ flowers and grasses planted in the Riverfront Park Demonstration Garden. Visit [www.chelanpud.org](http://www.chelanpud.org). Click on "Environmental Stewardship," then on "Water Conservation." For information about PUD water systems, from the home page go to "Customer Services" and then to "Water."

## Conservation works

Although population is at a record high, New York City is using 28 percent less water than it did in 1979. New York's daily consumption is 136 gallons per capita. That compares to 177 gallons in Boston, 170 gallons in Denver, 124 gallons in Seattle, and 97 gallons in San Francisco. (Note: The average daily use for Chelan County PUD households is 300 gallons.) (Source: *New York Times*)

*Continued on reverse*



*New meters and transmitters that allow meters to be read from a distance are being installed for all water customers.*

# Autumn 2006

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## Get ready for winter

Water expands as it freezes, which can cause pipes to break. Pipes that freeze most frequently include outdoor hose bibs, swimming pool supply lines, water sprinkler lines, and water supply pipes in unheated interior areas such as basements and crawl spaces, attics, garages, or kitchen cabinets. Pipes that run against exterior walls that have little or no insulation also can freeze.

Before the onset of cold weather, prevent freezing of water supply lines and pipes by following these tips:

- Drain water from swimming pool and water sprinkler supply lines following manufacturer's or installer's directions. Do not put antifreeze in these lines unless directed. Antifreeze is dangerous to people, pets, wildlife, and the environment.
- Remove, drain, and store hoses. Close inside valves supplying outdoor hose bibs. Open the outside hose bibs to allow water to drain. Keep the outside valve open so that any water remaining in the pipe can expand without causing the pipe to break.
- Check around the home for other areas where water supply lines are located in unheated spaces. Look in the basement, crawl space, attic, garage, and under kitchen and bathroom cabinets. Both hot and cold water pipes in these areas should be insulated. A hot water supply line can freeze just as a cold water supply line can freeze if the water

## How to reach us

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is not running through the pipe and the water temperature in the pipe is cold.

- Consider installing specific products made to insulate water pipes such as a "pipe sleeve" or installing UL-listed heat tape, heat cable, or similar materials. Pipes should be carefully wrapped, with ends butted tightly and joints wrapped with tape. Follow manufacturer's recommendations for installing and using these products. Newspaper can provide some degree of insulation and protection to exposed pipes - even 1/4" of newspaper can provide significant protection in areas that usually do not have frequent or prolonged temperatures below freezing. (Source: American Red Cross, [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org))

## It's not too late to plant

Fall is an excellent time to put in a new lawn. Cool weather with periodic rainfall is ideal for grass seeds to germinate and become established. Choose seed mixtures that are suited for your location and don't require a lot of water.

## Snowbird reminder

If you'll be heading south this winter, take this toll-free number with you: 1-888-663-8121. If your water service is off while you're away, you can call us at that number a few days before you return in the spring, and we'll get your water back on before your arrival.

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