



# What's on Tap

Vision of Tomorrow | Action Today

18631 SE 300th Place, Covington WA 98042 \* 253-631-0565 \* Fax: 253-630-4825  
CovingtonWater.com General Manager: Thomas Keown

2156103

## Backflow tests due to the District July 31st

### 2017's State of the District

The past year has been busier than normal for Covington Water District (District). We have made great strides with numerous programs and projects that we've been analyzing and planning for in recent years. There have also been several significant accomplishments (as outlined below), yet we remain diligent and committed to continuously refining the services we provide to balance the needs of developers and our existing customers.

Accomplishments include:

- The District **did not raise rates** for the second year in a row.
- Completed paying off 222nd Corrosion Control Facility (\$1.44M) and Timberlane Water Main Replacement (\$1.25M) PWFT loans in 2017.
- The District now produces water for about \$0.50/ccf (includes O&M and debt repayment costs), which is much lower than our neighboring utilities who are customers of Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) that pay rates of \$1.50/ccf (winter) and \$2.20/ccf (summer). SPU is also looking to increase their wholesale rates 25% over the next few years. The District is not.
- Water service revenue was 13% higher than budgeted for 2017.
- The District was awarded a \$79,000 grant to fund the production of energy from our new Tacoma Water C-4 supply main, and will provide 75% of the power the District uses at our Administrative Building site.
- Technology improvements and improvement processes include investing in on-line payment software; coordinating outsourcing of billing (resulting in reduction of 1 FTE);

aggressively pursuing testing and prioritizing rehabilitation of our large meters; and, in-sourcing tank cleaning activities when more economical than outsourcing.

We understand that building relationships within our community by getting our employees involved increases employee engagement and lets our customers know how we are giving back. So to support this important goal, staff helped support the following Community Events:

- Sawyer Woods Elementary School STEAM Event
- Martin Sortun Elementary School STEM Event
- Maple Valley Hometown Holidays
- Covington Days
- Play Unplugged
- Covington Business Expo

Another important task we undertake is maintaining and improving the water infrastructure that is critical to make sure the water our customers receive is safe and reliable. The District is fortunate to have a competent and dedicated staff that believes in the opportunity for efficiency improvements and are willing to devote the hours of time to learn how to use our software tools and input copious amounts of data into our work management system (Lucity). We also took the first steps of aligning Lucity to track data that will support our Reliability Centered Maintenance (RCM) program efforts. We are now in the process of using Lucity and GIS data to build our future funding revenue estimating tool. This tool will help guide our infrastructure investments to make sure we make the right investments, at the right time while meeting our levels of service so that these expenditures are **effective** and **efficient**.

For more information on our accomplishments, our rates and budget, please visit our website at [www.covingtonwater.com](http://www.covingtonwater.com).



### Special Events/Dates

The District will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

- Wednesday, July 4th for Independence Day
- Monday, September 5th for Labor Day

### Employee Spotlight

#### Terry Campbell – Senior Facility Operator



Terry Campbell started with the District approximately 35 years ago and has been a firsthand part of the extensive growth throughout that time period. Since the early days, Terry has been instrumental in the development of several water programs including; inventory, hydrants, valves and flushing. Terry is also the resident expert on where many of the District's older pipes are located in the system which has been of great value in finding their location and helping with the development of the District's GIS Program. He has also been an active participant over the years on the Safety Committee, including being one of the initial members when the committee was set up.

Terry performed in the Lead Excavator role for several years and used his skill set to train staff in proper techniques required to be a safe and effective excavator. He has done a great job supporting the group to perform the excavation work efficiently as a team.

Terry was also in the Water Resources Department prior to transitioning into the Operations Department. He worked on, or assisted with, many other programs related to water quality, treatment and cross connection control.

Currently Terry is the staff person that helps organize and implement the Unidirectional Flushing Program. This important program directs water throughout the distribution system and flushes water at preset points to ensure the quality of the District's water remains high. You may have seen Terry working around the District with water flowing out of hydrants.

Terry's secondary program is the Locate Program. You may be familiar with "Call 811 Before You Dig." Once those calls come in, Terry and other employees locate water lines prior to construction so water lines can be identified and potential damage avoided.

Terry is valued for his historical and technical knowledge and is always willing to help out when needed. Thank you for 35 years of service and counting!

### Operations Highlight: Flushing Program

Unidirectional Flushing (UDF) is an excellent, water-efficient method of cleaning water distribution pipes to improve water quality and restore capacity. The premise is simple: develop a plan that flushes water from a clean source through the existing pipe network and out while working in one direction and one segment at a time.

By cutting off other flows, scouring velocities of 5 to 7 feet per second is achieved, compared to 1 to 3 feet per second with conventional flushing. At these velocities, UDF scours out sediment, biofilm, corrosion products, and tuberculation. Not only is UDF a more effective way of cleaning than conventional flushing, but it uses on average about 40 percent less water than conventional flushing. Equally important, the sediment, corrosion products and biofilm are flushed out and not just moved to another pipe run that's often the case in conventional flushing.



The District has just over 600 "dead ends" within our distribution system. These are defined by AWWA in the M-14 manual as pipes that should be flushed at a minimum of once per year to prevent distribution system water quality degradation. These pipes are the focus once the UDF program moves through the distribution system first to ensure clean supply water to each "dead end" main. Free chlorine residual is monitored before and after flushing, turbidity, and color are monitored to ensure the water quality at these locations is consistent with the overall system. Another benefit is this process allows our Operators to assess the physical condition of the pipes, valves and hydrants all from a single program and score their condition for later use in our Asset Management Program.

Water main & dead end main flushing activities are performed 9 months out of the year, if you have any questions please contact Dan Sleeth, Operations Manager @ 253.867.0950.

### Community Engagement

With school out and summer here, our community will have plenty of opportunities for folks to get out there and enjoy the weather, each other, and the outdoors.

The District is participating in its third year of The Play Unplugged Program. The program officially started Memorial Day weekend and goes on until Labor Day weekend (May 25th - September 3rd, 2018). During this time, children will be able to complete the activities for any one of Covington's Brag Badges to earn a badge.

Play Unplugged is all about encouraging kids to put down their electronics and get out and play. This is done by creating a symbiotic relationship between kids, parents and the local community. With local



businesses and agencies sponsoring brag badges, families get to learn more about the businesses in town, and at the same time, businesses get exposure to their community members!

To earn a brag badge from Covington Water District, host or attend a water balloon fight, take a picture and come on over to the front desk and show it to one of our friendly customer service reps to earn a brag badge.

Other opportunities to get out into the community are listed below. District staff will be participating and attending the various events! Make sure to stop by our booth and say hello!

- Covington Days - July 21 - July 22, 2018
- Covington Chamber's Community Fall Festival - September 15th, 2018
- Maple Valley Emergency Preparedness Fair - September 29th, 2018

### Lawns 101: The Natural Course for Healthy Lawns

- Adjust higher-set mower to two to three inches. Mow weekly. Leave clippings on lawn to fertilize.
- Water lawn deeply and then let it dry out to allow oxygen, which organisms need to break down nutrients to feed plants, to get back into the soil. Too much water can do as much damage as too little.
- Maintain lawn by using organic or slow release fertilizers in the fall.
- Avoid weed and feed, pesticides and quick release fertilizers.
- Jump-start an unhealthy lawn. In the spring or fall, aerate, over seed and rake in compost.
- Consider alternatives to a lawn on shady, steep or wet sites.