

Grizzly Flats CSD Newsletter February 2024



RATE STUDY IN PROGRESS

The District began a review of its rate structure in 2023 to ensure the financial health of the District to be able to provide adequate, reliable water service to current and future customers. For background, following the Caldor Fire (August 2021), the District suspended water charges to all its customers. The District resumed charging customers once service was restored to their properties and they had access to use water service. In March 2022, the District Board of Directors directed staff to reinstate charging a uniform base rate to all water customers who have a potable water connection available to their property regardless of if the property was using water. This standard billing practice allows the District to maintain the water system infrastructure and water rights, and perform daily administrative, operations and maintenance activities.

The rate study demonstrated that the District used a significant amount of its financial reserves during the time customers were not being charged. The District needs to maintain adequate reserves to maintain its required debt service obligations, carry out emergency repairs, and meet cash flow needs. A rate increase is proposed to:

- Build-up required reserves,
- Fund system repairs and infrastructure NOT covered by grants; regular maintenance expenses, and
- Fund rising costs of doing business (chemicals, electricity, vehicles, fuel, etc.).

The District will hold a public workshop at the Pioneer Park Community Center (6740 Fair Play Road, Somerset, CA 95684) at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, February 26th.

Customers are encouraged to attend to learn more details about the proposed new water rate structure and have questions answered. For more information, including the rate study, visit www.grizzlyflatscsd.com.

CAN YOU FIND YOUR FIRE HYDRANT?

Snow season has begun! Please remember to keep the fire hydrants near your home clear when the snow piles up! Fire personnel need quick access to them in case of fire, and the hydrants need to be visible, so the snowplows don't accidentally knock them out! For the safety of you and your neighbors, please make sure those hydrants are uncovered.

WATER METER CLEARANCE & LOCATION

In the event of a water emergency, everyone should be able to locate and access the shut off valve in their water meter box. We are asking our customers to take a little time to check out your water service connection and to know where and how to shut off your water. If you need help locating your shut off valve or meter box, call our office. We would be happy to help!

Also, ***it is your responsibility to keep water meter boxes accessible and free of debris such as fences, bushes, trees, low hanging limbs, pine needles and dirt.*** District staff needs immediate access to your meter box in case of a leak, and exposing the isolation valve can take considerable time during inclement weather. **Please remember that all water charges due to broken pipes are the homeowner's responsibility as California law prevents us from adjusting accounts for these charges.** Therefore, keeping the water service connection area clear is in your best interest.

MONTHLY METER READ SCHEDULE

Water meters are physically read by District staff and volunteers between the 18th and 22nd of each month, weather permitting. Many properties have a water meter box located adjacent to a fence, which makes it difficult to read while dogs are outside. Although we love to see your pups, please bring your pets inside while meters are being read if possible. Thank you for your understanding!

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA)

The District has begun preparation work for the following grant projects and will keep you posted on important updates when they become available:

1. Clearwell and Water Treatment Plant Improvements (\$2,500,000)

- Clearwell Tank Removal and Replacement

The existing 200,000-gallon clearwell is a bolted galvanized storage tank for potable water to provide operational, emergency and fire storage capacity for the distribution system. The galvanized coating has failed despite a corrosion protection system being installed several years after the tank was initially installed. The tank and associated appurtenances are near or at the end of their serviceable life and in need of replacement. This project will replace the existing clearwell tank with a welded steel storage tank in accordance with American Water Works Association standards for welded steel potable water storage tanks. Since the existing tank cannot be taken out of service because it is an integral part of the water treatment process and only fire suppression storage in system, the new tank will be constructed in a separate location, in close proximity to the existing tank.

- Water Treatment Facilities Control Systems Replacement and Upgrades

The existing water treatment plant (WTP) has a conventional package surface water treatment process with older automated valves, chemical analyzers, and controls. The treatment process will remain the same, however, the automated control and monitoring system need to be replaced and upgraded. This will allow remote

access by GFCSD operations personnel to monitor the treatment process and to make changes during non-business hours. This portion of the project will entail replacement and upgrading an array of system valving and control components.

- Booster Pump Station Replacement

As with other components of this project the existing booster pump station is at the end of its serviceable life and needs replacement. The booster pump system at the WTP site serves two purposes, pressure and flow for the filter backwash process and pumping of decant water from the filter backwash tank to the raw water storage pond. The existing filter backwash system currently only has one pump near the end of its serviceable life and does not provide the needed redundancy in the event it is out of service, which would not allow the water treatment plant to continue operation. The new backwash pump system will include two pumps to ensure system reliability. The decant pump station will include replacement of the existing pump. Upgrades to both pumping systems will include necessary piping, valving, instrumentation and associated appurtenances.

2. Reservoir Lining Rehabilitation Project (\$300,000)

- The reservoir acts as a 3-acre-foot capacity forebay that stores raw water supplied from the watershed diversions at the GFCSD water treatment facilities. The reservoir was lined with an HDPE plastic liner to prevent leakage approximately 12 years ago. Since the liner was installed, sediment and debris has accumulated in the reservoir. Buildup of sediment and debris can impact the capacity of the reservoir as well as potentially impacting water quality due to organic matter in the sediment. This project will include removal and disposal of the sediment and debris accumulated in the reservoir, liner inspection below the waterline, and any needed repairs to the reservoir liner based on the results of the inspection. It should be noted that there was damage to the reservoir liner above the waterline during the Caldor Fire. Repairs of the reservoir liner from this event are separate and distinct from the work being performed under this project.

