

Board Byline

By Paul Gornick, Board President

Over the next year, the Board of Directors will be working through a public process that may reorganize the District as a Joint Water & Sanitary Authority.

What is a Joint Water & Sanitary Authority?

It's a type of "special district" under Oregon Law. The Board of Directors is seeking to reorganize the District as a Joint Water & Sanitary Authority to provide additional protection for customers' infrastructure investments. This change would secure the District's boundaries. District services (drinking water, wastewater, and watershed protection), functions, rate making, and service areas would not change.

Why become a Joint Water & Sanitary Authority?

Reorganizing as an Authority will add greater certainty for planning long-term and protect the integrity of the District's infrastructure investments. If the District were to lose customers and assets due to withdrawal, the District's existing bonded debt and the cost of needed improvements would be spread over fewer customers, resulting in high rate increases to the remaining customers.

What would this change mean for customers?

There would be no operational change. As a Joint Water & Sanitary Authority, Oak Lodge Water Services would continue to provide the same services to the same area. Rates will continue to be set by direction of a customer elected Board, even if part of the service area was later annexed or incorporated into a city.

How will the public be involved in this process?

In September, the city councils of Milwaukie and Gladstone adopted resolutions supporting Oak Lodge Water Services becoming a Joint Water & Sanitary Authority. In the new year, there will be opportunities for customers to learn more and provide public comment.

The Board wishes you a safe and happy holiday season! We look forward to connecting with you in the New Year.

Questions?

If you have questions please email Alexa Morris, Outreach and Communications Specialist at alexa@olwsd.org.

Community Participation

You're invited to attend District Board Meetings. At this time, Board meetings are being held online. The upcoming meetings will be held at 6:00 p.m. on:

- November 16
- December 21
- January 18

Learn how to call in at oaklodgewaterservices.org or email info@olwsd.org for assistance.

Free Emergency Kit

The Regional Water Providers Consortium is giving away "Start with Water" emergency preparedness kits through November and December. Each kit includes a one-gallon emergency water bag, information on how to store and access emergency water, and disaster sanitation stickers. Kits are available in both English and Spanish and can be requested here: <https://bit.ly/prep-promo>

Sandbags Available

If you need sandbags for residential water flow protection, a small number are available for our customers. Call ahead to ensure sandbag availability: 503-353-4207. Locations of other sandbag stations in Clackamas County can be found here: clackamas.us/dm/sandbags.html



Breaks in the System

Cold weather is a major cause of breaks in our water mains. If you see a water, sewer or storm problem — you may be the first to know about it.

- During leaf season your help will make a big difference. Prevent winter flooding by cleaning your gutters and curbsides regularly to keep the storm drains clear of leaves and sticks. In our area, Clackamas County provides street sweeping services and takes inquiries about sites with regular drainage problems.
- If a catch basin in the street is completely filled with debris, before flooding occurs call us at (503) 654-7765.
- If you are concerned about a site that floods regularly, contact Clackamas County's Planning and Zoning – Floodplain Assessment at (503) 742-4500.
- For after-hours flooding help, call Clackamas County Non-Emergency Dispatch at (503) 655-8211, extension 1.

Winter Water Conservation will Save You Money

Saving water now can mean saving money later. During the winter months outdoor water use is at a minimum. We use your winter water consumption to gauge the amount of wastewater your household sends down the drain to the treatment plant. A portion of your wastewater bill is based on winter water consumption which is reviewed and recalculated each July. Now is the time to fix those leaks, set your shower timer, and work together as a family to conserve our precious water resources – all while saving you money. Do you have questions about your bill? Call (503) 654-7765 or email billing@olwsd.org.

Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG)

In the winter, cold weather comfort foods can have more fats and oils in them. Remember to dispose of excess cooking fats, oils, and grease in the garbage — or scrape them into a can and freeze it. When the can is full, throw it in the trash. If you pour fats and oils down the drain, they cool quickly and slowly clog your pipes. Avoid a costly plumber visit by freezing your grease and saving your drain.

Email the word "FOG" to alexa@olwsd.org and receive a FREE grease scraper for your kitchen.

Emergency Contact Information

Our team is available 24 hours a day at (503) 654-7765. If you see water gushing up out of either the street, ground, or from a manhole, please call us. Use the same number if you notice sewer spills or if you see someone illegally dumping into a storm drain.



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