

# KING COUNTY WATER DISTRICT NO. 90

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Welcome to King County Water District No. 90

#### How do I contact the District?

Address: 15606 SE 128<sup>th</sup> Street Renton, WA 98059  
Office Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Phone (425) 255-9600, Fax (425) 277-4128

Website: [www.kcwd90.com](http://www.kcwd90.com) Email: [Info@kcwd90.com](mailto:Info@kcwd90.com)

Find us on Facebook!



#### I understand that elected Officials/Water Commissioners oversee the District. Who are they and what do they do?

The District currently has three elected officials, which are commonly referred to as the Board. They are:

- ❖ **Byron Murgatroyd, Position No. 1.** Byron has served on the Board since 1998 and has held positions as President, Vice-President, and Secretary. Byron is retired after working many years as an actuarial consultant specializing in retirement, health insurance, and economic risk and analysis. In addition to his actuarial certifications, he holds a Juris Doctor degree.
- ❖ **Pete Eberle, Position No. 2.** Pete is our newest commissioner, replacing Dick Gidner in 2020. Pete has been a resident of May Valley and Briarwood for 63 years and has been a customer of KCWD90 for 44 years. He retired from the State of Alaska, Marine Highway System, after 31 years of service. There, he worked as Chief Engineer on the ferries, transporting passengers and vehicles between Washington and all communities that the system served in Alaska. He has been active in the local community, working with the Four Creeks Unincorporated Area Council since his retirement. Pete is also active in Westport, Washington, where he volunteers at the Grays Harbor Lighthouse and Westport Maritime Museum.
- ❖ **Sam Amira, Position No. 3.** Sam has served on the Board since 2008, replacing Norm Green, who retired in 2008. He has lived in the District for over 25 years and is retired from Boeing. Commissioner Amira's knowledge of financial accounting, inventory management, and budgeting management skills from Boeing, along with his affiliation with the National Property Management Association (NPMA) managing all types of assets, brings a wealth of expertise to the District. Additionally, Sam served as a Logistic Specialist while in the Army Reserves. He retired in January 2008 as a Master Sergeant in the Army Reserves after 37 years.

The Board works closely with the District's Management Team overseeing the financial and business activities of the District, both long and short-term. It is through the combined efforts and expertise that we can provide our customers with the level of excellence in supporting their water needs today and in the future.

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### When and where are the Board meetings?

The regularly scheduled Board meetings are held on the first and third Tuesday of each month, commencing at 4:30 p.m. The public is encouraged to attend. If you have item(s) and/or concerns you would like included on the agenda, please contact the District Office during regular business hours. Your request must be received at least **48 hours** before meeting dates.

### What should I expect for an average bill?

There is no average bill amount because the amount you are billed depends on the amount of water used. There is a base charge for our residential customers of \$59.75 bimonthly. The base charge includes the first five hundred cubic feet of water. Additional water usage will be billed according to actual consumption per one hundred cubic feet. The District has a summer surcharge of \$0.90 per ccf (1 ccf is equal to about 750 gallons) for water usage on bills in June, July, August, and September. See the current Schedule of Charges in the Rates Section for more information.

### Why is there a street light charge on my bill?

The purpose of this lighting is generally to enhance the nighttime visibility of neighborhood streets and intersections. If street lights have been installed in your area, a street light charge may also be included on your bill or, if applicable, via your Homeowner's Association. Puget Sound Energy (PSE) bills the District and those charges are distributed evenly to all our affected water service customers. The District does not maintain streetlights. If you have an outage **call PSE at 1-888-225-5773**, be prepared to provide the numbers on the light pole.

### When will I receive my water bill?

The District bills customers on a bi-monthly basis. Your bill should arrive during the first week of the month on either odd or even months. If you do not receive your bill, please notify the District office. Payments are due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month; **failure to receive your bill is not an excuse for non-payment.**



### How can I pay my water bill?

Payments can be made at the District office. Acceptable forms of payment in the office are check, money order, or cash. You can also mail payments or drop payments in our drop box at the SE corner of our parking lot.

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- **Auto-Pay is a FREE service offered by District.**

You may have your payment automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on or after the due date. When you sign up for Auto-Pay, you will still receive a detailed copy of your bill in the first week of your billing month. The amount due is automatically deducted from your designated financial institution on the 15th of the month. To process and set up an Auto-Pay account, complete and sign the application found on our website and return it to our office with a voided check.

Convenience fee: None

- **Pay by Phone – Call 1-855-984-1191**

Customers who wish to pay their bill **over the phone** will enter our automated voice response system by entering their account number. Customers can hear their current account balance, make a payment using a credit card or eCheck, and get answers to frequently asked questions.

Convenience Fee: \$3.45

- **Pay Online - [www.kcwd90.com](http://www.kcwd90.com)**

Customers who wish to pay their bill **online** have the option of making a "Quick Payment" to their account by entering their account number, or they may choose to "Register" an account for added features. Registering an account allows customers to manage payment, notification, and billing preferences, make payments with a credit card or eCheck; and log in quickly without having to remember their account number. Customers who register an account will also be able to link and pay multiple accounts with a single payment.

Convenience Fee: \$2.95

**Exceptions: SHUT OFF.** If you receive a phone call or a door tag notice notifying you that your water is scheduled to be shut off for non-payment, **do not mail in your payment.** The District may not receive your payment in time and may shut off the meter, resulting in additional charges.

### **How do I pay my water bill if your office is closed?**

Pay online 24/7 at [www.kcwd90.com](http://www.kcwd90.com) or pay by phone at **1-855-984-1191**. Also, for your convenience, the District has a drop box located at the SE corner of the parking lot next to the street. All payments made via this method will be posted the following business day.

### **When is my bill due?**

Water bills are due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month (or the Monday following the 15<sup>th</sup> if it falls on a Saturday or Sunday). Late charges are applied on the first business day of the following month. The District gives an automatic grace period until the last business day of the month. After that, late fees are assessed at 10% of your most current water bill.

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Why is there a balance on my account if I just moved in?**

Many new homeowners are not aware that water charges (unlike other utilities) are associated with the physical property rather than with the individual incurring the charges. What this means is that property ownership is transferred along with any unpaid balance to the *new owner*. When the District is notified of a change in ownership, a final bill is prepared. However, if the previous owner and/or tenant do not pay the final bill, the responsibility lies with the new owner.

### **What do I do if I own rental property in the District?**

If you are the owner of a rental, you must set up an “owner account.” If you do not have one already, call the office, and we will quickly get that account set up for you. That way, you receive a duplicate copy of the renter’s bill, which allows you the benefit of knowing how your renter is doing on their payments.

Give us a call when you know the date your renter will be moving in or out in that way, we can schedule a closing meter read.

The District charges a fee of \$25.00 to close an account; this fee is to cover the extra trip, company vehicle, employee’s time, and the paperwork involved in closing an account. Please note: We allow 30 days for the renter to pay the final bill before we transfer the balance onto the owner account.

Feel free to give us a call to verify that the renter paid their final bill before you give back their deposit! Please be advised unlike any other utilities, Washington State Law requires that the “water service stays with the property” (ref. RCW 57.08.081). What this means to you as the owner is if your renter vacates your rental property with an unpaid balance, after 30 days, you are ultimately responsible for the water bill.

### **What if I have a complaint?**

Complaints or concerns should be directed to our District staff, who will work with you in resolving issues. Unresolved complaints can be taken to the Board of Commissioners.

### **Where does our drinking water come from?**

The District purchases approximately 75% of its water from Seattle Public Utilities (SPU). SPU draws its water from the Cedar and Tolt Rivers; 25% of our water is produced from our wellfield. The water you normally consume from KCWD90 comes from the Cedar River and our wellfield.

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### How do I know the District's water is safe?

The District is committed to providing residents with a safe and reliable supply of high-quality drinking water. SPU and private laboratories test our water regularly using sophisticated equipment and state of the art procedures. We are proud to report that the water provided by the District meets or exceeds established state and federal standards for appearance, safety, and water-quality standards.

Each spring, the District sends a Water Quality Report (aka Consumer Confidence Report) to every customer. The report details the District's water quality analysis for the previous year. It also includes additional health information, information for sensitive people, and a detailed list, and quantity, of all detected compounds.

### Does the water contain fluoride?



Yes. The range of fluoride for all the District's water sources is between 0.7 and 1.0 parts per million (ppm). The average is 0.7 ppm. The EPA's maximum allowable limit is 4.0 ppm.

### What if I have a leak?

Please note that if a water leak is discovered on the property side of the meter, the homeowner will be responsible for the repair as well as the associated water usage charges. If a leak is discovered in your service line, it should be repaired promptly.

To support our customers, the District offers a leak adjustment, which is applied to one (or two) billing period only. To be eligible for a leak adjustment, the leak(s) must be repaired within 30 days of notification and/or discovery, your bill must be at least \$50 higher than your average water bill, and the leak cannot be an irrigation system or in the internal plumbing of your home.



**Please read the FAQs first to review the qualifications for a leak adjustment.**

The Leak Adjustment FAQs is under the Forms tab/General Interest. The Leak Adjustment Request Form is under the Forms tab/Applications.

### How can I turn off the water in case of an emergency?

All homes should have a shut-off valve located at the residence. However, if your home does not have one, you may (in an emergency), turn the water off at the water meter. Meters are generally located at the front of the property, near the road. The recommended tools to have on hand are a crescent wrench and/or a meter wrench, which can be purchased at your local hardware store. First, locate the valve (silver dollar-sized, brass-colored with a raised bar in the center). Place the wrench over the raised bar and turn it to the right until the "eyes" on the valve are aligned. Repair leak(s) and reverse the process to re-establish water service to the residence.

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### Can I turn my water back on myself?

The District maintains meters, but in emergencies, it is advantageous that the homeowner turns the water on/off. When turning the water back on, reverse the steps noted above, and turn the raised bar only  $\frac{1}{4}$  turn counter-clockwise to bring the water back into the system slowly. Then open the valve all the way.

### Can my water be shut off in a District emergency, and will I be notified?

Yes. If there is a planned shutdown, the affected customers will be notified before the shutdown. **For customer convenience, our field crew will leave a door tag with the date and estimated downtime.** In the event of such a shutdown, customers should make sure that they do not operate dishwashers, washing machines, and showers during the shutdown period.

However, there may be critical circumstances, which would result in an unplanned shutdown (e.g., an accident, main break, etc.). In this situation, there would be no notification to our customers. The focus would be to repair and/or restore water service as quickly as possible, with a minimum impact to our affected customers. Please note that customers can call our main phone number 24/7 for information and/or to report an emergency.

Emergency shutdowns or other emergency notifications will be posted on our Website Facebook page. Like us on Facebook to be included in these updates. Emergency notifications may also be made by automated phone calls. It is vital to make sure your phone number is updated with the District.

### What should I do if I plan to move?



If you are a homeowner or a tenant, the procedure is the same. Call the District office. We will need to know the closing date, new owner/tenant name (if known) and forwarding address information. If you are selling your home and going through escrow, most likely, the escrow company will fax a final bill request to our office. We encourage both the previous and new owner/tenant to call the District office.

If your home is going into foreclosure, please call the office with the bank contact information. We cannot stop billing going directly to the homeowner until there is a new responsible owner on file.

### What if it is determined that I overpaid my account after I moved?

If you overpaid your water bill account, refunds are processed on approximately the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month. If you are entitled to a refund, we must have the correct forwarding information available.

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### What should I do if I leave the area for the winter, go on vacation, or a temporary job assignment?

If you are planning to be away for an extended period, contact the District office to have the water shut off at the meter. Inside your home, you should shut off your water heater (at the circuit breaker) and open a hot and cold-water faucet in the house and one outside faucet to drain the water system and leave faucets open. To protect outside faucets from freezing, cover them with some insulation. Make sure to let us know if you will be gone for over four (4) months so we can note your account and, in some cases, we can put your account under a “non-use” rate. In that situation, we would need to have specific departure and return dates.

When you return, shut off all faucets and turn on the water at the meter. Open faucets one at a time to remove any air in the line. Turn the water back on in the home and check for any leaks by watching the water meter for movement.

### What is a cross connection?

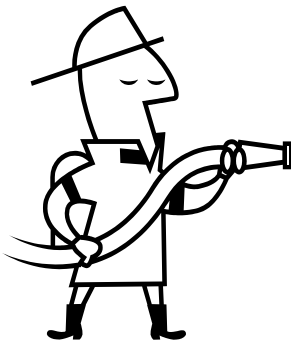
A cross connection (a.k.a. backflow) is a temporary or permanent connection between a public water system, providing drinking water, and any secondary system containing non-potable (undrinkable) water or other substances.

### Why is backflow a problem?

Backflow into a public water system can pollute or contaminate that system, potentially causing that water to become unusable or unsafe to drink. Each water supplier has the responsibility to provide water that is usable and safe to drink under all foreseeable circumstances.

### What causes backflow?

Several situations can cause Backflow, such as:



1. Firefighting: The Fire Department hooking up to a hydrant to fight a fire, creating a dramatic increase in demand and pulling all available water toward the hydrant;
2. Main break: High water withdrawal lowering main pressure (e.g., an open hydrant or main flushing); and
3. Reduced pressure: A reduction in water pressure on the suction side of a booster pump.

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### **Why do I have to have a backflow device?**

A backflow device is required to prevent contaminated water from entering the drinking water system.

Examples of customers requiring backflow devices are premises:

1. Fire sprinklers or private hydrants
2. Mobile home parks and shopping malls
3. Fish and/or decorative ponds
4. Hot tubs and swimming pools (unless there is an air gap)
5. Irrigation systems
6. Service locations with dialysis machines, x-ray, or dental equipment
7. Fire protection systems

### **How often do I have to have my backflow device tested?**

Washington State Law requires testing of your backflow device annually. In conformance with this State requirements, the District prepares letters to all affected customers, and the letters are mailed out May 1. The Test Report results must be returned to the District on or about June 30. Any exceptions are to be coordinated directly with the District office.

### **Do you have a Senior Citizens Low-Income and Permanent Disability Discount Rates?**

#### **Policy Authority**

Yes. RCW 57.08.014 authorizes KCWD 90 to charge reduced rates and charges for low-income persons, including, but not limited to, low-income disabled persons and low-income senior citizens; and the Board of Commissioners of King County Water District No. 90 has determined it to be in the best interest of low-income senior ratepayers and low-income disabled ratepayers to establish a reduced water rate policy.

#### **Policy Requirements**

1. To be considered eligible for a reduced water rate charge, any low-income senior ratepayer or low-income disabled ratepayer must submit an application to the District.
2. Low-income senior ratepayers shall be defined as a ratepayer of the District, 55 years of age or older or, if married, the applicant's spouse is 55 years of age or older (age is verified by a ratepayer's driver's license, passport, or other legal identification), and have a gross annual income from all sources of less than \$22,000 per year if single, or, if married, a combined gross annual income of less than \$27,000 per year from all sources.



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3. Low-income disabled ratepayer shall be defined as a ratepayer of the District being permanently disabled as evidenced by a letter from the Social Security Administration declaring the ratepayer permanently disabled and having a gross annual income from all sources of less than \$22,000 per year if single or, if married, a combined gross annual income of less than \$27,000 per year from all sources.
4. Gross annual income of any low-income senior ratepayer or low-income disabled ratepayer shall be established by verification by District staff of Federal Tax returns for the prior two years; verification of the IRS low-income, no-reporting statement; Social Security statements and/or unemployment benefit statements.
5. Other requirements to be eligible for the low-income reduced water rate policy of King County Water District No. 90 shall include the following:
  - (a) Any applicant must reside in the residence where the reduced water rate is being requested;
  - (b) Any applicant's residence must have a separate water meter. (No mother-in-law apartment or multi-family homes are eligible.)
  - (c) Any tenant applicant must pay the water bill directly to King County Water District No. 90.
  - (d) Any applicant must be the named ratepayer on the District's utility billing system.
  - (e) Only one parcel of property owned by any one applicant may be eligible for the reduced water rate charge.
  - (f) All applications must be renewed annually. A renewal letter will be sent to all participants receiving a reduced water rate charge on or before the prior application anniversary date. Applicants will only have 30 days after that to reapply for the reduced water rate charge. Any applicant failing to reapply within the 30 days may be subject to discontinuation of the reduced water rate charge.
  - (g) All applicants must agree to notify the District administrative staff when moving from the residence where the reduced water rate charge is being applied.
  - (h) All applicants must agree to repay the District for all amounts undercharged to the applicant by the District if an applicant is found to have been ineligible for the reduced water rate charge.
  - (i) All applicants must agree to provide additional information to the District administrative staff when requested the District may require regarding their age, residence, and/or income as from time to time.

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(j) All applicants must agree that the information provided to King County Water District No. 90, to participate in the low-income ratepayer's program is a public record and may be subject to public disclosure.

### **I'm new to the area and don't know my other utility services.**

Water & Sewer Utility service could be through the City of Renton (425) 430-6852.  
Garbage service most likely will be Republic Services (206) 777-6440.