

La Mesa Water Cooperative

WaterGram - October 2013

Update on Arsenic Issues

When we received the arsenic violation notice on well #2, we immediately tested the water from well #5, which supplies roughly 2/3rds of our water, and in our storage tanks. The Federal standard for arsenic is no more than 10 ppb (parts per billion). The tests indicated an arsenic level of 7.3 ppb in well #5 and 8.3 in our tanks. These tests indicated there is no cause for concern about arsenic levels in our water supply.

We also reported last month that we intended to speed up our planned installation of arsenic treatment equipment at well #6. On Tuesday, September 24, the Board approved this plan and we expect to order the equipment in the next 30 days.

Update on Emergency Planning

Although we had a multiple layer backup plan in place, last year's loss of service at well #5 indicated that we need to have more replacement parts on hand. Consequently, the Board ordered the purchase of a spare pump and motor for well #5. These parts should be on hand in about two months.

Preventive Maintenance Activities

Like all well-managed utilities, we have a regular preventive maintenance program. Although they are essential for the health of our system, most of these activities are not visible to the membership. One of the projects that is visible is the new coat of bright yellow paint on our fire hydrants. You may also notice people repairing hydrants and installing concrete pads around several valve cans (the round black cast iron covers in or near the road).

We have a new Treasurer

Over the summer Dan Lawrence resigned his position as Board Member and Treasurer. The Board appreciates his

years of hard work and wishes him well. Board member Bob Blanchard graciously agreed to serve as Treasurer.

Time to Adjust Watering Schedule

Fall is here and it is time to reduce your watering schedule. The Albuquerque Water Authority recommends watering no more than 2 days a week during October. If you have an automatic irrigation system, please reset your timers to reflect the reduced water needs of your plantings. Also please make certain to turn your system off during rainy periods.

Irrigation Systems and Water Loss

The Board continues to be notified of large water losses (and correspondingly large water bills) caused by leaks in irrigation systems. Large increases in water consumption (double or triple your usual summer usage) are usually the result of underground leaks in irrigation systems. If you have a large unexplained increase in water usage, or unexplained damp spots, turn off your irrigation system and have it inspected. Delays in detecting and repairing leaks may be very expensive. If you suspect the increased usage is from an error in reading your meter, please don't wait until the next bill. Call the Coop and we will be glad to re-read your meter.

National Septic Tank Week

It's okay if you forgot to celebrate National Septic Tank Week (September 23-27), but it is not okay to forget your septic tank. Neglected septic tanks can turn into very expensive problems. Your septic system should not be one of life's mysteries. A flyer from the EPA is on the back of this page. For more information see the EPA booklet, "A homeowner's guide to septic systems." This and other information is available at www.epa.gov/septicSMART or the Coop web site listed at the bottom of this page.

Board of Directors

Bob Blanchard (802) 922-1042
Bob Davey 771-3434
Marty Davis 771-9127

Gordon Forbes 771-3464
Irena Budzko King 771-8437

Dave Otter 867-7986
Jim Pilcher 771-9341
Dennis Szarka 867-5225

Visit us at lamesawatercoop.org

Do Your Part, Be SepticSmart: The Do's and Don'ts of Your Septic System

Learn these simple steps to protect your home, health, environment and property value:



Protect It and Inspect It:

Do:

- Have your system inspected (in general) every three years by a licensed contractor and have the tank pumped, when necessary, generally every three to five years.

Think at the Sink:

Don't:

- Pour cooking grease or oil down the sink or toilet.
- Rinse coffee grounds into the sink.
- Pour household chemicals down the sink or flush them.

Do:

- Eliminate or limit the use of a garbage disposal.
- Properly dispose of coffee grounds & food.
- Put grease in a container to harden before discarding in the trash.

Don't Overload the Commode:

Don't:

- Flush non-degradable products or chemicals, such as feminine hygiene products, condoms, dental floss, diapers, cigarette butts, cat litter, paper towels, pharmaceuticals.

Do:

- Dispose of these items in the trash can!

Shield Your Field:

Don't:

- Park or drive on your drainfield. The weight can damage the drain lines.
- Plant trees or shrubs too close to your drainfield, roots can grow into your system and clog it.

Do:

- Consult a septic service professional to advise you of the proper distance for planting trees and shrubs, depending on your septic tank location.

Don't Strain Your Drain:

Don't

- Concentrate your water use by using your dishwasher, shower, washing machine, and toilet at the same time. All that extra water can really strain your septic system.

Do:

- Stagger the use of water-generating appliances. This can be helpful especially if your system has not been pumped in a long time.
- Become more **water efficient** by fixing plumbing leaks and consider installing bathroom and kitchen faucet aerators and water-efficient products.

For more SepticSmart tips, visit: www.epa.gov/septicmart