



# West Extension Irrigation District

## Fall Newsletter

October 2014

### SYSTEM SHUT-OFF DATES.

#### IRRIGON PRESSURIZED SYSTEM

Wednesday, October 15

#### PUMP STATIONS — ALL AREAS

Wednesday, October 22

#### MAIN CANAL

Wednesday, October 29

**DONT FORGET TO WINTERIZE!!!**

### **SPECIAL FEE—PUMPING SURCHARGE**

With the very dry irrigation season that we have had, our pumping costs for water are much higher than originally budgeted. You are receiving a bill from the District that has a surcharge for pumping costs for 2014—\$2 per acre with a \$10 minimum.

Annually, the Board of Directors sets their budget. They do their best to budget what is needed for the District, but there are some unknowns that come up each year. By its nature, the budget can handle many of the unknowns. That board anticipated a higher cost for pumping our water this year, but the cost is even higher than we could imagine. It is 70% over a typical year. Thus this special fee for 2014. The due date is Dec. 1, 2014.

**CITY OF HERMISTON REUSE WATER:** The City of Hermiston and WEID have partnered with state and federal agencies to reclaim highly treated municipal wastewater (Class A), mix it with river water, and deliver it to customers in the WEID. We will start getting this water in 2015. Work at the City of Hermiston plant is being completed and the pipeline to WEID will be laid this winter. The initial amount of water to be received is about 3.5 cfs (the WEID canal flows 95—130 cfs typically) from late spring until the end of the irrigation season each year. We have worked with many state and federal agencies to be able to receive this water as it is the “first of its kind” - both in Reclamation and in the West. WEID will continue to look for ways to enhance its water supply.



**NON-USE OF WATER:** The State’s law of using your water at least one year out of every five affects all irrigators. If you are not irrigating all your land, don’t need it all (buildings, driveways, areas you are not irrigating), or just want to cut your water bill down, let us know and we can get that unused portion transferred OFF your land and lower your bill. The District is actively looking for places where water can no longer be used to avoid losing water rights and to assure we keep a full supply of water for our patrons.

## FALL / WINTER MAINTENANCE PROJECTS

District crews are getting ready for their fall and winter work.

1. The pipeline down Knapp Street will be installed. This will bring pressurized water to landowners who have been on the waiting list for water rights since the mid-1990's.
2. A main leg of the Irrigon Pressurized System extending from south of Washington to Highway 730 is a major project. We will replace 3200 feet of deteriorated steel pipe with 24-inch PIP and renovate the Huke Pump Station.
3. Replace 1300 feet of steel line on Lateral 63/Irrigon with PVC.
4. Replace approximately 200 feet of canal (sides and bottom) at Three Mile Dam.
5. Reconstruction of the Irrigon Pumping Station as part of replacement project for fish screens at the station, in conjunction with Stahl Farms.
6. Annual cleaning of canal and canal maintenance. Expect to replace about 150 concrete panels in the canal as time and budget allow.
7. Boardman laterals—we have several grants out that, if successful, will give us some funds to start the replacement of the open laterals in Boardman. Laterals 5, 7, 15 and 17 are our first priorities. While we may not get started this year, we are actively seeking funding assistance. Landowners on all open laterals will be required to go to sprinkler irrigation (if not already done) when the laterals are replaced with pipe.

**VACANCY BOARD DIVISION ONE:** Every year, one or two positions on our Board of Directors expire. This year, it is the term for Division One, which is the Umatilla, Morrow County Line area (to 15th Street) area. Bob Mueller currently holds the position, having been appointed for this current year.

Landowners who hold property in the Division may apply by completing an application with required signatures and filing the form with the district office by 4 pm, October 8. For more information, please contact Lisa at the WEID office.

### Your Delivery System - Your Responsibilities

During the winter, you will have time to take care of any problems on your irrigation system. Before you shut down, check the following:

- ◆ Valves and pipes for any leaks or problems
- ◆ Nozzles for wear
- ◆ Meters to assure they are working
- ◆ Clean your filter thoroughly
- ◆ Drain your valves, meters and filters



Main canal irrigators—after water shuts down:

- ◆ Check your screen at the main canal. Some have deteriorated and need repair or even reconstruction.
- ◆ The district is cleaning the canal starting this fall. If you “dig out” in front of your screens and delivery when the canal dries out, our equipment can remove the debris when they come through.
- ◆ If you have a delivery from the main canal please check your main delivery line for any problems that need to be repaired.

## WINTERIZING YOUR SYSTEM

Every year, after the irrigation system is shut-off and before the first freeze, the ritual of irrigation "blow out" becomes the priority for all our irrigation systems where the frost level extends below the depth of the installed piping. Even if you have drained some water out of the system, the remaining water can freeze, expand and crack the PVC piping (rigid, white pipe), usually from fitting to fitting. Freezing water left in your valves, meter and any backflow assembly will damage the internal components and could possibly crack the brass body. All of this means costly repairs in the spring. To minimize the risk of freeze damage to your irrigation system, you'll need to "winterize" your irrigation system.

The district uses a double valve irrigation delivery. The valve off the mainline is the district's valve and for emergency use only. It should be left open at all times (except during blow-out, see below). Every landowner should have their own shut-off valve with this one being their standard "on/off" valve and the one referred to below.

### 1. Shutting off system.

It is best to wait until the irrigation season is over, as the main pipeline or canal will drain itself and any water between your valve and the District's valve will drain back into the district's system. If you need to drain your irrigation lines before district shut-off, you will need to close your valve. Be sure to reopen it later, to keep water from collecting and freezing during the winter.

### 2. Take care of any automatic controls..

If you have an automatic system then you will need to "shut down" the controller (timer). Most controllers have a "rain-mode" which simply shuts off the signals to the valves. The controller continues to keep time, the programming information (start times, valve run times, etc.) isn't lost, and the clock continues to run. The only change is that the valves will not activate. An alternative to using the rain mode is simply to shut off the power to the controller. If you do, you'll need to reprogram the time and potentially all your other settings as well, in the spring.

### 3. Drain the system.

Now you need to remove the water from the pipes, meter and sprinklers so that it won't freeze and break. There are two main methods to drain your pipes: the manual drain method and the compressed air blow-out method.

#### Manual Drain Method

Use when manual valves are located at the end and low points of the irrigation piping. To drain, simply open all the manual drain valves. Don't forget to drain the filter and meter. If your sprinklers have check valves you'll need to pull up on the sprinklers to allow the water to drain out the bottom of the sprinkler body. You should leave all valves and drains open during the winter to allow any moisture to drain off and keep from expanding and freezing. You may want to insulate above-ground valves and meters or remove your meter and store during the winter.

#### "Blow Out" or Compressed Air Method

Extreme care must always be taken when blowing out the system with compressed air. Compressed air can cause serious injury, including serious eye injury, from flying debris. Always wear ANSI approved safety eye protection and do not stand over any irrigation components (pipes, sprinklers and valves) during air blow out. **SERIOUS PERSONAL INJURY MAY RESULT IF YOU DO NOT PROCEED AS RECOMMENDED!**

It is recommended that a qualified person perform this type of "Winterization" method. The blow out method utilizes an air compressor. The compressor can be rented at your local equipment rental yard. The compressor is attached to the mainline via a quick coupler, hose bib or other type connection. To start the "blow out", shut off your main valve and, with the compressor valve in the closed position, attach the air compressor hose to the fitting. Activate the station on the controller that is the zone or sprinklers highest in elevation and the furthest from the compressor. Close the backflow isolation valves. Then slowly open the valve on the compressor; this should gradually introduce air into the irrigation system. The blow out pressure should remain below the maximum operating pressure specification of the lowest pressure rated component on that zone and should NEVER exceed 80 PSI. Do this for each line on your system until they have all been drained.

#### 4. Storing for Winter.

After the blow-out, open all drains and leave open for winter to keep moisture from collecting and freezing. You may want to insulate above-ground valves and meters or remove your meter and store during the winter.

#### 5. Meters.

For those of you who have meters, they are your responsibility to care for including repair and maintenance. The most common failure is freezing during the winter. Please remove your meter, drain all water, let dry, then store for the winter in a dry place such as a shop or garage.

### **WINTERIZING YOUR LAWN**

What you need:

- \* Lawn mower
- \* Rake
- \* Nitrogen based fertilizer
- \* Pre-emergent weed control

Fall is your lawn's favorite time of the year. Take care of it properly during this time to ensure that your lawn looks its best next spring and summer. Start by raking up any leaves and other debris. Fallen leaves can smother your lawn as they become wet and decompose. Removing leaves from your lawn will also help prevent disease problems come spring. If there are any bare spots in your lawn, re-seed now.

Fertilizing your lawn before the onset of winter is very important. Nitrogen promotes healthy root growth and allows your lawn to store food for the winter. Fertilize your lawn twice during the fall. Around Labor Day, apply 3/4 of a pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of lawn. Fertilize again after the last time you mow with the same amount of nitrogen. This second feeding is usually done early to mid-November.

Once the grass has stopped growing for the year, give it one last mowing ... to about an inch high. Keep the grass short to prevent it from matting down as winter approaches. If you have excessive thatch buildup in your lawn, it is a good idea to remove it now as well. Use pre-emergent weed control in late October and early February to keep the weeds from growing.

Following these easy steps will guarantee you have a beautiful lawn next year.

### **SPRING START-UP**

After you have left your system open for the winter, you will want to close your drains and valves PRIOR to irrigation system start-up. You will need to replace any meters or valves pulled during the winter and activate your line to check for leaks.