



West Extension Irrigation District
Fall Newsletter

October 2015

System Shutdown Information

Irrigon Pressurized & Non-Pressure Systems
Wednesday, October 14

Main Canal, Umatilla, South Irrigon, Boardman
Wednesday, October 21

SHUTDOWNS WILL START AT 7:00 A.M.
IF WEATHER TURNS COLD/ WET, SHUTDOWN MAY OCCUR EARLIER

YOUR SYSTEM SHUTDOWN:

Don't forget to drain and winterize your system.
If you have a meter, remove or winterize it.
Be sure to call the final meter reading into office.

SPECIAL FEE—PUMPING SURCHARGE

For 2015, the pumping surcharge is \$5 per acre with a \$10 minimum. The minimum fee considers the cost of preparing and mailing the pumping fee to you. The due date for the pumping surcharge is December 1, 2015.

Annually, the Board prepares its budget, with its best estimate for pumping costs (the cost of getting the water from the river into our delivery system). That cost is unknown at the time of the budget (which establishes our annual assessment). Rather than set an arbitrary number and collect money from our patrons up front that may not be needed, the Board sets a reasonable amount knowing that we may have to come back to our patrons in the fall to pay excess pumping. The \$5 special fee is what is needed for this year.

This is likely not a surprise to most of you as you have read the news and seen the broadcasts about the drought that has enveloped the West. We are fortunate that we don't have to shut off early as many Districts did and that we have water for our patrons. Thanks to our District forefathers for their work and planning to develop our two Columbia River pumping stations.

There is more information on Page 2 of this newsletter about the District's water supply and pumping costs.

WATER REPORT – PUMPING COSTS

The District gets its water from the Umatilla River and two pumping stations on the Columbia River. The Irrigon station delivers water season-long to 1144 acres. The Umatilla station is the supplemental supply for the 9235 acres off the main canal, and is used when the Umatilla River cannot supply enough water for our irrigators. We usually pump that water from mid-June to mid-September. This year, we started the pumped water on April 24 and will be using it through the end of the season. The cost of our pumped water varies from year to year and is a very large part of our annual budget. The listing below shows a history of the water delivered to our patrons and the pumping costs of that water.

Year	TTL Water Delivered in acre-feet	Water pumped in acre-feet	% of water pumped	Annual pumping cost
2003	42,536	15,807	37.2%	\$ 132,157
2004	40,135	12,027	30.0%	\$ 118,144
2005	41,761	17,600	42.1%	\$ 164,143
2006	42,984	12,737	29.6%	\$ 123,757
2007	44,237	17,981	40.6%	\$ 191,175
2008	44,089	9,964	22.6%	\$ 81,578
2009	42,225	10,177	24.1%	\$ 75,666
2010	39,779	12,034	30.2%	\$ 112,537
2011	40,765	8,556	21.0%	\$ 63,984
2012	40,917	11,615	28.4%	\$ 122,773
2013	40,465	13,914	33.1%	\$ 177,884
2014	42,560	15,029	35.8%	\$ 193,661
2015 estimate	40,989	20,547	50.1%	\$ 298,370

From this information, you can see that our water demand (amount needed by our patrons) is fairly level from year to year and the pumping cost of that water fluctuates. From a management standpoint, we are very pleased to see that although the cost of water has increased, the amount of water used during this drought year is less than that used in the most recent dry year of 2007. This is due to the water conservation efforts done by our patrons and the District (scheduling, pipeline, meters).

WHAT'S NEXT? The District is asking patrons to continue finding ways to conserve water and will start enclosing the Boardman open laterals. We have 18 open laterals in Boardman, most still using flood water. During conversion, those flooders will be required to go to sprinkler irrigation. We anticipate that 2016 will continue to be a drought year. There is concern that Cold Springs Reservoir and McKay Reservoir will not fill this winter, meaning shortened irrigation season for Hermiston and Westland Irrigation Districts and less return flow in the Umatilla River for us.

WATER SCHEDULING: For those of you under five acres who took water from 4 pm to 10 am during the heat of the season, THANK YOU!! That helped keep the canal level. You can discontinue that now, if you haven't. We will take a closer look at all our water schedules in the off season. We want to be sure they are evenly distributed and try to tighten them up a bit, if possible. Many of you will be notified with changes or clarifications during the off-season.

LATERALS 5 & 7: We have some federal funding and our District funds, so will pipe lateral 7 along Rippee Road in Boardman this winter. The north half of lateral 5 will be added to lateral 7, thus eliminating lateral 5. There is a lot of water loss along this lateral, so this will be a great water conservation project. There are three flooders on these laterals, and they will go to sprinkler irrigation.

BOARDMAN LATERALS: District crews will spend time on the open, concrete-lined laterals in Boardman, working to eliminate areas of loss along the laterals and at distribution boxes. There are several places where private ditches cannot hold water and these areas will be expected to be repaired by the landowners. We will also spend time cleaning up the brush and tree growth along the lateral easements. Thus, much of the work this winter will be in Boardman.

IRRIGON PUMP STATION: We finished a \$200,000 piping project in January 2015 replacing old steel pipe with 24-inch PVC. That actually resulted in water savings as the old pipe was deteriorated and leaking water. This fall, we will line the 30 and 36-inch penstock from the river station. If the Army Corps permit is obtained, the station will be extended into the river and new screens will be installed. Cost of this project is \$500,000. We have borrowed for this work on a 15-year payback.

MAIN CANAL: You may remember that in 2003, we increased our annual assessment by \$100,000 in order to get our main canal in better shape. There were many areas of impending failure really due to lack of funding for maintenance over the previous fifty years. This effort has paid off, and for the past three years, we have been able to decide where to replace panels and floor in the canal (replacing about 200 panels a year) rather than needing to respond to pending failure. That doesn't mean the canal is in perfect shape—far from it. Although 200 panels a year sounds like a lot, there are 35,640 panels in the main canal and 27 miles of concrete floor. This work will go over forever, basically.

CANAL ROADWAY & RIGHTS-OF-WAY: The canal road has eroded in many areas of the canal, exposing the concrete liner. We started addressing this two years ago and will beef up our efforts to try to get caught up. It all takes time, but the main canal will be there for many more years, so...

DISTRICT PIPING PLANS:

UMATILLA/IRRIGON OPEN LATERALS: Other than the Relocation Canal (small canal south of Irrigon), there are just two short laterals west of Irrigon that take flood water—three irrigators. Over the last three years, six flood or open ditches have been piped or replaced with sprinkler irrigation.

PIPING THE BOARDMAN LATERALS: As mentioned in the spring newsletter, the Board wants to pipe the open laterals and will be acquiring grant or loan funding to do so. We will start with laterals 5 & 7 this off-season. We are looking at Laterals 15 and 17 next. Laterals 9, 11, 12, 13 are being planned as well. Several private landowners have asked about theirs and we can find ways to accommodate some private funding and move those into planning stages. In Irrigon, several of the laterals were piped as a result of private funding by an irrigator wanting to eliminate flood irrigation. If a group wants to get together towards such an effort in Boardman, we are very open to that.

Your Delivery System - Your Responsibility to Irrigation Within District Standards

Each irrigator is responsible to assure they can take water within the irrigation allotment.

The District allotment is 8.5 gallons per minute (gpm) for each acre of sprinkler or drip irrigation and 4.5 cfs at the point of delivery for flood irrigators. Those under five acres on a schedule have a shared allotment.

The District crews contacted many of you this year for over use, and we found that some have systems that are outdated or has not been maintained. During this off-season, we ask you all to assure your system or flood ditch matches the District's delivery allotment.



If you have any questions about your system, contact the District office and we will provide information and direction to you.

BE SURE TO CHECK THE DISTRICT WEBSITE FOR UPDATED INFORMATION AND FOR IDEAS ON HOW TO MAINTAIN AND CARE FOR YOUR SYSTEM. WINTERIZING INFORMATION HAS JUST BEEN POSTED.

Westextension.com

UPCOMING OPENINGS ON THE WEID BOARD OF DIRECTORS

There are two positions on the Board of Directors that will be up for election in November. The positions are for a three-year term beginning in January 2016 and ending in January 2019. The Board of Directors meets at least monthly. They are responsible for setting District policies, budgets, and guidelines in compliance with federal, state and irrigation laws. Interested patrons, please keep reading.

Division Two Director (South Irrigon area from Divison St. to I-84 south of the Relocation Canal). Abe McNamee is the current Director.

Division Four Director (Boardman East from Skoubo Lane east to Bombing Range Road. Vern Frederickson is the current Director.

Landowners interested in either of the open positions are encouraged to contact the office and/or to pick up a petition packet from the District office. State law requires a petition to be signed by ten electors in the Division and filed at the District office by October 6, 2015 at 4:00 p.m. If more than one candidate files for any position, the election will be November 10. If only one candidate files for any position, that person is declared to be elected, in accordance with State law. For questions or information, contact Lisa at the district office at 541-922-3814.