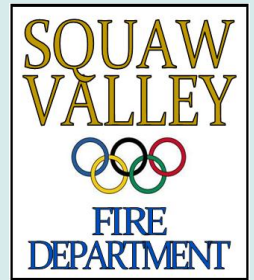




# SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2020



## ***0% Rate Increase for Sewer, Small Rate Increase for Water***

The District is not raising sewer rates this year and is limiting its water rate increase to match inflation to provide some financial relief to businesses and residents negatively affected by the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Water rates will increase 2.43%. Prior to the widespread economic shutdown to implement social distancing guidelines, rates were proposed to increase 5% for sewer and 4% for water. However, the Board recognizes it is important in the near term that rate increases remain at a minimum, so they directed staff to identify and make strategic cuts to expenses in the operations and capital budgets for all departments.

Residents will see a 3% increase in rates paid for weekly curbside garbage collection; this is less than the increase the District will pay to provide that service this year. The District will leverage its rate stabilization fund which is used to provide relief to customers during challenging economic

times and fund District operations to provide consistent service levels.

When rates are determined, the focus is establishing adequate reserves of the District's Fixed Asset Replacement Funds (FARFs) while supporting the required resources to provide consistent and quality utility services to the community. The fiscal year 2020-21 budget reflects the rates discussed and does not jeopardize target balances in FARFs.

One year remains on the Proposition 218 notice issued in 2017, at which time the District will conduct a new Cost of Service Analysis and Rate Study. The goal of the five-year schedule is to keep rate increases at a minimum as well as allow our customers to budget for utility costs. The results of the new study will be shared with you in May 2022.

For more information on rates please visit the website at <https://www.svpsd.org/>.

## **Longtime Fire Captain, Sal Monforte, Retiring July 1st**



Sal Monforte joined Squaw Valley Fire Department as a volunteer firefighter in 1983. He was an employee of "Mountain Host" – the food and beverage concessionaire for Squaw Valley USA – so he couldn't accurately be called a ski 'bum'; more of a 'marginally employed full-time skier'. Sal's primary pursuit during the 80's was competing internationally as a speed skier. He was part of the Squaw Valley group that dominated the speed skiing scene, led by Steve

McKinney. The speed skiing travelling circus competed across Europe with a few sites in North and South America and was a colorful and gregarious outfit. Sal's love for speed also found a (perhaps safer) outlet in motorcycle racing at tracks throughout California and again, he did well and made a lot of friends.

Eventually, however, life got in the way, and after painting for several contractors in the area, Sal started a painting business that grew year after year, taking on some of the larger residential projects in the area and employing a group of skilled painters who worked for him year 'round. Squaw Valley Fire Department's call volume was increasing significantly during this period as well and Sal could always be counted on to show up for calls, and his

commitment to the organization was always evident.

When Chief Bansen expanded full-time staffing of the Department in the 90's, Sal was among the former volunteers who became employees. Sal worked his way up through the ranks, hired as a full-time Firefighter in 1995 and promoted to Engineer in 2000 and to Captain in 2003. Sal's relationships within the community made him an effective and approachable representative for the Department and his work in Defensible Space and other fire prevention efforts made the Valley a safer place to live and a better place to run a business. Sal also represented Squaw Valley Fire Department and our community on large wildland fires throughout the state of California through the years – his steady, safe leadership as a company officer and his outgoing personality serving the Department and community with distinction.

We wish Sal the very best in retirement, although it is hard to imagine Squaw Valley Fire Department without him. His unselfish devotion to the Department has been shown in many ways – in public and behind the scenes – for decades. No one has worn the uniform with greater pride, tramped through more backyards doing defensible space inspections or driven home more times in the wee hours of the morning after coming to the station to cover a call. Sal has been the definition of a dedicated volunteer and a fine career firefighter and fire officer. We appreciate his service to the District and the community and will miss him.

*-Written by former Fire Chief, Pete Bansen*

## SQUAW VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

# Fire and Safety Notes

Summer, 2020

### FIRE DEPARTMENT STAFF NEWS

Congratulations to Captain Salvatore Monforte on winding down his 38 year career with Squaw Valley Fire Department. Sal started as a volunteer in 1982, his presence and experience will be missed! Congratulations to Firefighter-Paramedic Keith Erickson and wife Emily for the arrival of their new baby boy Axel in April.

### Fire Prevention News Ordinances/Cost Recovery

A reminder that the latest Fire Code restricts the use of solid fuel (charcoal included) during High Fire Danger. Placer County has been working with all of the local fire departments, Squaw Valley Fire included, to implement **Fire and Life Safety Inspections** at all Short Term Rentals (STRs) in our district. Placer County has also extended their **Hazardous Vegetation Ordinance** to include improved parcels. The Squaw Valley Fire Department implemented a **Cost Recovery Fee Schedule** to help offset some of our administrative costs associated with inspections. Please visit the Squaw Valley Fire Department's website for details on these subjects. <https://www.svpsd.org/svfd/fire>

### Pancake Breakfast!?

The **Squaw Valley Firefighters Association** regret that the annual Pancake Breakfast for the SVPOA Memorial Day weekend community cleanup day was canceled (or postponed?) due to the Covid-19 Virus. The Squaw Valley Property Owners Association cleanup day has been a Squaw Valley tradition since the 1960's. We look forward to serving everyone next year, if not sooner! If you've never participated in the cleanup day or eaten breakfast at the fire station, we recommend both activities. The hearty breakfast can be rationalized with community service and roadside exertion and you'll have a chance to see old friends and make new ones. It's always the same day - Saturday of Memorial Day weekend at 8:00. It is FREE, hosted by the Squaw Valley Firefighters Association!

### Preparing for Wildland Season

After a below average winter and fairly dry spring, California is bracing for another fire season. Fuel conditions on the western slope of the Sierra are already dry - the grasses are turning brown in the foothills and the coastal hills are approaching that characteristic golden color as of the first week of June. The beautiful lush spring growth will not last through the long hot summer months.

Here in Squaw Valley, we're gearing up for the summer routine of defensible space inspections. We have had a very ambitious and successful program for over two decades, thanks to a very knowledgeable, concerned and conscientious community. Please be particularly careful this summer - get that vegetation cut early and make sure to maintain those neatly cut grasses as summer progresses. Remember that we're happy to come out and give you an on-site consultation so that you cut everything that needs to be cut and not much more.

Defensible space is about helping homes to 'stand alone' during a fire situation when resources are limited. We've seen again and again where homes with a modicum of treatment survive a fire moving through a residential area where homes with less preparation are lost. Often the difference comes down to a few simple things: fire resistant construction, the absence of a continuous source of flammable vegetation between wildland and the home, closed attic and subfloor vents, a roof free of leaves and pine needles. Firefighters - given enough time and a home that stands a reasonable chance of surviving - will take the opportunity to do more preparation in advance of an approaching fire front, but that time and opportunity is not always available.

Our annual push for defensible space is an opportunity to remind our neighbors and friends of those factors that can make a difference in helping their home to survive when others will not. Please let us know what we can do to help you prepare your home for what we hope will not be Squaw Valley's worst fire season ever. You can learn more about preparing your home and community from the Olympic Valley Firewise Community, see article below.

This year Squaw Valley Fire Department will be doing the first round of Defensible Space Inspections in mid June. We will do one re-inspection, mid July, if your property is not in compliance with **Placer County's Hazardous Vegetation and Combustible Material Abatement Ordinance**, codified as Placer County Code, Chapter 9, Article 9.32, Part 4, your property may be handed over to Placer County for enforcement.

### Firewise Community

Over the last 6 months a volunteer group of residents was successful in getting Olympic Valley recognized as a Firewise Community. This certification opens the Valley up for various wildfire prevention grants and possible lower homeowner insurance policies. To maintain this certification, we must follow an action plan. Every year, we must submit a report to Firewise USA of the hours and/or dollars spent in this effort. A key component of our certification is to track the amount of time and/or money you spend maintaining your yard and community. We need you to keep track of your hours and/or dollars spent between now and snowfall doing this work. We have created a simple on-line form to help you keep track of your efforts: <https://www.ovfirewise.net/> Save your efforts up, or post them to us along the way, so we can submit them in order to maintain our Certification.

### STR Inspections

Placer County has enacted new regulation on Short Term Rentals (STRs) and Squaw Valley Fire Department will be conducting the **Fire and Life Safety Inspections** for the STRs in our District. Placer County's Short-Term Rental Program establishes rules for vacation rentals in unincorporated areas of eastern Placer County. Short-term rentals are residential units rented for 30 days or less, typically advertised as vacation rentals. Placer's Short-Term Rental Ordinance is intended to strike a balance of reducing neighborhood nuisances like noise and parking issues related to vacation rentals without undermining the market for this important guest accommodation. If you are registering your property for a Placer County TOT Certificate for a STR, you can contact SVFD to schedule your inspection at [prevention@svpsd.org](mailto:prevention@svpsd.org).

# New Sewer Lateral Testing Requirements in Olympic Valley

## The Sewer System - A Shared Responsibility

It takes both homeowners and sewer agencies doing their part to keep the sewer system from overflowing into the environment. The drawing below provides an overview of the requirements and best practices of a sewer system.

### What Is a Sewer Lateral?

A sewer lateral is the pipe that conveys sewage from a building's plumbing to the District sewer system. The property owner is responsible for the upper sewer lateral only – the part on private property. The District maintains responsibility for the lower sewer lateral.

### Sewer Pressure Test

Sewer pressure tests are ultimately aimed at preventing sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) and infiltration and inflow (I&I) caused by failed building laterals. Many older homes still rely on original building laterals that have become cracked, disjointed, or damaged by earth settlement or blockages. Unmaintained building laterals that become blocked or failed can contribute to SSOs of the public sewer system or to sewage backups into the building served by the lateral.

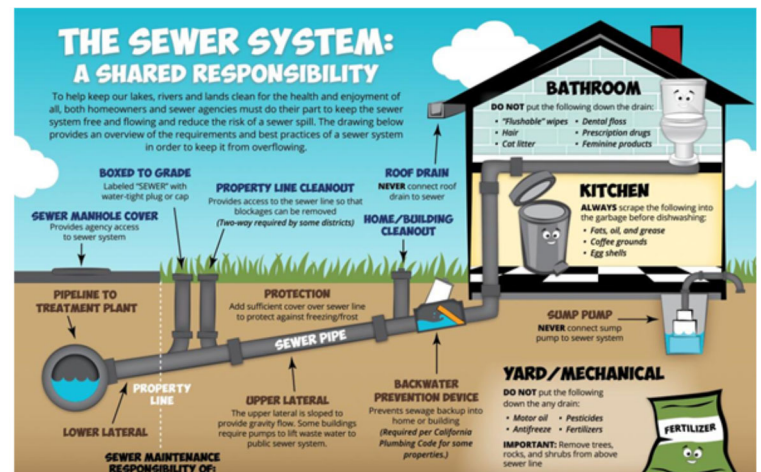
### When does a sewer pressure test need to be performed?

- ..# New construction, remodels, or additions.
- ..# Addition of living quarters, such as Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).
- ..# Addition of a toilet or other plumbing fixtures.
- ..# Change of use (e.g. residential to business or vice versa).
- ..# Repair/replacement of building sewer.
- ..# Prior to close of escrow upon sale of a property.
- ..# Upon determination of the General Manager to protect public health, safety, or welfare.

### How is a sewer pressure test typically performed?

- ..# The test section is from the building cleanout to the property line cleanout.
- ..# An air test is performed by plugging each end of the lateral and applying 4 psi to the section under test. The test fails if the loss exceeds 1/2 psi in 5 minutes.
- ..# If the line fails, the owner is responsible for correcting the problem and scheduling a new test.
- ..# Sewer pressure tests are performed during normal business hours. Please call the office at least 24 hours in advance and let them know you need to schedule a sewer pressure test.

The information above is a basic overview of the sewer pressure test. View the Sewer Code and Technical Specifications for more detailed information at [www.svpsd.org/sewer](http://www.svpsd.org/sewer).



## New District Babies

Congratulations are in order for two District employees and their families!

Firefighter/Paramedic Keith Erickson and his wife, Emily, welcomed their first child, Axel, in April. Board Secretary Jessica Asher, and her husband, Tyler, also welcomed their first child, Kyle, in May.



Keith, Emily and Axel



Jessica, Tyler and Kyle

## Toilet Rebate Program Recap

The four-year Toilet Rebate program officially closed on April 30, 2020. The District was able to provide 99 rebates to customers who replaced high-flow toilets with new, low-flow toilets.

The program started in 2016, and was done in collaboration with South Tahoe Public Utility District.

The District will continue to look for ways to bring money saving rebate programs to the Valley, and will update our customers when those programs are available!



## IS YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION CURRENT?

It is very important for the District to have your current mailing address, phone number and email address on file in order for us to contact you if we become aware of an emergency at your residence. This information is confidential and will not leave our office.

If you would like to provide us with your updated information, please visit our website at [www.svpsd.org](http://www.svpsd.org) and select the **"CONTACT US"** tab at the top of the homepage!



## Board of Directors Meetings

Regularly scheduled meetings are held the last Tuesday of each month at 8:30 a.m. at 305 Squaw Valley Road, Olympic Valley, California, or via GoToMeeting. Please check our website at [svpsd.org](http://svpsd.org) for up to date information.



## COVID-19 – District Operations Update

**A**t the time of writing this article (June 17, 2020), the District's operations remain restricted due to social distancing guidelines recommended by State and County health officials to minimize the spread of the Coronavirus. The uncertainty of when things get back to normal and what the new normal will look like continues to frustrate many. And while a specific date to return-to-normal is desperately desired, the appropriate public health response remains, unfortunately and unpredictably, data-driven.

District staff continue to monitor the evolving circumstances triggered by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Who knows? Current modifications to our standard operations may very well be lifted by the time this article is published.

However, starting March 12<sup>th</sup>, we adapted to social distancing protocols by physically isolating staff by department within the Administration Building and Fire Station 21; allowing administrative staff to telework; closing the building and the Community

Meeting Room to the public; suspending notary services and T-shirt sales; splitting operators into two separate shifts working out of different locations; and conducting our public meetings virtually using teleconferencing software. Staff required *little* time to adjust to their new working conditions to continue providing a high level of customer service, albeit electronically.

As required by guidance from public health officials, we have prepared *COVID-19 Exposure Prevention, Preparedness, and Response Plans* for each of our work sites and for the different types of work we perform. These plans help us ensure a safe work environment for our employees as well as the public we serve. We so look forward to seeing our customers again – face-to-face. However, we will continue to follow guidelines to protect our staff and the public.

Thank you for your sustained patience and cooperation!

## CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORT NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

The Squaw Valley Public Service District is proud to supply safe, reliable and healthy water that meets or exceeds State and Federal public health standards for drinking water. Annually, the District publishes a water quality report titled "Consumer Confidence Report" (CCR) as required by the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). The purpose of the CCR is to raise customers' awareness of the quality of their drinking water, where it comes from, what it takes to deliver water to their homes, and the importance of protecting drinking water sources.

In recent years the District has mailed its customers a printed copy of the CCR to comply with the SDWA. The California Department of Public Health has expanded its interpretation of the SDWA to allow for electronic delivery of the CCR. To view our 2019 Consumer Confidence Report and learn more about your drinking water, please visit the following URL: <https://www.svpsd.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019CCR.pdf>

If you would like a paper copy of the 2019 CCR mailed to your mailing address or would like to speak with someone about the report, please call (530) 583-4692 x207.

