

August 2020 Newsletter

Please submit questions/comments to admin@sallal.com

<p>Member Vote on Capital Projects Loan</p>	<p>As a condition of our US Department of Agriculture Rural Development loan, we must receive membership approval of the loan. The loan is for 40 years with an interest rate fixed at 2.375% for the life of the loan. The loan is intended to finance the new well and reservoir as well as the new office. To gain membership approval, we sent out ballots and held a meeting on August 25th.</p> <p>We received 268 valid ballots which exceeded the minimum needed to establish a quorum, and 236 of those ballots approved the loan, allowing Sallal to move forward with these projects.</p> <p><u>Thank you for supporting the best funding for these critical improvements!</u></p>
<p>Member Meeting on Chlorination</p>	<p>Several Sallal Board members, General Manager, and engineer consultant met with Department of Health (DOH) representatives on June 9th to better understand whether a return to untreated water is feasible and would be allowed. Information provided by DOH made it clear that the possibility for successfully returning to untreated water will be very challenging based on the risks of coliform contamination and the amount of work and costs involved of designing a new water quality maintenance program. DOH made it clear that the overall risks involved to both the association and members of returning to an unchlorinated system would be substantial. One adverse water quality event could retrigger chlorination.</p> <p>We know this is an important issue to many members. We will hold a Member Meeting via Zoom on this topic on Tuesday, September 29th at 7 p.m. to explain all that we've learned on this issue as well as provide updates on what we are doing to keep your drinking water safe. Members must contact the office no later than Monday, September 28th to get the log-in/call-in information to participate in the meeting.</p>
<p>New City Conservation Ordinance Update</p>	<p>Since the City's new Water Conservation Ordinance passed in June, we have been investigating our role in providing member water usage data to the City and our legal options related to this data sharing. After receiving substantial member input, Sallal's Board met on July 21 and decided the Association would no longer provide any usage information to the City for any members. However, the City then informed us that some members had signed water usage sharing authorizations as part of their sewer connection agreement when they connected to the City's sewer system, and then threatened to sue Sallal. To avoid the risks and costs of litigation, we subsequently agreed on August 11th that it would be appropriate to provide usage data for only those members on sewer that have signed such authorizations, and asked the City to provide us with copies of each agreement. On August 12th, we e-mailed City to say "<i>...in accordance with the North Bend Municipal Code 13.24.010.G, Sallal will provide the relevant water use records for each member for which the City provides Sallal a copy of an agreement (signed by the current member/owner) authorizing the water purveyor to release that information.</i>" However, rather than provide those authorizations, the City responded by immediately passing an Ordinance to impose a base sewer fee plus the average of the past two years of water bills, plus a 10% admin fee on the approximately 361 Sallal members on City</p>

	<p>sewer. This ordinance also seeks to require Sallal to enter into a Franchise agreement with the City, as well as force Sallal to provide the usage data of all members within the City, including those on septic.</p> <p>Your Sallal Board is consulting with legal counsel to determine what options are available to us. If we determine that we have no feasible option but to share members' usage data, we will let folks know through Sallal's website, social media and e-mails to those affected. Please ensure we have your correct e-mail address.</p>
<p>Water System Plan Status Update</p>	<p>Sallal's draft water system plan (WSP) garnered much attention at the King County Utility Technical Review Committee (UTRC), the committee within King County tasked with giving recommendations to the King County Council on Water System Plan approvals. We have been told by the UTRC that they won't recommend approval of our plan unless we come to agreement on a water supply contract with the City of North Bend. The Department of Ecology has completed and submitted their positive recommendation on our plan, including a comment that North Bend's 2008 permit for the Centennial Well does not require a supply contract with Sallal. Given Ecology's position on the contract, we have asked the UTRC to reconsider its position. We have been told that if we clearly state in the WSP that this plan is only for a 10-year period, and we address the changes and comments they provided, we should receive their positive recommendation. We have also received comments from Department of Health (DOH). We are moving ahead with making changes requested by DOH and UTRC and will resubmit the plan for final approval.</p>
<p>National Guard Development</p>	<p>On July 23rd, Puget Western Inc., the owner of the proposed 35 acre National Guard site at Truck Town (between SE North Bend Way, SE 140th Street, and 468th Ave SE), filed an appeal with the King County Utility Technical Review Committee (UTRC) to request that the County find that "water service is not available in a timely and reasonable manner" from Sallal for their project. Their appeal requested that the UTRC to exclude the parcel from Sallal's service area. The appeal document contained a commitment to serve the parcel with water from the City conditioned upon installation of approximately 15,000 feet of water main and a pump station, a water right change and water system plan service area adjustment.</p> <p>Before Sallal could respond, the UTRC ultimately declared that the appeal was not necessary because Sallal conceded it was unable to serve. This decision deletes the 35-acre parcel from Sallal's water service area. If the City is ultimately allowed to serve the parcel, a duplication of water system facilities will result.</p> <p>This is the second parcel removed from Sallal's service area due to water rights limitations. Unless we can secure additional water rights, reduce demand, or purchase water from the City, service area deletions could continue to happen.</p>
<p>Billing Questions and Issues</p>	<p>If you are receiving your bill through e-mail, please be sure to add admin@sallal.com and lisa@sallal.com to your approved list in your e-mail client. Otherwise, your bill may be flagged as spam and you may not see it.</p> <p>Looking for an easier way to pay your bill? Sign up for ACH at no cost. Email admin@sallal.com for assistance. This can also reduce the risk of fraud as there is no paper check mailed by you or your bank to Sallal.</p>
<p>New Office Staff</p>	<p>Please welcome Katrina Montgomery to the Sallal team! She will be helping support Sallal's office administration tasks assigned by the General Manager such as bills, payments, and member questions.</p>