



Winter 2014/2015

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*Regular meetings of  
the Board of  
Commissioners are  
held the first and third  
Wednesdays of every  
month at 7:00 p.m.*

*Public comment is  
always welcome.*

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## Our Promise of Clean Water

*Safe, clean water is every water provider's top priority. The recent Mercer Island boil water notice only reinforces the importance of ensuring safe drinking water.*

*Read on to learn about how we at Mukilteo Water and Wastewater District are steadfast in our commitment to provide clean water to our customers.*

## Our Water Supply

**Y**our drinking water comes from Spada Lake Reservoir, located about 30 miles east of Everett at the headwaters of the Sultan River. This 50 billion gallon storage lake serves as a collection point for rain and snowmelt from the Cascade Mountains. It was created in 1964 through a partnership between the City of Everett and the Snohomish County PUD as part of the Jackson Hydroelectric Project.

Spada Lake is located in the Upper Sultan River Watershed, an area encompassing more than 80 square miles. This is one of the wettest watersheds in the continental United States, averaging 165 inches of rain each year.

Water quality in the Sultan Basin is carefully monitored to protect the naturally pristine water in Spada Lake. The watershed is regularly patrolled and human activities are limited to minimize the impact on water quality.

From Spada Lake the water travels through a pipeline to Chaplain Reservoir, which holds about 4.5 billion gallons of water. This is where the water is treated by the Everett Drinking Water Treatment Plant, utilizing an advanced filtration and disinfection system. First the water is filtered to remove sediment and other contaminants from the water and then it is disinfected, making sure it is safe to drink.

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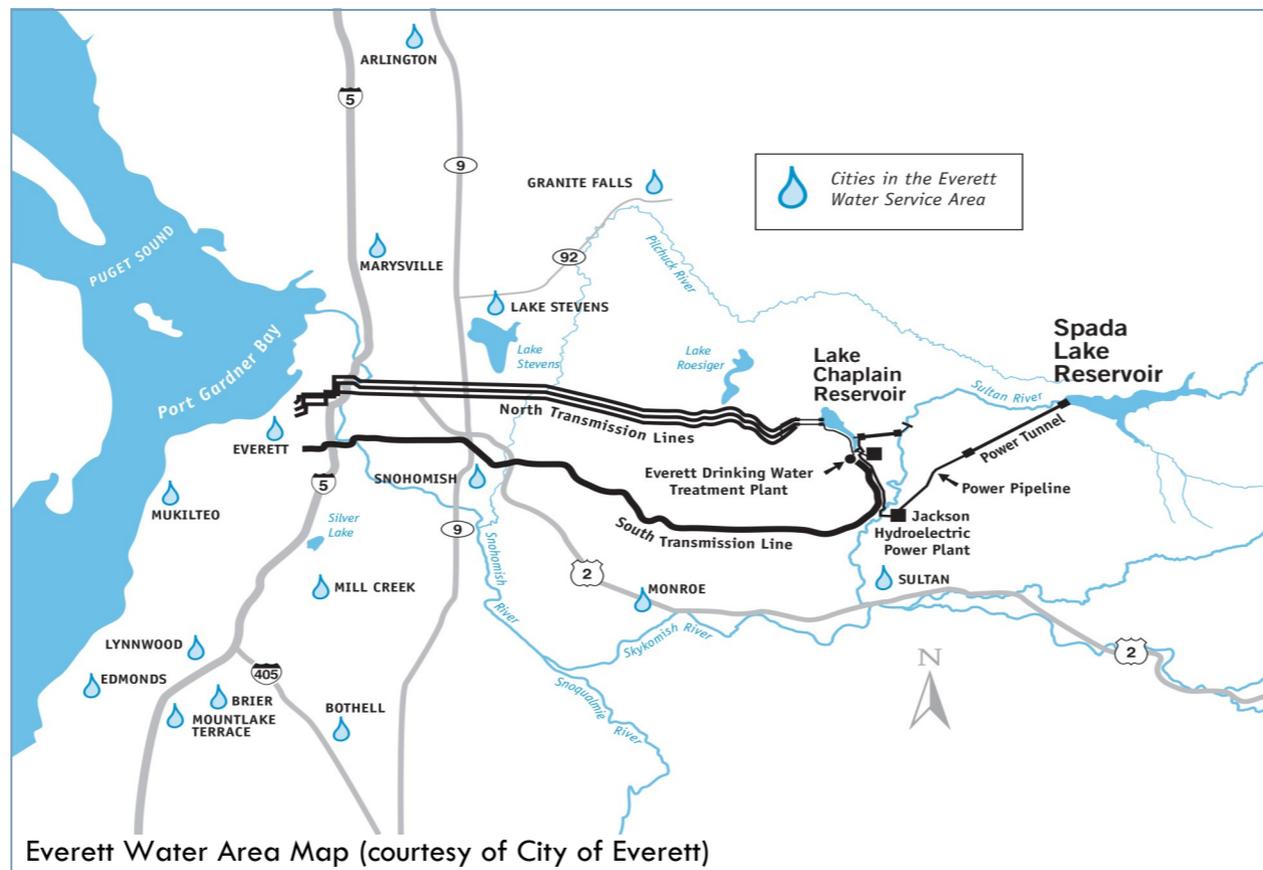
## Our Water Supply

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From the Everett Drinking Water Treatment Plant, the water runs through a series of pipes to the Mukilteo Water and Wastewater District. Once here, the District has its own storage and distribution system that ensures reliable supply and pressure.



All of the water distributed by MWWD starts at Spada Lake and is then treated at the City of Everett's Water Treatment Plant. Spada Lake has a 50 billion gallon capacity.



## Our Water Distribution System

Our water distribution system consists of approximately 88 miles of pipe, four water storage tanks, and four pump stations. The system is designed, operated, and maintained to provide clean, reliable, and safe water to our customers. Here are some things we do on a regular basis:

- ◆ **Coliform Monitoring Plan:** Using the 45 sample stations throughout our system, we test for chlorine residues, coliforms, and *E. coli*. These tests make sure we know your water is safe to drink.
- ◆ **Water Main Flushing Program:** To clean out any sediment that may accumulate in the pipes and to make sure your water is fresh, we flush approximately 60 miles of pipe each year.
- ◆ **Cross Connection Program:** To make sure non-drinkable water doesn't enter the water system, we have a cross connection program that requires backflow preventers on all commercial, industrial, and multifamily connections, as well as home irrigation systems and other at risk connections. The backflow preventers are required by the State of Washington to be tested annually to make sure they are working properly.
- ◆ **Reservoir Inspection and Cleaning Program:** Each of our four water storage tanks is drained on a four-year cycle so we can inspect the inside and clean out any sediment that may have accumulated.

At the end of the day, from our Commissioners to our employees, the District takes pride in ensuring that when you turn on your faucet, the water that comes out is clean, reliable, and safe to drink and use.



Park Street Reservoir (Reservoir #1) was built in 1999 and has a capacity of 750,000 gallons of water.

## If MWWD Had a Mercer Island Incident ... What Would Happen?

Providing safe clean water is every water provider's top priority. The recent Mercer Island boil water notice only reinforces the importance and need to ensure we provide safe drinking water to our customers. So what would happen if Mukilteo Water and Wastewater District had an incident like Mercer Island?

Spread throughout the District are 45 sample stations that the District utilizes to test for chlorine residuals and *E. coli*. Every month, 30 samples are taken and tested to comply with Department of Health requirements. If a sample is determined to be contaminated, another sample is immediately taken and retested along with nearby samples both upstream and downstream from the initial bad sample. In the event one of these samples is also found contaminated, the District immediately notifies the Department of Health who then oversees the boil water notification process and determines if the closing of businesses is necessary.

Then it's all hands on deck to notify our customers and to find the problem. Several methods are used to notify the public in case of a boil water notice, including using news media outlets, posting information on the District's website ([www.mukilteowwd.org](http://www.mukilteowwd.org)), visiting our customers door to door, or calling our customers over the telephone. Working with the District, the

Department of Health determines what area is affected to minimize the inconvenience to the public. If a boil water notice is issued, customers will be warned not to drink, cook, or brush teeth without first boiling water. In recent cases, such as Mercer Island, schools and restaurants were closed until the boil water advisory had been lifted.

Again, working with State agencies, MWWD will immediately begin taking steps in hopes of identifying the cause of the contamination, flush the water mains to get any contamination out, and clean the reservoirs if necessary. Once the area has been flushed and cleaned, additional testing would be done to ensure all contaminants have been eliminated. When the additional tests come back clean and authorization has been granted by the Department of Health, the boil water notice is lifted.

Please be assured the District works hard to provide clean water to our customers and works even harder to prevent these kinds of inconveniences.

**Having a way to contact you quickly is crucial.** Please call us or send us your current contact information. You can also use the Customer Contact Info Form on the home page of our website to update your information.

## Testing Our Water and Making Sure It's Safe

**E**. coli ... it sounds like some computer virus. What is it and why does the District pay so much attention to it?

*Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) consists of a diverse group of bacteria that all water providers make sure is not in your drinking water. Most *E. coli* are harmless and actually are an important part of a healthy human intestinal tract; however, some types of *E. coli* are pathogenic, meaning they can cause illness or diarrhea. The types of *E. coli* that can cause diarrhea can be transmitted through contaminated water or food, or through contact with animals or people. Symptoms of getting sick from *E. coli* vary person to person, but often include severe stomach cramps, diarrhea, and vomiting. If there is fever, it usually is not very high (less than 101° F). Most people get better within 5 to 7 days. Some infections are very mild, but others are severe or even life threatening.

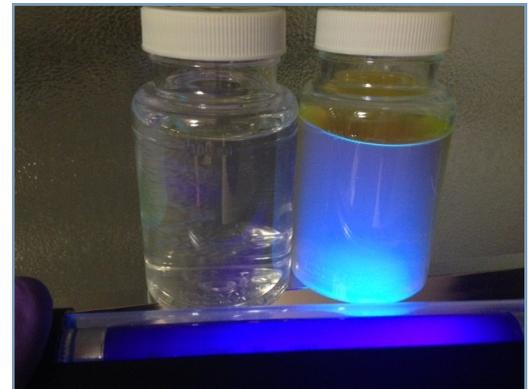
Pretty serious stuff ... so the Everett Water Treatment Plant and the District pay a lot of attention to making sure your water is free of all *E. coli*.

To ensure this, the Everett Water Treatment Plant first disinfects the water by mixing a small amount of chlorine as part of their treatment process. But just to make sure the water stays free of *E. coli*, the water needs to maintain a small amount or “residual” chlorine in it at all times. When the water gets to our system, the District methodically tests the water several times each month, checking for the presence of *E. coli*, and making sure there is residual chlorine in the water.

Water sampling is done by trained and certified water quality staff members who use extremely meticulous sampling procedures. Collection bottles and equipment

must be free of any foreign materials or the sample can come back with a false positive. To avoid contaminating the sample, for example, the tester cannot touch the lid or rim of the sample bottle with bare hands, and cannot allow rainwater to run down the tester's head or clothing.

Once samples are collected, they are taken to a state certified laboratory for testing. If any of the samples come back positive for coliform or *E. coli*, the water quality person must immediately return to the site and resample. Additionally, the water quality person must take a sample upstream and downstream of the sample location. Anytime there is a problem with a sample, it must be reported to the State Department of Health.



**A laboratory technician performs tests to detect the presence of coliforms and *E. coli*. A sample positive for *E. coli* will fluoresce under UV light.**

In most cases, positive samples are due to an error in sample collection. Usually the repeat samples come back fine and free of any contaminants. If the repeat samples still indicate contamination, the District will work with local health officials to determine the cause of the contamination, how to rectify it, and execute a public notification strategy to inform and protect our consumers.

Our exhaustive testing program is part of our commitment to you, our customers, that when you turn on your water faucet, it is reliable and safe to drink and use.