

Belmont Terrace Mutual Water Company Newsletter

June 2007

Inside This Issue

- 1 Contamination Update
- 2 Rate Increase
- 2 Meters
- 2 Conservation

*Why we need to
increase rates?*

See next page.

OUR water company needs people to help with yard work on the well property, serving on committees and the board.

Contamination Update

There are three sites near Belmont terrace that have contaminated groundwater. The least problematic site is the dry cleaner in Redwood Market Plaza (next door to Albertson's), they have used PCE in the past, which is a contaminate which has been detected in our backup well.

Next in line is the dry cleaner in Fiesta Shopping Center which has extremely high concentrations of PCE surrounding their sewer line connection. The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) has asked for more and much deeper monitoring wells to ascertain which direction the contamination plume is traveling. So far, the shallow monitoring wells indicate that groundwater moves away from our well, but the hydrogeologists at RWQCB cannot conclude anything about the deeper groundwater that may be effected by our well. On the other hand, PCE has not shown up in our main well. The former dry cleaner owners are very slow in responding to the RWQCB, because it is very costly to investigate the contamination - but their reluctance could end up costing us a lot more.

The worst and nearest contaminated site to our well is the former Homan Tire Service (the empty lot on the north end of Redwood Market Plaza, bounded by Ari Silez's house, Mary's Pizza, Taco Bell, and Highway 116). This site has only just come under jurisdiction of the RWQCB after very "relaxed" review by the County of Sonoma. First of all, the County decided not to monitor for PCE, even after a very high concentration was discovered in soil removed in late 2005. Secondly, the known contaminants are mostly hydrocarbons and some extremely carcinogenic solvents that have no minimum safety level. The County was ready to approve a shallow cleanup process even though the monitoring results are inconclusive about the direction different contaminants are traveling at different depths. The RWQCB hydrogeologists are calling for more detailed monitoring, and fortunately, there is a State fund for investigating and cleanup of hydrocarbons (the owners' will be billed later by the State).

Contamination Update (continued)

Another reason for slightly more optimism about this site is that the owner is planning to develop the site and does not want lengthy delays - but we all know that real estate is volatile...

John Rosenblum will have site maps and numbers for anybody who wishes to see them at our June 25 meeting.

Why a rate increase?

At the June 25 meeting, John Rosenblum will go over the financial status and needs of our water system, including increases in operations, reserve requirements, and upgrade costs. He will also compare our costs to other water systems, and the cost of annexation versus the cost of remaining independent. The board members feel that it would be in our best interest to remain independent - but upgrades and better reserves will be needed.

Metering

The Board would like to engage in applying for state loans and grants for our upgrade. Metering our water is a mandatory requirement for funding.



Conservation

Awareness of water use is an integral part of properly managing our water availability. The majority, or two thirds, of our annual water demand are lawns and landscaping. This where we should be most focused on conservation. In addition, the prompt repair of leaks and use of water/energy efficient appliances i.e.: toilets, washers, and low flow plumbing fixtures all contribute to savings.

Check out: <http://www.terrylove.com/crtoilet.htm>