

Entranosa Water News

September 30, 2016

Residential Usage in September. Residential demand this month was just over 6,000 gallons. In September 2015, residential usage was just over 7,600 gallons, and in 2014 it was just over 6,200 gallons. As always – use what you need ... no more, and no less.

Hardness. We measured 24 grains of hardness at the office this morning. A grain is approximately 17.1 milligrams per liter. Hardness has fluctuated this summer because of the varying demand, which changes the specific (and how many) wells we employ. In October, we expect hardness to drop to the low 20s and the high teens.

Drought Conditions. Our drought condition remains as ‘abnormally dry’, where it has been most of the year. The seasonal outlook through the end of December is for a ‘normal’ condition (not sure what that is, any more ...) with a damp winter (that means – snow).

Contact Information. Our website (www.entranosawater.com) provides the ability to easily update your contact information by clicking on the green “Bill Payment” button, and then click on the red “Pay Your Bill Now” button. You’ll need to register (requires your account number and zip code) and then update email and phone contact information (note – you don’t HAVE to pay your bill on this link). Current information is used to contact you for a variety of reasons – billing, high usage, water outage, emergency information. We do NOT provide this information to outside sources. Note – the various payment options are listed in this section of the web page.

Annual Meeting and Board Elections. The annual meeting was held on Thursday, September 22nd at the Nature Pointe Community Center (we are grateful for their hospitality, and the pre-meeting meal). We needed 167 ballots for quorum, and we had in excess of 204, with over 100 members attending. Paul Gorder and Linda Barbour were elected to three year terms, and Rob Baracker was elected to the two year term. Both bylaw changes passed with over 2/3 majority vote. We awarded three door prizes of water bill credit (\$50, \$75, and \$100), several Entranosa ball caps, and a 48-gallon rain barrel.

Expansion Tanks. We mention this several times each year, but it bears repeating. They are required by the Plumbing Code (starting in 1997), and while most homes built since that time have them, we’re finding that some do not. Owners should strongly consider having them, regardless of when the home was built. The absence of such a tank could present a hazardous situation in your home – it absorbs the pressure generated by water heating devices (like your water heater) and it is usually installed on the cold water side (feed line) of the hot water heater. It most often looks little like a small propane tank, and the size of the tank depends on the size of the hot water heater. Take a look ... if you have questions, consult a licensed plumber or an expert at a home repair store (Davis Hardware, RAKS, Home Depot, Lowes ...)

Consumer Confidence Report. Our latest, annual, report is on our web site and the link is:

http://www.entranosawater.com/WaterQuality/EWWA_2015_CCR.pdf

You can also request a hardcopy from the office - we’ll be happy to mail it to you.

County Water Ordinances. The County’s of Santa Fe and Bernalillo have ordinances dealing with water conservation. They both dictate ‘water hours’ – those for Santa Fe County expire today (September 30) and the Bernalillo County hours expire on October 31st – until Spring.

Call 811 BEFORE You Dig – It IS the Law

Entranosa Water & Wastewater Association
(505) 281-8700 (office) / (505) 604-5935 (emergency)

www.entranosawater.com

Office Hours of Operation: Monday – Thursday 8:00am – 4:30pm, and Friday 9:00am – 4:30pm

Septic / Liquid Waste Management Program

Entranosa Water & Wastewater Association Bylaws, Article IV, Membership, Section 3 – “... and further provided that after October 5, 2000, all new memberships and transfer memberships shall either include wastewater service or be located in a subdivision or community where wastewater services are provided.”

In the early 1990's, the Association added 'wastewater to its' name to reflect that wastewater was the greatest single threat to our water resource, which drove a mission to be involved in efforts to protect that resource. In 1995, the Association completed a study of groundwater in the east mountain area and it concluded – in part – that septic tanks were a significant contributor to plumes of groundwater contamination (mostly nitrates) in the community. The study cited lot size, soil conditions, tank construction, and lack of septic tank maintenance as contributors to that contamination. As a result of the study, and after a great deal of discussion within the board of directors, along with several surveys of the membership, the Association created a voluntary septic management program in 1999. That program was successful and well received. The following year, the board received – and eventually endorsed – a proposed change to the bylaws to require wastewater service (later defined as the septic management program) as a condition of membership (the language in Article IV, Section 3, above). This action was, in part, precipitated by a June '99 newspaper article dealing with nitrate contamination near Melody Ranch which cited septic tanks as the source. Coincident to the proposed bylaw change in 2000, Bernalillo County implemented a new wastewater ordinance that required individual management plans for septic tanks in the County, and placed responsibility for septic maintenance on property owners. In 2003, the Secretary of the Environment Department cited septic tanks as the single greatest source of contamination of ground water in the State. In 2005, the State of New Mexico revised their liquid waste regulations such that they generally mirrored the requirements imposed by Bernalillo County. Our septic management program meets the requirements of both the Bernalillo County ordinance and the state regulations.

Prior to endorsing the bylaw change in 2000, the board held several heated discussions on the issue. The arguments in opposition to the bylaw change centered on the fact that Entranosa was not a government entity and it should not place itself in a position to interfere with how private individuals maintained their private property. The arguments in favor of the bylaw change focused on studies and emerging evidence that the primary – and, at the time, the ONLY – well field we had was in a highly transmissive water bearing strata, in a rapidly growing area, and we had the obligation to take steps to protect that source; that we were a 'water' **and** a 'wastewater' organization, and it was not inappropriate to offer the membership the opportunity to vote and decide for themselves if they wanted to connect water and wastewater services.

The bylaw passed and we currently have about 1700 members enrolled in the program. It continues to grow, monthly, as new memberships are purchased and as memberships are transferred with the sale of an existing home. Some members choose to sign onto the program voluntarily.

We have four state certified wastewater operators on staff, and one nationally certified septic inspector (certified through the National Association of Wastewater Technicians). We competitively award the septic pumping contract, and American Pumping is the current holder. Participants in the program save between \$40 and \$80 per pumping, depending on the comparison.

Currently, two subdivisions are exempt from participation in the program because they are served by sewer collection and treatment systems of their own – Paako and Woodlands.