

It's Kind of Late Spring!

Charles A Smith, PE, CESCL, WDM1

Water Distribution Manager

Are you feeling the “big sigh”? The holiday has come and gone. Relatives invited and not so much invited have made their way to the Island and home once again.

So how did your water work? Good? That's great! I didn't get a single phone call all weekend, so I'm making the assumption that all went well. Let me know if there is anything I can do for you.

Remember, if you have any questions about your water system, you can contact me as noted below.

The DDP

Charles A Smith, PE, CESCL, WDM1

Water Distribution Manager

Being your Water Distribution Manager, I get to hear a lot of stories. I mean A LOT of stories. It's OK, in the business we refer to these as “anecdotal evidence” as for the way things used to be. Well, I remember, back in the day ...

One of the stories that has been repeated more than a couple of times is how several of the ditches alongside of the roads would continuously run water even after it had been dry for several days in a row. I found this fascinating as so many different people could tell the story.

But now, the story has changed. Since the installation of the new water distribution system there seems to be a DDP – or Dry Ditch Phenomenon – happening all over the Island. Where we used to have 20 or more ditches running with water, we're now down to just three (or less on some days). This is a great thing!

Although I've heard that the 26 foot long Croc-a-gator© that inhabits the swamp isn't too happy. But that's a story for another time.



Something to Watch for – Tampering with the Water

Charles A Smith, PE, CESCL, WDM1

Water Distribution Manager

With the good, sometimes you have to talk about the bad and the ugly. Over the last month, we've had three incidents of people tampering with other people's water meters or water service connections. This is not good.

Remember that this is your water system and any damage will cost you the property owner. It's good to be on the look-out for things out of the ordinary. For example: if you're driving by and you see three or four of the meter box lids are up – check in with the Member to see if something is happening. Or if you come out after an absence and you find your meter shut-off valve turned on and a spigot running – let the Office or the WDM know.

Since we will soon be charging for water, this tampering may seem like just a bit of inconvenient mischief at the moment, but it could cost you significantly if not stopped.

I am recommending that Members look into acquiring locks for your water meter shut off valve.



The valve will take a standard Master lock hasp – the hasp being the metal loop at the top of the lock. Make sure that there is someone other than yourself that can open the lock in case of emergency.

Please see your local hardware store to acquire a lock.

The Flapper

Charles A Smith, PE, CESCL, WDM1

Water Distribution Manager

I feel there should be some evil laughter after saying the title of this section but I'm not sure why.

As some of you that have been on The Leak List know, I've often asked you to check the flapper in your toilet to make sure it's not leaking. The flapper is notorious for very slow, almost imperceptible leakage. This can happen for a number of reasons. For example:

- When you leave and you empty all of your appliances and fixtures. This will leave the flapper dry where it could shrink or change shape. Then the next time you fill the toilet, the flapper leaks.
- Chemistry – if you leave a cleaner in your toilet tank, this cleaner could be slowly eating away at the seal and will cause a leak.

You're looking at me funny. Oh. What is a flapper? Gotcha. The flapper is the soft rubber piece that is usually connected by a chain to the toilet handle.



The flapper is usually located at the bottom of the toilet tank and prevents the tank from releasing the water in the tank until you flush.



How can you tell if your flapper is leaking? This is a great question that has a multitude of answers. Here are two that I find usually telling as to whether or not the flapper is leaking.

The "turn off the valve and wait" method. Usually, there is an isolation valve under the tank of the toilet. You take the lid off the tank and check where the water level is normally. Most toilets will already have a line, a mark in the porcelain casting or a line of grunge established over time. If there is no line, take a felt tip pen and just above the water, draw a line.



Next, turn off the isolation valve usually located under the toilet tank in the water supply line. Now for the hard part – you'll need to wait about an hour, maybe longer depending on how slow the leak might be. When you come back, the water level should be just where you marked it. If it's not, then you know you have a leak.

Another method is the "color the water" method. With some food coloring, add a few drops to the toilet tank. Then once again the hard part of waiting an hour. If there is any color in the toilet bowl, even just a little, you have a leak. I find that the colors of blue, red and green seem to work the best for contrast in white toilets. If your toilet isn't white – try the valve method.

The North Beach and South Beach

Charles A Smith, PE, CESCL, WDM1

Water Distribution Manager

I've been getting a lot of questions about the water services at the parks. These water services are for you to use as you need, but remember that the water services provided are metered and you should try and conserve the water where you can.

The North Beach – There are three water spigots available at the North Beach. These are located:

- At the southeast end of the Pavilion
- At the fire pit and flag pole area on the east side of the log bulkhead, and
- On the west side of the boat launch ramp.

The South Beach – There is a water service installed for the South Beach trail, there is no water meter or water line down to the beach.

The Nature Park – There is a water service installed, but there is no water meter or water line installed at the Nature Park.

Goodpastor Park – There is a water service (outside spigot) on the northeast side of the Community Building and HMC Office. Check with the HMC Office before using this spigot unless it is an emergency.

If you use one of the public water services, please make sure to turn the service off completely when you are done.

Mow This!

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Water Distribution Manager

Due to all of the rain and now the sun, we've got a lot of grass growing at the Island. Remember that metal mower blades don't work well near plastic or metal meter boxes. We recommend that you stay at least one lawn mower width – 24 inches or more – away from the meter boxes when mowing the grass. Use plastic string trimmers when you get up close to the meter box to help prevent damage to the box and antenna in the lid.

Where is My Meter?

Charles A Smith, PE, CESCL, WDM1

Water Distribution Manager

I must admit that this was one of the funniest questions I got last week, but then I realized – if you're new to the Island or haven't been here since the new water distribution system was installed, this could be a serious situation.

A little background first. When the initial water distribution system was installed in the 1960's – let's just say there wasn't a whole lot of concern as to where would be a consistent place to install a water service. Most water services were installed on the "as short of a distance to my cabin as possible" method. That's not to say that there is no consistency. When initially installing the water services, it was likely that the service was installed near the center of the property or at one of the property corners. I think this was done to make sure that the installation of the telephone poles would not interfere with the water services.

When the new water services were installed, the choice was made to be in the HMC roadway easement and then – to the left or right of the existing water service so the existing service could remain in operation while the new service was being constructed.

Therefore, in looking for your water meter, the meter is going to be located in general:

- If the service is a single water service – just servicing one lot, the meter is likely to be in the middle of the lot near the HMC roadway easement.
- If the service is a double water service – two meters close together providing water to two lots, the meters are likely to be located at the lot corner often near the telephone pole.

I say "in general" because there are differing situations all over the Island. If you need assistance locating your meter box, please let me know. I'd much rather trip over the box with my boots in the tall grass than have shards flying out from under a lawn mower.

It might also be a good idea to install a driveway reflector at the corner of the meter box if it looks like you might not be back before the grass grows up again.

Stuff and Things

Charles A Smith, PE, CESCL, WDM1

Water Distribution Manager

I'll wheel, I'll deal. You just let me know what I can do to be of service to you because it's all about you and you getting what you want, neigh, what you *need* when it comes to the things I got. Like this here storage cabinet only used by a little old gentleman and never driven on Sundays.



It's yours for the outstandingly low price of FREE! That's right, not one thin dime. You want it, come and get it; it's yours for only the sweat off your brow to move it out of the pump station yard. This beautiful post-apocalyptic cabinet includes all of the hardware and screws, but sadly not the cinder block base as that is tied to the building drainage. You just let me know.

The next item is six feet of pure and unadulterated fuel hose from the far east – I believe somewhere near Puyallup. The hose has 3/4 inch male brass fittings on either end and would be perfect for that gas pump you want to restore in your basement. \$20 and it's yours.



Oh now here is a sweet little deal just in time for the newsletter – You want fuel hose? Here's 50 feet of the stuff pure and uncut. Sure it's red and currently hanging on a door, but it can be yours for just one dollar... a

foot, that's right – yours for just \$50 and I'll throw in the string and quite possibly a little bat guano.



Tired of coming home and sloshing through the living room? I know I am. Check out this little beauty!



This Water Ace R5S-1, 1/2 HP clear water sump pump works great. The float switch operates the motor for the pump – there is no external on/off switch. According to the internet it retails for about \$200 – The HMC Board says I can let it go for \$100.

All transactions are final and as-is with no guarantees or warranties. All monetary transactions will be done through the HMC Office and with the appropriate approvals as necessary.

Do you have leftover construction materials just taking up valuable space? Brick pavers, drain pipe, lumber; anything that I can use for future projects can be donated to the HMC Water Department through the HMC Office. Just let me know. I'll even come and get it.

To Make a Report

Information to Have At Hand

If you want to report something, have this information ready to go:

Your Name: _____

Contact Number: _____

On Island Address: _____

And a brief description of the problem or issue. This will go a long way in getting a speedy response. Report forms are available in the HMC Office or the website.

An Emergency

Don't panic and don't wait. If there is an emergency on a lot - turn the water service off at the meter and call Charles Smith, WDM or Sean Burns at NWS.

If there is an emergency with the water main or meter – call Charles (206) 707-4645 or Sean (360) 917-4649 and let them know what is happening.

A Non-Emergency Repair or Service

Send me an email (HMCWater@herronisland.org) with the above information on who, where and what and I'll get there as quickly as I can. You can also fill out the Water Service Request Form and drop it off at the HMC Office. The office will notify the Water Distribution Manager when there is a request in the office.



CONTACT INFORMATION

HMC Water Department

Charles Smith (WDM): (206) 707-4645

HMCWater@herronisland.org

Northwest Water Systems

Sean Burns: (360) 917-4649

sean@nwwatersystems.com

Toll Free: 1 (888) 881-0958

HMC Office (253) 884-9350

Claudia Ellsworth, Island Manager

hmcmanager@herronisland.org

Carolyn Snyder, Office Manager

Office@herronisland.org

Call Before You Dig

As it is Spring, that also means that people are getting ready to build new homes, trailer platforms and other such items. If this means that you'll need to establish a new water connection – please let me know.

Examples would be if you want to install a new yard hydrant so that you have a place to wash off your boat or equipment. Or maybe you're getting that green thumb going and need a new spigot for a garden.

If you're going to be digging within 2 feet of the meter box, please let me know. Oh, hey, you're still going to be the one digging, but I can be helpful in letting you know where things are and how things were connected to existing services during the water system replacement project.

Utility Notification Center

811 or 1-800-424-5555

www.callbeforeyoudig.org

HMC Water Department

Charles Smith (WDM): (206) 707-4645

HMCWater@herronisland.org



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

Requestor:	
Name/Member No.:	
On-Island Address:	
Contact Number:	

Description of Issue:	
[Enter a brief description of the issue to be addressed.]	

Sketch of Issue:	
[Sketch the location of the issue to be resolved to add clarity to where the work is to be done.]	

HMC Office Use Only							
Issue Resolution:							
[Enter a brief description of how the issue was addressed.]							
Personnel:				Hours	Cost/Hour	Total	
Water Distribution Manager						\$0	
Office Administration						\$0	
Subtotal						\$0	
Materials:	Description	Amount	Unit	Cost/Unit	Tax	Total	
			EACH		\$0.00	\$0.00	
Subtotal						\$0.00	
						\$0.00	