

# Water Source

Volume 8 Issue 3

A Newsletter to the Customers of Bella Vista Water Company

## Ever-increasing Costs Make Rate Increase Necessary.

BY JUDY GIGNAC

### Inside this Issue!

In this issue, we'll continue our series *Groundwater Protection Begins At Home* and discuss the proper selection and disposal of paints and the solvents they contain. Plus, we'll give you the latest information on our proposed rate increase.

We'll also bring you a few more interesting "Water Tips and Tricks," to help you save water - and money - in more ways than one. You never know, one of these quick little tips may help you think about water conservation in a whole new way.

**A**lthough you will be receiving formal notice of our rate application before the end of the calendar year, I wanted to let you know ahead of time what is occurring and why.

On September 28, 2001, Bella Vista Water Company submitted an application to the Arizona Corporation Commission for review and possible increase in our rates. The Commission found the application to be sufficient on October 29, 2001 and has set a hearing on our application for July 25, 2002 (or as soon thereafter as practical) at 10:00am at 400 West Congress Street, Tucson.

Our last rate increase was based on our review and expenses for 1997. Those rates became effective in June 1999. The rates we have applied for, after whatever changes the Commission makes, will probably not become effective until January 2003.

It is unfortunate that we must apply for new rates, however, the rates set by the Commission during the last case have never allowed the company to achieve the return determined by the Commission to be "just and reasonable." The costs of operations (taxes, regulatory fees, power costs, insurance, etc.) as well as meeting the ever-changing regulations governing the water industry (new radon and arsenic rules, for example) continue to increase. Furthermore, we have recently made significant additions and improvements to our water system (costing over \$2.3 million) to enable the company to maintain a high level of reliable service.

The rates requested for the average residential customer using 6,500 gallons a month will mean an estimated increase in your bill (before taxes) of \$4.06 a month. To promote conservation we are asking for a 36% increase in our rates for those residential customers with a 1" meter using more than 25,000 gallons. In total we are requesting a 20% increase in our revenues. It is anticipated that during the process the Commission staff and the representatives of the Residential Utility Consumer Office will *decrease* these rates.

The water industry is very heavily regulated to ensure customers receive a safe and reliable water supply. Bella Vista is proud of its record of *providing reasonably priced and reliable water service to our customers*. We are requesting an increase in our rates so we can continue to provide safe and reliable water service to you as well as obtain a just and fair return on our investment.

The rate increase is necessary so we can continue to provide safe, reliable water service to all our customers as well as obtain a just and fair return on our investment.

# GROUNDWATER PROTECTION... BEGINS AT HOME!

## Part 3: Paints

*In many places around your home right now, you probably have any number of common household items that contain hazardous and/or toxic substances. When these common items are disposed of improperly, they can cause serious damage to our groundwater supply. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that the average American disposes of approximately one pound of such waste each year!*

Let's talk first about paints...

Paint consists primarily of pigment and solvent. Many paints include solvents, such as naphtha and xylene. And while latex paints use water as a solvent, they may, however, contain other toxic substances, such as ethylene glycol or acetate. All of these are potentially hazardous substances, and as such, should never be disposed of casually.

As with other potentially hazardous products, paint should always be used completely or given to someone who can use it. If the paint has been stored for an extended period, and has completely dried in the container, it may be put in the garbage. If the paint is still liquid, however, the only safe disposal is through a community hazardous waste collection or recycling facility.

Remember also that it is important NOT to rinse paint brushes and containers where the wastewater can run directly into a storm drain. And whenever possible, use latex paint that has a water-based solvent.

Contact the Cochise County Solid Waste Transfer Station at 452-9805 for more information on how to properly dispose of hazardous waste.

Next Issue:

*Fertilizers and pesticides.*

# Water-Saving Tips and Tricks!

**Water Tip:** Recycle the water from your fish tank.

**Trick:** Water from fish tanks is rich in nitrogen and phosphorous, making it a terrific fertilizer for your plants.

**Water Tip:** Check faucets for leaks regularly.

**Trick:** You'll be surprised how much water - and money - you'll save by taking care of simple leaks in taps, toilets and outdoor faucets quickly. Replacing worn washers periodically will go a long way to preventing leaks from occurring.

**Water Tip:** Never pour toxic chemicals down the drain, on the ground, or in the trash.

**Trick:** Whenever possible, choose and use natural household cleaners like borax, ammonia, vinegar, and baking soda. Make sure you always recycle any hazardous household chemical cleansers properly.

**Water Tip:** Don't water the house, sidewalk, patio or street.

**Trick:** Always keep your sprinklers adjusted so that only your lawn is watered.

**Water Tip:** Only water your lawn as much as it needs.

**Trick:** If you're still watering your lawn the old-fashioned way, with a garden hose and attached sprinkler head, it's time to start saving water. Think about installing an automatic sprinkler system controlled by a timer. Even better, use a moisture indicator attached to your sprinkling system to only water when your lawn really needs it!

**Water Tip:** Don't let the tap run to "cool" your water when you want a drink.

**Trick:** Fill a pitcher with tap water and put it in your refrigerator so that it's ready for those times you want a nice, refreshing drink of cool water. If you have kids, make sure they know the pitcher of cold water is there for them too, and make sure they can get to it easily.

*If you have a water-saving tip, please forward it to our office. Or, email it to us from our Web site. Your tip could help us all save water. In fact, you might just see your tip in a future issue!*

## Water Proverb!

To rule the mountains is to rule the river.

*(Chinese Proverb)*

We hope you continue to use these suggestions of different low-water-use/drought-tolerant plants, shrubs and trees to help you beautify your yard and save water in the process. When it's time for you to plant, ask your nursery about these plants and others like them. After all...

# Water doesn't grow on trees!

## Trees

Desert Willow  
(*Chilopsis linearis*)

Some supplemental irrigation once established

Texas Ebony  
(*Pithecellobium flexicaule*)

Emory Oak  
(*Quercus emoryi*)

Canary Island Date Palm  
(*Phoenix canariensis*)

## Shrubs

Guajillo  
(*Acacia berlandieri*)

Some supplemental irrigation once established

Lemon Verbena  
(*Aloysia wrightii*)

Pine-Leaf Milkweed  
(*Asclepias linaria*)

## Cactus

Golden Barrel  
(*Echinocactus grusonii*)

Some supplemental irrigation

Easter Lily, Sea Urchin Cactus  
(*Echinopsis spp.*)

Prickly Pear, Cholla  
(*Opuntia spp.*)

In our next issue...

Part Three of our series...

*Protecting our Groundwater Begins at Home: "Fertilizers and Pesticides"*

Water-Saving Tips and Tricks

Did you know...?

## DID YOU KNOW?

..that virtually every nation relies on the animal resources of the world's oceans for food, but Japan and Russia are perhaps the two most industrialized fishing nations in the world?

...that the first water ski was patented by an American in 1924?

...that the first conservation issue to which Theodore Roosevelt devoted himself was the irrigation of our arid Western lands, for settling?

This newsletter is offered as a service to our customers. If you have any questions or comments about any of the material in this issue, or ideas or suggestions for future issues, we'd love to hear from you. Please address them to:

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