

# Entranosa Water News

August 31, 2007

**Labor Day.** We'll be closed on Monday for the Labor Day holiday. The weather is cooling (a little), the night air becoming crisp and refreshing, and it'll be punctuated this weekend by the aroma of charcoal and rib steaks or chicken sizzling on the grill; the last holiday of the summer. We wish you an enjoyable, and safe, Labor Day weekend.

**August Consumption.** August started off with some rain – and then dried up. The average residential consumption this past month was approximately 9,052 gallons – but last year, during an extremely wet period, it was 6,646 gallons. If you believe your billed usage is higher than what you've used – give us a call and we'll be pleased to check for a leak – but keep in mind that if you left the hose on overnight, you could easily have used 24,000 gallons.

**Drought Forecast, and Weather Conditions.** While our drought condition remains “normal” and we're wandering in and out of the monsoon, remember that we live in a highland desert – be aware of how you use your water and use what you need ... no more, and no less. Drought conditions have improved across the State. The drought forecast in our area, for the next three months is 'normal'.

**Annual Meeting.** Our annual meeting will be held on October 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Mountain Valley Church, and it will start sharply at 7:30 p.m.. Our meeting packet and notice were mailed on August 30<sup>th</sup>. There are two positions on the board and we have three capable candidates. Please plan to attend.

**Bernalillo County Activites.** The County has established a series of ongoing after-school programs at Los Vecinos Community Center, as well as a number of family activities for kids of all ages. Contact 314-0240 for details.

**Modeling.** We've been revising and updating the hydraulic model of our system and we've recently run our fully built out scenario in which we serve all of our existing commitments (about 5900 connections) plus four percent. There are some upgrades we need to make for line size in a couple of areas and some additional onsite infrastructure will be created inside new subdivisions as they build out – but for the most part, we're positioned to support all of our obligations (and more) with what we currently have.

**Sandia Labs Federal Credit Union.** The Association has joined with Sandia Labs Federal Credit Union (SLFCU) and all of our members and employees are now eligible for services with this financial institution. They've made a commitment to the east mountain area by establishing a branch in Edgewood, by the end of 2007, at NM 344 and Dinkle Road. They have a web site – [www.slfcu.org](http://www.slfcu.org).

## **Call Before You Dig**

New Mexico One Call

260-1990 or **811**

## Septic / Liquid Waste Management Program

### Entranosa 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, and we should be involved in efforts to protect it. 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 septic tank maintenance as a contributor to that contamination. As a result of the study, and after a great deal of discussion within the board of directors and after 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 may have been 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. Two years ago (2005), the State of New Mexico revised their liquid waste regulations that generally mirrored the Bernalillo County requirements. Our septic management program meets the requirements of both the Bernalillo County ordinance and the state regulations.

Prior to endorsing the bylaw change six years ago, the board held several heated discussions on the issue. The arguments in opposition to the bylaw change centered around the fact that Entranosa was not a government entity (at the time) 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 over 1400 members enrolled in the program. It continues to grow monthly as new memberships are purchased and as memberships are transferred as the result of a sale. Some continue to voluntarily sign onto the program. We have two state certified wastewater operators on staff, and two certified septic inspectors.