

Entranosa Water News

February 27, 2010

Board Officers. The Board of Directors met in a regularly scheduled meeting in January and elected officers for this year. They are:

President	Steve Varley
Vice President	Steve Hicks
Treasurer	Ron Bodo
Secretary	Carolyn Freeman

Hardness. We remain in the winter mode and hardness is consistently in the range of 10 – 14 grains of hardness.

February Consumption. Household demand remained relatively low this month, The average household meter used about 4,330 gallons this month, or 149 gallons per dwelling per day, about 5% less than February '09.

Board Meeting. The Board of Directors did not meet in February, but plans to hold its monthly meeting on the 4th Thursday in March at 6:15 p.m. (weather permitting), which is the 25th. Should you wish to attend, please call to verify the date and so we can make proper arrangements.

Hydrant Vandals. In January, Entranosa and three other community water systems (American/Edgewood, Thunder Mountain, and Moriarty) experienced the concentrated efforts of – politely put – vandals, who started opening fire hydrants in Edgewood, moved over to Thunder Mountain, moved up to us – and about three hours later, hit fire hydrants in Moriarty. The water systems, excluding Moriarty, are offering a reward of \$3,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons involved. Should you have information, please contact John at the office.

Drought. We continue to monitor drought information from the US Drought Monitor, sponsored by the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, www.drought.unl.edu/dm/monitor (for current information). The data and graphics are interesting (well ... they are to us). In spite of the mud, we're listed as being in an 'abnormally dry' condition.

Bottled Water. We're grateful for the feedback we received on our bottled water blurb last month. Some were helpful and encouraging, some weren't – regardless, we are still grateful. Thank you for reading the newsletter!

Conservation Ordinances. For those of you in Bernalillo County, the 'season' starts on April 1st and you can find the ordinance on the county web site. We copies available in our office as well. In Santa Fe County, the 'season' starts on May 1st. We'll provide a summary of the ordinances next month.

Waterwise Tips in the Garden

from the Entranosa Water & Wastewater Association
Conservation Committee

Think Shelter from Drying Winds

In our part of New Mexico, dry and windy days are all too common. To conserve water, consider creating windbreaks. These may be as simple (and ugly) as rows of old tires. Vegetables can be planted in the tires without the fuss of filling them with dirt. After the growing season, the tires can be stored out of sight.

Other choices for windbreaks might be straw bales or old boards. The boards can be placed on top of newly planted rows of seeds. Remove the boards to water the seeds, but replace them to protect the wet ground from the wind. With the first sign of sprouts, take the boards off the top and prop them up to block the prevailing winds. Bamboo stakes on either side of the boards will prevent them from flopping over when the wind shifts.

Save Water by Creating Shade

Take advantage of the shade created by trees in your yard to establish new plants. In the absence of trees, consider creating a shady spot using lathe or bamboo.

Trees can be trained and pruned to be living shade barriers. Manchurian bush apricots are tough and vigorous growers that can withstand a lot of pruning, encouraging them to spread in the desired directions.

Choose strong, vigorous trees for your shade barriers so they can be shaped to fit your needs. By choosing small, you don't have to water as much or deal with flying branches in a storm. Encouraging the trees to make canopies of leaves just over your head increases the coolness of the shade. Choosing a fruit tree means that some years, at least, you might get a crop.

Container Gardening

Terracotta or clay pots are almost worthless for container gardening in our climate. The water evaporates through the pot. Plastic tubs work much better. Wooden half barrels are good for container gardening if you waterproof them first to prevent water from evaporating out the sides.

Save Water by Mowing

Mowing can save water. Mowing your property before the grasses set their seeds creates a climate for the grass to return. You will create a yard of mostly tough grasses that don't require extra water other than the rain.

The trick is to mow high and not often. Mowing too low "scalps" the grass blades and exposes them to wind and heat damage. It also exposes the topsoil, which will blow away. Tough, native grasses hold topsoil in place and gradually create a cool oasis around your home without subjecting it to the fire danger of tall, dry weeds.

Create 'sponges' for your Plants

Dig a hole around your plants or trees & fill it with a porous material (shredded newspapers or junk mail, horse manure, or old brush, depending on the size of the hole). Cover the hole with dirt and presto! You have an area that collects water and saves it for your plants, safe from the wind.