

Entranosa Water News

August 31, 2010

Water Hardness. We measured about 25 grains of hardness at the office yesterday morning, which is a little less than July but is reflective of a wet August ... as the monsoon wanes, it'll rise as we pump more water daily. The hardness of the water should continue to range between 24 to 33 grains around the system and average about 28. A 'grain' is equal to 17.1 milligrams per liter.

Water Use. August was fairly normal – hot and dry, wet and wild. The average residential demand was just under 7,300 gallons. Please look at the usage graph on your bill – if you think you have a leak, let us know. The average residential use in August of 2009 was about 9,000 gallons and 7,100 gallons in 2008. Weather makes a difference

Drought Monitor. The US Drought Monitor, which can be viewed at <http://drought.unl.edu/dm/monitor.html>, reflects some significant improvements in the drought picture over the past month. Our area has improved to a 'normal' condition as the drought fades to the northwest corner of the State. The projection, through November has changed, and is now being reported as 'normal' for our area.

Bill Payments & Credit Use ... as a reminder.

- We've changed the address to which payments are sent – it is "Dept 2465, PO Box 122465, Dallas, TX 75312-2465" your bill stub has that address, which you can just mail, and if you use a bill payment service, you need to provide that address to them.
- As of July 1st, we no longer process automated credit card payments, so if you've been using that method you'll need to make a change. We'll still accept credit cards in online payments, and walk-in's but there is a \$3 processing fee for each credit card payment
- We still offer automatic bank account drafts that are safe, convenient, and no-cost

Annual Meeting & Call for Candidates. The annual meeting for Entranosa will be on September 30th and it will be held at the Mountain Valley Church. This year, there will be a ballot issue for administrative changes to our bylaws (updating our name), and an election of two directors, for which we have four candidates. The Annual Packet is in the mail – members should receive it soon.

Septic Management and Liquid Waste Program

There have been a number of recent questions about our septic program. It has been our practice, the past two years, to run an article on the program every August – we're doing that again this year and we hope it is helpful.

Redrilled Well.

We are redrilling one of our wells – deepening it to provide increased longevity of supply by adding an additional 180' of water column.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG – IT IS THE LAW 811

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, 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. In 2005, the State of New Mexico revised their liquid waste regulations that generally mirrored the requirements imposed by Bernalillo County while strengthening some sections, and Bernalillo County modified their ordinance in 2006 to match the state regulations. 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 around 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 over 1500 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 three state certified wastewater operators on staff, and three septic inspectors certified through the National Association of Wastewater Transporters, and we contract out the services for pumping, getting the best price the market will bear.