

# Palomino Lakes Water Newsletter

January 2006

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## Slow progress on new well

At the 2005 Annual Meeting the PLMWC Board informed the community of problems in establishing the ownership of the land that is the most desirable spot to locate our new well. The property title was clear up until the early 1900's when incorrect property lines were established as part of a sale from family member to family member.



Existing well with proposed site in background

In an effort to resolve the matter the Board contacted the County Assessor's office which initially was of little assistance. The Assessor's office did not know who currently owned the land and because it was such a small parcel of agricultural property they did not have the people or the money to research the ownership.

Since the Board must have a County recognized owner in order to apply for the necessary State and County permits to drill and operate the new well the Board was forced to seek legal counsel specializing in water problems.

Then just two weeks ago the Board was heartened by a change in the attitude in the County Assessor's Office. Due to a personnel change there may be a resolution to the ownership problem. While we await the Assessor's answer we have gone to our water attorney for their input on the matter.

Once the ownership issue is settled the required permits and paperwork can be completed. Preliminary test drilling and geologic reports have been completed and indicate that a 50 foot well located approximately 200 feet south-west of the existing well will provide adequate water for our community. In the meantime design work continues on the well and its support systems. At this time the well is scheduled for "sometime this summer."

## Water system dodges flood bullet

Late on Friday, December 30, the PLMWC Board received a call from the California Department of Health Services advising that the Ukiah Municipal Sewerage System was going to release into the Russian River in advance of the New Year's storm. Over the weekend the Board monitored the flood water level around the well and, although it was close, flood waters did not reach the well. The Board was prepared to shut down the well had water threatened the well head.

By Monday, January 2, the floodwaters had receded enough to get to the well site and check the level of the chlorinator tank to be sure chlorination had not been interrupted. While the liquid chlorine tank level was getting low, there was chlorine in the tank and the chlorinator

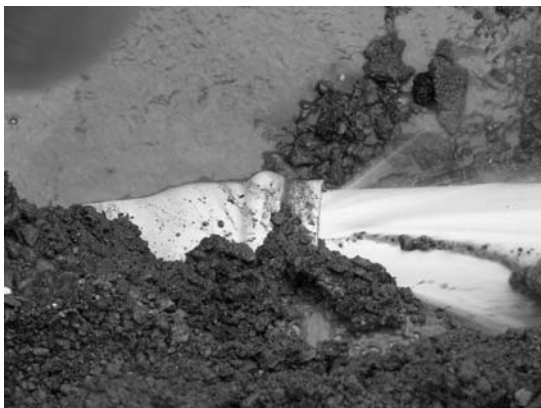
was working properly. As a precaution, additional chlorine was added to insure sufficient chlorine should the waters rise again. The chlorine dosage in the storage tanks was checked to be sure residual chlorine levels were adequate.

As a further precaution, Zastrow Water Treatment Service, our system operator, was instructed to draw a raw water sample for analysis from the well on Tuesday and then to chlorinate the well and manually raise the chlorine levels of all water storage tanks.

Water testing showed no fecal coliform bacteria present in the well and ample residual chlorine in the water storage tanks.

### **Mountain Pine springs a leak**

In early October a moderate leak occurred on lower Mountain Pine Road. The leak, which may have been exacerbated by a 4.0 earthquake, worsened as the Board tried to pin-point the location of leak and line up a repair crew. The delay turned out to be fortunate as water began seeping to the surface some 40 feet up the hill from the original seepage. This helped pin-point the leak and saved significant trenching and resultant expense.



Water pours from 6" main on Mountain Pine

The good news was that Rege Construction was able to dig directly to the leak with minimal trenching and to make the repair quickly. The bad news is that this leak had been going on, at a much lower rate, for an extended period, perhaps dating back to a previous repair in 1997. This long term erosion, coupled with the unstable soils in the immediate area, compromised the integrity of as much as 300 or 400 feet of piping running through the area. The Board is currently looking at various means to address this issue. It is quite possible that a substantial section of 6 inch water main will have to be replaced.

### **Cleanup complete at Tank #1**

A number of steps have been completed at tank site #1 to reduce ongoing maintenance, increase safety and improve the appearance of the site. In October, Sanz Landscaping of Cloverdale removed the weeds, berry bushes and poison oak that were taking over the site. The soil inside the fenced area was leveled out to reduce tripping hazards and a layer of landscape fabric was applied and covered with crushed stone.



Tank#1 after clean up

In November, SBC relocated their equipment to the "new" utility pole and removed the old pole. The new pole had

been set in 1998 but SBC had failed to finish the project.

In December, Comcast removed an unnecessary guy wire that had originally supported the old pole. This wire and its anchor intruded significantly into the fenced area causing access problems and a tripping hazard.

As a side note: If you have double utility poles on or near your property let the POA know. The utility companies are responsible for moving equipment to the new pole and removing the old pole.

### **Tank #3 hillside slip-sliding away**

During the winter of 2004-2005 a small slide occurred on the tank site #3 site at the end of Toyon Lane. The slide was at the fence at the back of the flat area and posed no threat to anything within the fenced enclosure.



A rather poor picture of the slide at Tank #3

The Board had intended to fix the problem in accordance with our engineer's plans before this winter's rains arrived but unfortunately the lower Mountain Pine leak and the POA's lower Mountain Pine culvert project required a great deal of the Board's time. This, coupled with Howard being out of the area on an unexpected project that lasted

several months, prevented action on the project.

The slide area has weathered the recent heavy rains quite well with very little change and will be repaired as soon as weather permits.

### **Fire hydrants delayed**

Progress on the fire hydrant project has been slower than desired for the same reasons impacting the tank site #3 slide.

On the plus side six hydrants and six automatic shut-off valve assemblies were purchased late last summer. The purchase occurred just before the general world wide cost of cast iron products began to rise due to the demand of the Chinese and Indian economies.

The first two new hydrant locations will be Palomino Road at River Road and Palomino Road at Mountain Pine Road. Both sites have good access and no vegetation problems. Tackling these areas first will allow the installers to gain knowledge of how the old wharf hydrants were installed before tackling the more complicated locations.

The next two hydrants will be Palomino Road at Madrone Drive and at Palomino Road at Willow Terrace. Both installations will be somewhat more complicated thus more expensive and time consuming.

The last two hydrants will be Mountain Pine Road at Willow Terrace and at Mountain Pine Road at Toyon Lane. One site will be difficult because both the old system lines and the new lines occupy the same small space while the other site will require a small retaining wall.

Property owners affected by this work will be contacted within the next few weeks and the work fully explained.

Every attempt will be made to have the work complete as quickly as possible but before June 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Water bills to include return envelopes**

Thanks to a suggestion from Willow Terrace resident Robert Souza, your next water bill will include a return envelope.

### **Speaking of water bills ...**

One of the Board's least pleasant tasks is reminding property owners of overdue water bills. This is an ongoing problem that takes the Board's time and adds to the cost of everyone's water through increased postage and accounting expenses and legal costs when collection actions become necessary. Unfortunately the Board has been forced to take legal action in the past and is currently beginning another legal action.

As this newsletter goes to press there are 10 overdue accounts totaling nearly \$5,000. This is a huge burden for a company of our size and one that can't be ignored.

Please pay your water bill promptly.

### **www.palominolakes.org updated**

For much of the past year, updates to our web site, [www.palominolakes.org](http://www.palominolakes.org), have been sporadic. When former webmaster Brian Corzilius left the community last year we had no immediate replacement and struggled to maintain the site. Rick Corriea has recently begun to manage the site and things are improving. Take a

look at the website and send comments and suggestions to our new webmaster.

If you have HTML experience and are interested in an unpaid job that benefits your community, let Rick know.

### **Annual Meeting scheduled**

The Palomino Lakes Annual Meeting is scheduled for 10 AM, Saturday May 6 at the Veterans Memorial Hall, 205 West First Street.

The annual meeting will include election of officers for the Property Owners Association and the Mutual Water Company. While Board salaries are low (zero) the fringe benefits are great – you learn how the community works and get to meet and help your neighbors. Please consider making this contribution to our community. Nominations may be submitted to any existing POA or MWC Board member. Self nominations are encouraged.

Remember that the voting privileges of property owners with overdue water bills or annual POA or MWC assessments are suspended.

### **Board Members**

Howard Blake, President, 894-4709, [hcblake3@comcast.net](mailto:hcblake3@comcast.net)

Lee Tolbert, Vice-President, 894-4582, [j-l\\_tolbert@comcast.net](mailto:j-l_tolbert@comcast.net)

Rick Corriea, Secretary/Treasurer, 894-0432, [rmcorriea@comcast.net](mailto:rmcorriea@comcast.net)

### **Emergencies**

Clover Alarm, 445-2951