

PINERY PIPELINE FEBRUARY 2025



Please join us at our District Office for our monthly Board Meetings typically held at 6:00pm on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Our Upcoming Board Meetings will be held at 6:00pm on Wednesday, February 19th and Wednesday, March 19th.

From your Board of Directors

Now that we are through 2024, I wanted to stop and take an opportunity to look back at what the past year has looked like from a water usage perspective. District staff and the Board regularly hear inquiries from customers revolving around their water usage. Typically, this is in the context of trying to understand a bill or possibly prompted by an issue, such as a water leak. It can be challenging to evaluate your own usage without additional context. Your bill allows you to compare your usage in the current year to the prior year, but it doesn't help you understand how your water usage may compare to your neighbors throughout the District. To hopefully provide a little of this context, the table below summarizes the proportion of households whose usage topped out in each of our billing tiers for every month in 2024. It also includes the average gallons used per household across the entire District.

Month	Tier 1 – (<5k gal)	Tier 2 (5k-20k)	Tier 3 (20k-30k)	Tier 4 (30k-50k)	Tier 5 (>50k)	Average usage in gallons
January	76%	24%	<1%	<1%	<1%	4,431
February	81%	19%	<1%	<1%	0%	3,982
March	75%	24%	<1%	<1%	0%	5,031
April	65%	32%	2%	<1%	<1%	5,830
May	24%	55%	11%	8%	2%	13,897
June	9%	34%	22%	24%	10%	26,756
July	8%	32%	21%	28%	12%	28,420
August	11%	43%	22%	19%	6%	22,743
September	11%	42%	22%	19%	6%	22,360
October	21%	55%	15%	8%	2%	14,985
November	76%	24%	<1%	<1%	0%	4,397
December	74%	26%	<1%	<1%	0%	4,540

Interestingly the table shows that in the non-irrigating months (November – April) a significant majority of households used 5,000 or fewer gallons of water. It also shows that even during irrigation season (May – October) the average usage peaked in July at 28,000 gallons and roughly 60% of households were billed for 30,000 or fewer gallons of

water in each of those months. These numbers also help to illustrate the substantial difference between water usage during the two halves of the year. The average water delivered per household in July is nearly seven times the water delivered in February.

What does that mean? It means that the District is required to maintain a significant amount of infrastructure that is only needed or that is not being fully utilized for at least half of the year. If over time we can reduce that difference — known as peaking — by reducing use in those summer months, it



benefits all of us. This is through a reduction in the need for the District to construct additional infrastructure that may only be needed or fully utilized to meet demand during a small part of the year. If you are interested in reducing your own water use, I encourage you to visit the District's website and explore those various programs and incentives being offered.

Josh Connors, Director, Pinery Water and Wastewater District



Are your Pipes Ready for Winter?

Winter is in full swing now and each year the District receives calls from homeowners with no water or a pipe breaking due to freezing temps. Here are some tips to help prevent and thaw frozen pipes at home and avoid pipes breaking.

How to Prevent Frozen Pipes

- Keep garage doors closed if there are water supply lines in the garage.

- Open kitchen and bathroom cabinet doors to allow warmer air to circulate around the plumbing. Be sure to move any harmful cleaners and household chemicals up out of the reach of children.
- When the weather is very cold outside, let the cold-water drip from the faucet served by exposed pipes. Running water through the pipe - even at a trickle - helps prevent pipes from freezing.
- Keep the thermostat set to the same temperature both during the day and at night. By suspending the use of lower nighttime temperatures, you may incur a higher heating bill, but you can prevent a much more costly repair job if pipes freeze and burst.
- If you are going away during cold weather, leave the heat on in your home, set to a temperature no lower than 55° F.

How to Thaw Frozen Pipes

- If you turn on a faucet and only a trickle comes out, suspect a frozen pipe. Likely places for frozen pipes include exterior walls or where your water service enters your home through the foundation.
- Keep the faucet open. As you treat the frozen pipe and the frozen area begins to melt, water will begin to flow through the frozen area. Running water through the pipe will help melt ice in the pipe.
- Apply heat to the section of pipe using an electric heating pad wrapped around the pipe, an electric hair dryer, a portable space heater (kept away from flammable materials), or by wrapping pipes with towels soaked in hot water. Do not use a blowtorch, kerosene or propane heater, charcoal stove, or other open flame device.
- Apply heat until full water pressure is restored. If you are unable to locate the frozen area, if the frozen area is not accessible, or if you cannot thaw the pipe, call a licensed plumber.
- Check all the other faucets in your home to find out if you have additional frozen pipes. If one pipe freezes, others may freeze, too.

Reference: <http://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/winter-storm/frozen-pipes>

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