

## DID YOU KNOW?

### Miles of Pipe

There are 2.2 million miles of water pipes across the United States. More than 148,000 municipal water systems supply 39 billion gallons of water each day to homes and businesses nationwide. Skagit PUD operates over 600 miles of pipeline and produces between 8 to 9 million gallons of water daily, with higher production during the summer months.

### Water Essential for Ag Productivity

According to the U.S. Geological Survey, agriculture, specifically irrigation, is the largest single consumer of water in the United States. This sector accounts for the majority of water used in the country, making up around 80-90% of total consumptive water use.



### Salty Seas

Of all the earth's water, 97% is salt water found in oceans and seas.



### Rate Increase 2025

All bills generated January 1, 2025, and thereafter include a 5% rate increase. The increase is approximately \$7.12 per billing cycle (60 days) for the typical residential customer.

The amount of water you consume is measured in cubic feet. One cubic foot of water equals 7.48 gallons. Water rates are billed in units of 100 cubic feet of water used (1 unit equals 748 gallons).

## Warm Up to Winter Water and Energy Savings

**T**HIS WINTER, whether you call a house, apartment, or condo "home," kitchens and laundry rooms are a great place to start saving water, as well as the energy needed to heat that water. In addition to fixture and appliance retrofits, simple behavior changes can help save water used for washing clothes, cleaning dishes, and cooking during the colder months. These tips will help you melt away high utility costs and give water and energy waste the cold shoulder.

### In the Kitchen

Whether you are cooking for guests or cleaning up after, you can find ways to save everywhere, including the kitchen sink:

- Scrape pots, pans, and plates before loading them into the dishwasher instead of rinsing them. Modern dishwashers can thoroughly clean dishes that have had food scraped off — the wash cycle and detergent will take care of the rest.

### In the Laundry Room

About 90% of the energy the washing machine uses during laundry goes towards heating the water. Using cold water to wash some of your clothes eliminates this energy, making your clothes and the planet happy! Decreasing your carbon footprint can be as easy as switching to cool water. Start your laundry list of savings with these tips:

- Set your washing machine to use cold water rather than hot or warm water. This can cut energy usage per load almost in half and save you money on utility bills!
- Wash only full loads of laundry in your washing machine, saving more than 3,400 gallons of water annually.
- Set your washing machine's water levels and load size appropriately for the amount of laundry you are washing.



*By design, modern washers are well equipped to handle cold water.*



*Dishwashers are generally more efficient than hand washing dishes.*

- Run the dishwasher only when full, and air-dry wet dishes when possible.
- If you don't have a dishwasher, fill the sink with a few gallons of soapy wash water, clean your dishes, and set them aside. Then, rinse them all together afterward. Hand washing one load of dishes can use 20 gallons of water, whereas water- and energy-efficient dishwashers use as little as 4 gallons. Over time, that's a big difference!

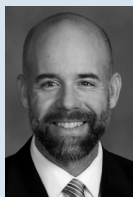
## Your **PUBLIC** Utility

Three Commissioners — Andrew Miller, Joe Lindquist, and Corrin Hamburg — elected by the residents of Skagit County, govern Skagit PUD. Each serves six-year terms on a nonpartisan basis.

The PUD Commissioners establish policy, approve budgets and expenditures, establish rates for services, retain the utility management, and provide oversight of the utility. PUDs are self-regulated and, as such, are not regulated by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission. Water service is provided on a non-profit basis, reflecting the actual cost of service.

As with any decision before the board, citizens have numerous opportunities to comment on the utility's actions. As elected Commissioners, they ensure that provided services are financially feasible and in the customer's best interests.

The Commissioners hold open public meetings on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 4:30 p.m. in the PUD's Aqua Room, where members of the public can observe and participate in decisions made by the board. The public may attend in person or via Zoom. Meeting agenda packets, audio recordings, and minutes are available at [www.SkagitPUD.org](http://www.SkagitPUD.org).



### **District No. 1**

#### **Andrew Miller**

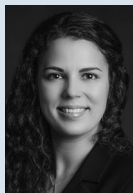
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### **District No. 2**

#### **Joe Lindquist**

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### **District No. 3**

#### **Corrin Hamburg**

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## 7 Steps to Avoid Frozen Pipes

Frozen and burst water pipes can ruin your whole day. The best strategy in combating the cold winter months is a defensive one. By taking preventive measures to winterize your home, you can not only save money but also save water and reduce energy usage.

1. Know what areas of your home — like basements, crawl spaces, unheated rooms, and outside walls — are most vulnerable to freezing.
2. Search for pipes that are uninsulated or pass through unheated areas. Wrap them with pipe insulation available at hardware stores.
3. If you have heat tape installed on exposed pipes, ensure the tape is still operational and installed according to the manufacturer's specifications. Inspect the tape for cracks or fraying.
4. Everyone in your household should know where to locate the main water shut-off valve. Check the valve annually to ensure it's working correctly. If a pipe freezes or bursts, shut off the water immediately.
5. Covering or wrapping your outdoor faucets is a simple job that can save you significant expenses, both in water and plumbing fees.
6. Turn off and drain irrigation systems.
7. If no one is home for an extended period during extreme winter weather, consider turning off your main valve altogether and hiring a plumber to drain your system. That way, if your furnace quits working, there will be no water in your pipes to freeze.



## Winter Good Time to Plan for Water-Wise Landscaping

For customers interested in switching out high-water-use plants for water-wise landscaping, winter months can be a good time of the year to plant.

- **Less disruption to existing plants.** With many plants dormant in winter, you can make significant changes to your landscape without impacting the current growing season.
- **Better visibility.** Bare branches and less foliage provide a clearer view of your yard, allowing for better planning and design considerations.
- **Optimal planting conditions.** Winter rain can help newly planted drought-tolerant plants establish their root systems effectively, reducing the need for extra watering once warmer weather arrives.
- **Time to research and consult professionals.** The slower winter pace allows you to thoroughly research water-efficient plant options and consult with landscape designers or nurseries to develop a comprehensive plan.