

FALL 2026 NEWSLETTER



Hard for me to believe how fast the summer season has passed. A little smokey for sure, but mostly great boating weather. Visitors have now evacuated, boats are coming out of the water, firewood is in the shed, and us full-timers are settling in, waiting for snow (or maybe not!). If you're a part-timer, please be sure to leave the sewer pump switch on in your electric panel.

DEQ Inspection. Last month, the Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ) sent an inspector out to our treatment facility located above Bottle Bay Road to see how we're doing.



IDEQ inspector Josh Willson walks by polishing treatment lagoon with Bob Hansen (middle) and Stacy, both of Water Systems Mgt, our licensed operator.



Inspecting our irrigation pump controls and activity records. The wastewater in the polishing lagoon is treated with chlorine and then sprayed in the surrounding forest.



Irrigation Pipe



Sprinkler Head



Monitoring Well

DEQ is particularly concerned with land application. We've laid irrigation pipe throughout the forest, and the treated wastewater is periodically sprayed during the summer months. The volume of wastewater, chlorine additive and timing of application are carefully controlled, and the soil is monitored through the wells strategically placed on our property. Bob Hansen's team records what days during the month that spraying has occurred, the volume of wastewater released each time, the

air temperature, precipitation, and other factors. These various factors affect nitrogen and phosphorus loading in the soil. Our DEQ permit specifies limits, and we're required to keep and report on phosphorus and nitrogen levels as well as our spraying activity.



Effluent from our collection system (septic tanks) is pumped up to this aeration lagoon where sunlight and oxygen drive the biological decomposition of organic waste. DEQ looks for rips in the liner. We're good! This picture was taken in mid-September when the lagoon is down to its lowest level.

Two Asks of DEQ. Two very important things are happening between the District and DEQ. First, we've requested a 3-year extension of our Land Application Reuse Permit. Renewals cost the District thousands of dollars. We should be holding a 10-year permit but after our major upgrade to the treatment facilities – the upgrade for which you're paying \$60 quarterly on the loan – DEQ only gave us a 7-year permit. Why? Who knows! Second, we're seeking DEQ approval of a "Preliminary Engineering

Report" drafted by our engineering consultant with modifications to our treatment plan and our Residential System Requirements. All this to ensure we're in compliance with current regulations. And importantly, to allow the District to continue approving Building Location Permits and sewer installations instead of the DEQ bureaucracy. Why not let DEQ do it? Because we know that the DEQ approval process would be very costly for our homeowners and the delay in getting new homes permitted would be intolerable. We're optimistic we'll get DEQ approval for both asks.

Save a Buck. You'll note that you may have a one-dollar additional charge on your quarterly invoice. The Board voted to add this charge to those District members that still receive invoices through the mail. If you elect to receive your quarterly invoice by email, there's no charge. So, **SAVE A BUCK! Authorize us to email your invoice.** Email an okay-dokey to susan@plattecpa.com

Payment Portal. Even better, go entirely paperless. Check out the payment portal on the District website bottlebaydistrict.org. Click "Pay My Bill." You'll find options for payment that many find more convenient than writing and mailing checks.

FY 2027 Budget. The Board has adopted the fiscal year 2027 budget, with no increase in user fees. Our capital improvement program will continue as planned. We also completed all 2026 projects this summer and expect to finish under budget.

Bill Berg, District President
billb@bbsewer.org