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MUNICIPAL  
CORPORATION  
AND POLITICAL  
SUBDIVISION OF  
THE STATE OF  
COLORADO

**Servicing Wildernest  
property owners in  
the unincorporated  
area of Summit  
County, CO with:**

- Water & Sewer
- Road Maintenance
- Snow Plowing
- Storm Drainage
- Covenant Enforcement
- Pedestrian Path
- Architectural Review

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Inside This Issue	Page
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Water Leaks	1
Rate Increase and Rate Study	2
Leaking Toilets - The Unnoticed Water Vampire	2
Board of Director Elections	2
Infrastructure Updates	3
Short Term Rentals, Sales Tax Collections	3
Snow Plowing & Winter Maintenance	4
What Causes Sewer Backups	4

# Buffalo Mountain Metropolitan District

## BMMD

### Servicing the Wildernest & Cortina Ridge Community

#### Winter 2022 Newsletter

### Water Leak Repairs & Responsibilities

Buffalo Mountain Metropolitan District (BMMD) is responsible for maintaining and replacing water and sewer mains throughout the Wildernest service area, while property owners are responsible for maintaining and performing repairs to personal property water and sewer service lines and related infrastructure which runs underground from the District main connection all the way into a home. This article provides helpful tips to maintain personal property infrastructure, what to do in case of a water leak, and financial responsibilities.

Visit BMMD's website for more detailed information, complete Codes and Regulations, and for recommended repair and maintenance contractors <https://bmmd.colorado.gov>. If you need assistance, please call BMMD at (970) 513-1300.

**Interior Leaks, Shutoff Valve** - The interior shutoff valve is usually located near the water meter where the water line enters the building in a crawl space, mechanical room, or garage etc. Make sure to turn the valve on/off at least once a year to keep it operational.

**Exterior Leaks, Curb Stop Valve** - The exterior curb stop shutoff valve is usually located near the property line at the street and has a 3" round metal lid that is normally flush with the ground. If your property service line has a leak outside, you will need to use this curb stop valve to shut off the water. Operating the valve requires a special metal "key" to turn the valve. The valve itself is around nine feet (9') deep so you'll need a plumber or BMMD's help to shut off the water. Protect this infrastructure! Marking the valve with a snow stake or delineator will help find it in the winter and keep it identified if repaving the driveway. Please contact BMMD if you need help finding or testing your curb valve and we will GPS the coordinates and save it in our GIS mapping system for future reference. Make sure to turn the valve on/off periodically to keep it operational.

**Exterior Leaks, Investigation & Repairs** - Once an exterior water leak is discovered and reported to BMMD, the water department will immediately investigate to determine the source of the leak. If the investigation finds a leak on a private service line, the property owner must repair immediately. If satisfactory progress toward repairing said leak has not been initiated by the property owner after notice, BMMD may shut off water service if there is excessive water loss or until the leak has been repaired. If the property curb stop valve is broken and water is unable to be shut off, BMMD is authorized to immediately repair the private line leak and charge the full cost to the property owner.

**Tips** - Property owners can reduce liability of emergency repair costs by making sure the property has a working curb valve. Knowing the location of your underground service lines may save you thousands of dollars in excavation fees. Every property owner should have a copy of the property site plan showing the location of the water/sewer service lines. This will be a valuable tool in an emergency situation if the plumber or excavator knows the location of underground service lines.

**Unknown Leak Source** - If BMMD is unable to determine during the investigation whether a leak, break, failure or other condition exists within a District main or within a personal property service line, the BMMD is authorized to immediately perform an emergency repair. All nearby property owners will be notified of the leak in the neighborhood and if the source of the leak, break or failure is caused by a personal property service infrastructure, all such emergency repair costs will be charged to the property owner.

**Financial Responsibilities** - Exterior service line leaks can be very costly, especially in winter. Costs can include but are not limited to: Excavation equipment, labor for all repair personnel, road or driveway repaving, revegetation, etc. Costs to repair a private property service line leak costs on average between \$9k - \$18k in Summit County. In some cases, duplex properties share service lines so repair costs will be shared. Larger HOA properties share one master line so costs will be paid by the HOA. Unfortunately, exterior infrastructure is NOT covered under homeowners insurance and must be paid out-of-pocket by the property owner.

## 2022 Service Increase & Rate Study

For the past ten years, BMMD has worked hard to address numerous aging infrastructure problems. In early 2021, BMMD hired engineering firm SGM, Inc. to conduct a comprehensive water and sewer service rate study and long-range asset management plan. It is a process that evaluates existing system conditions, maintenance demands, infrastructure repair and replacement needs, and ways in which to fund the needed updates over the next twenty years.

Until the rate study is completed in March 2022, BMMD must continue annual rate increases to meet rising maintenance, operations, and materials expenditures, including a 12% price increase by Xcel Energy. It is BMMD's goal to identify other funding sources such as grants or low interest rate loans to help finance costs associated with other required capital infrastructure project repairs and replacements in order to ease the financial burden on the customer. Outlined below are the new 2022 water/sewer rates. The 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2022 bills will be mailed the first week of April.

Service Area	Quarterly Water	Quarterly Sewer	2022 Quarterly Total
Wilderness	\$60.00	\$110.00	\$170.00
Cortina Ridge	\$90.00	\$165.00	\$255.00

BMMD is committed to providing Wilderness customers with quality reliable service. BMMD strives to maintain the delicate balance between financial stability, reliable operations, and delivering services to customers at the best value. BMMD will report on the results of the rate study once it becomes available.

## Leaking Toilets The Unnoticed Water Vampire

A few years back, BMMD upgraded to an Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) technology. This was not simply for billing and water use monitoring but for the critical and timely detection of wasteful water leaks. This technology has proved to be critical tool by reducing high water bills and saving millions of gallons of water annually.

On a recent daily check, a residence was noted to have a sudden and unusual jump in water usage by over 3,500 gallons per day by a single townhome. While there is an expected variability in use with increased guests and events like a hot tub fill, a sudden and large jump in water usage usually means a water leak of some sort. The property owner was contacted by email, (another good reason for BMMD to have current contact information on file) and the out-of-area property owner contacted their local property management company. The property was inspected, and a running toilet was identified as the culprit. The meter report confirmed the leak to have stopped and the issue was resolved.

While a running toilet may seem like an insignificant problem, these leaks can account for thousands of gallons a day being wastefully pumped from the ground, treated, pumped up to underground water tanks in the district, fed to residences and ultimately flowing down to the wastewater treatment plant on the north end of Silverthorne.

The leaking toilets are usually a very simple fix with the problem usually being tied to the flapper or the water valve in the tank not shutting off. If you detect a running toilet and are unable to address it immediately, we would like you to shut off the valve supplying water to the toilet until the leak can be fixed. This valve is located at the base of the toilet.

Over the past six months, BMMD has identified and resolved thirty-eight (38) leaks. Most were attributed to leaking or running toilets. We must all do our part for water conservation in the arid West. We appreciate your cooperation and help in saving water.

## Call For Nominations BMMD Board of Director Elections

The next Board of Director regular election will be held on May 3, 2022. At that time three (3) directors will be elected to serve 3-year terms. In order to be a candidate for the Board of Directors or vote in District elections, a person must be registered to vote in the State of Colorado and

1. a resident of the district; OR
2. own taxable real or personal property within the district; OR
3. obligated to pay taxes under a contract to purchase taxable property within the district.

In order for an individual's name to appear on the ballot for the election, a self-nomination and acceptance form must be filed with the Designated Election Official (DEO), Shellie Duplan, on or before 5:00 p.m. on Friday, February 25, 2022.

Self-nomination and Acceptance forms are available upon request from the DEO at the District offices, 106 Adams Avenue, Silverthorne, Colorado or by email to [shellie@bmmmd.org](mailto:shellie@bmmmd.org). An Affidavit of Intent to be a Write-In Candidate must be submitted to the office of the DEO, by the close of business on Monday, 2/28/22. Call the DEO Shellie Duplan if you have any questions at 970-513-1300.

## Infrastructure Updates

High elevation and extreme climates are tough on water and sewer infrastructure causing deterioration at a much faster pace. BMMD is actively addressing aging infrastructure by planning and executing improvement projects to the water, sewer, drainage and roads throughout the Wildernest community on an annual basis. However, additional improvements are needed to sustain functionality and promote longevity. Following is a list of projects completed over the past several years and current projects planned for 2022. This list does not include the regular on-going daily, weekly, and monthly maintenance activities.

**New Tank 2** - BMMD successfully completed the construction of a new 250,000 gallon water Tank, pump station, and 1,500' of new water main piping.

**Tank 3 Rehabilitation** – Completed the exterior rehabilitation and re-coating of this 50-year-old buried steel water tank in Fall 2021. Interior work will be conducted in 2022.

**Water Intake Plant** - BMMD is working with Xcel energy to facilitate rebates and on-going savings once new pump control equipment is installed in 2022.

**Wells** – Drought can cause stress to the water table and aquifer. BMMD must maximize well pumping efficiency and will install equipment in 2022 to help reduce pump energy demands and increase the accuracy of water produced.

**Pressure Reducing Valves (PRV) Project** - BMMD has installed two underground automatic fire flow pressure reducing valve (PRV) vaults. This upgrade to the water distribution system provides automatic fire flow functionality rather than relying on manual operation. BMMD is planning to install two more PRV vaults over the next several years.

**Wastewater Improvements** - BMMD regularly monitors the sewage collection system by conducting bi-annual camera and cleaning of the sewer main. In 2020, BMMD replaced approximately 2035 linear feet of 8" sewer main pipe, replaced 7 manholes, reconnected 9 existing sewer services and completed wetland restoration.

**Emergency Portable Generator** - Should there be a power failure longer than two days, there will not be sufficient water capacity to meet customer demands without the ability to pump water which requires power. BMMD's purchase of a portable generator enables water supply reliability during emergencies by providing backup power in the event of a power outage.

**Telemetry & SCADA Upgrades** - Utilities use telemetry monitoring to keep track of the water/sewer network. BMMD is upgrading 20-year-old hardware and software to make the system more reliable and efficient.

**Roadside Drainage** – BMMD is working to convert a section of open ditch storm sewer drainage system to a piped, below ground system to promote road safety.

**Main Valve Replacement** - BMMD continues to replace water main valves throughout the District. This on-going maintenance program will help the District isolate emergency water main breaks and keep more customers in water when leaks occur.

**Replacing Old Fire Hydrants** - To safeguard the public by ensuring fire hydrants are accessible and fully functioning, BMMD is conducting a fire hydrant replacement program. This program replaces old fire hydrants with new, long-lasting equipment which offers enhanced flow rates to improve fire-fighting capability. This vital work is needed to ensure that emergency services personnel have easy access to hydrants with sufficient water pressure and flow rates to fight a fire.

## Short Term Rentals

### Are You Collecting & Remitting The Correct Amount of Sales Tax?

Short-term rentals (STR) in Colorado are subject to tax, including Wildernest. Are you or your hosting platform collecting the right amount of sales tax for your short-term-rental (STR) home, including the 4% Wildernest sales tax that started on 7/1/21? **The current total sales tax rate you should be collecting and remitting is 10.375%.**

The Colorado Department of Revenue (DOR) requires STR hosts to collect applicable short-term rental sales taxes from their guests and remit them directly to the DOR. BMMD has been told by multiple property owners that some hosting platforms are not collecting or remitting the new 4% Wildernest sales tax to the DOR on their behalf.

The DOR has informed BMMD that Airbnb and VRBO hosting platform sites are obligated by State statute to collect and remit all sales tax administered by the DOR on your behalf. They are considered a Marketplace Facilitator and no special agreement is required for them to collect and remit on your behalf.

If Airbnb & VRBO have informed you they are not collecting the new 4% Buffalo Mountain Metropolitan District sales tax, you need to contact the Colorado Department of Revenue at: 303-866-4850 or 303-238-7378, or email [dor\\_taxpayerservice@state.co.us](mailto:dor_taxpayerservice@state.co.us).

BMMD highly recommends STR owners check your current sales tax schedule on your hosting platform to verify accuracy and correct tax compliance. The DOR is becoming more aggressive in their efforts to identify individuals and businesses not in compliance with tax laws. Failure to comply with state and local tax laws may result in late fees, interest payments, and in extreme cases, legal action by DOR.

**Mailing Address**

PO Box 2430  
Silverthorne, CO 80498

**Physical Address**

106 Adams Ave.  
Silverthorne, CO 80498  
Phone: 970-513-1300

**District Manager**

Shellie Duplan  
shellie@bmmd.org

**Operations Manager**

Will Yates  
will@bmmd.org

**Bmmd.colorado.gov**

**After Hours  
Water and Sewer  
Emergency Services**

For immediate assistance with BMMD water or sewer emergencies please contact Water Solutions at (970) 262-0217 or call BMMD Manager Cell at (970) 409-0270.

**Buffalo Mountain Metropolitan District**

*Providing Water/Sewer/Road & Covenant services to the Wilderdest Community for over 50 years*

**Snow Plowing & Winter Maintenance**

Snow removal is a top priority for BMMD in winter. Our snow plow staff is dedicated to keeping Wilderdest roads clear and safe as possible. Residents of Wilderdest must also do their part by complying with the following Summit County winter maintenance laws:

- No parking in the street or right-of-way. Parking any vehicle and/or trailer in the street or right of way is prohibited and subject to ticketing and/or towing.
- Do not snow blow, plow or shovel snow from your driveway out onto the road, right-of-way or drainage ditch.
- Snow removed from a private driveway or parking area must be stored on your own property at least 10 feet from the paved edge of the road.
- Don't let children play in roadside snow banks.
- Do not walk in the street.
- Put your trash and recycling bins out on the morning of your collection day, not the night before and remember to bring your bins back inside the same day.
- Mark your infrastructure. (driveway culverts, driveways, outside water shut off or curb stop valve, sewer cleanouts, etc.)

Snow removal operations for county roadways utilizes the right of way area for snow storage. Snow removal operations during a storm, or the clean-up that begins when the storm abates, may result in a berm of snow across private driveways or encroachments to county roads. Homeowners and residents are responsible for maintaining their own driveways entrances and parking areas.

**What Usually Causes Sewer Backups?**

Much like other home systems, you never think about your sewer pipes until they don't work properly. Knowing the causes of sewer backups can help you troubleshoot your home's drain system and determine whether you can make a quick fix yourself or if you need professional help.

The most common sign of a potential sewer service line back-up inside a building is the lowest elevation toilet or floor drain begins to backflow sewage water. If a sewer backup or issue occurs, stop using water in the building immediately. Contact a plumber to determine the source of the blockage. In most cases a plumber will be able to snake the service line through a cleanout at the home. In extreme cases, tree roots or deteriorated/collapsed sewer pipe will cause blockages.

If you or the plumber are unable to determine the source of the backup, call BMMD's sewer operator WSI at (970) 262-0217 to help investigate further. Camera technology may be needed to determine the source of the problem. BMMD is responsible for District owned sewer mains and the property owner is responsible for private sewer service lines.

Helpful Tips – 1) Know where your cleanout is and the condition, 2) Don't put any trash or food waste down the drains, 3) Don't pour grease down drains, 4) Use grease-fighting dish detergents to break up blockages, 5) Don't flush your old medications, and 6) Don't landscape over sewer service lines.