



# Beachcomber Brief Edition



HMC Newsletter

December 2011

*In the past, the Beachcomber has been published nine times per year, with no issues in October, December, or February. The HMC Board has decided to publish a brief edition in each of these months in order to stress a few current items that the Membership should be aware of.*

## **Herron Island Water Utility (HIWU) Information** **a MUST READ for all members**

Did you know that in November we held the first Board meeting of the Herron Island Water Utility (HIWU)? We did! The Board meeting minutes can be found online at [HerronIsland.org](http://HerronIsland.org) on the home page in the NEW water section. Here are some other key details to know.

- **The Herron Island Water Utility is a non-profit corporation fully owned by the Members of HMC Management.**
- **The Utility is a self-balancing entity where water-related costs are supported entirely by water-related revenues.**
- **Any loan made for improvement or repair to the Herron Island Water System will be secured by the assets of HMC Management and, as such, will be the collective responsibility of all Members of HMC Management.**
- **Documentation of Resolutions, Articles of Incorporation, Financial Policy, and minutes of the Utility Board Meetings are posted on line at [www.herronisland.org](http://www.herronisland.org) on the home page in the new water section. Be informed. Be sure to check it out.**
- **At this time, the members of the Water Utility Board are the same as the members of the HMC Management Board although this could change in the future. During the next election cycle, Members will be voting separately for Herron Island Water Utility Board Members and HMC Management Board Members.**
- **Beginning January 14, 2012, the Water Utility Board Meeting will take place at 10:00A.M. followed immediately by the regular HMC Board Meeting.**

**The proposed Water Utility Bylaws are posted online for Members comments before they go to Membership vote in February. All comments may be sent to the Island Manager and the Board by January 5, 2011.**

## *Board Talk. Ask the Board they answer.*

The Board likes to hear from you.  
Here are some recent member questions with answers.

**1. Who were all the guests on our island on December 9th?**

Thirty-six Water System contractors from twenty seven companies interested in bidding our Island Water Project came for a pre-bid tour and question and answer meeting. The meeting was led by Jester Purtteman, NWS Project Engineer and Claudia Ellsworth, Island Manager. Bids will close on January 13, 2012.

**2. Why do I have to pay my water bill before I use December water?**

The Water Utility is charging membership a flat rate during this period of time before the distribution system has been replaced and meters installed. To save costs, quarterly billing was established and is to be paid similar to HMC assessments that are billed ahead. Once meters are installed, water usage will be billed after water is consumed.

**3. Why do I have to pay a water bill for my vacant lot that has not been billed in the past?**

In the past, all assessable unit Owners have been paying a water bill as part of the general assessments; this cost was itemized as "Water" and was included in the HMC general budget that members vote on each year in June. Beginning budget year 2011/2012 the Water Utility is charging a flat rate for all assessable units until such time as construction is complete and meters are installed and being read.

**4. When will I be able to pay my full share of Capital Costs for the up-coming project?**

HMC allows pre-payment for any of your assessments or bills except for this "one time only pre-payment option". Until the exact dollar amount for the entire project is complete and costs calculated, a member's portion of those costs cannot be determined. If a member has sold their property, the capital costs stay with the property address. An estimate of \$6,000 could be used during negotiations at closing. Remember, paying in full is only an option, not a requirement. If not paid up front, the capital costs will be recovered over a 40 year repayment period as part of the water bill to current, and future, owners of the property.

**5. Why did I incur a late fee on my last water bill when it was paid on December 1st? The bill is for three months so why don't I have until the end of the three months to pay?**

Your water bill is due by the end of the month in which it was billed. In this case, the bill was sent on Nov. 1st and due by November 30th. We adopted this rule to be consistent with the same rules we operate HMC Management. This helps with budgeting because water expenses are paid monthly.



### Air Quality Burn Bans

Although there are no Air Quality Burn Bans currently in effect as of December 15th, there have been several declared so far this month. HMC is on the notification list of the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency for the declaration and lifting of bans and will post the notices, including applicable restrictions, on the home page of our website ([herronisland.org](http://herronisland.org)). Please check the site frequently.



### North Beach Construction

The North Beach Construction project is on schedule and work will begin very soon. Bids will be opened December 22nd. The noise and vibration from the pile drivers can be annoying, but will only last a few days. During this time we are providing for the construction activity to occur between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. which coincides with the Island rules and the Pierce County Code. We want to notify Members that because of time restraints the work may continue into the evenings. To meet the permit deadlines this project must be completed by March 2. Even though driving the piles will take less than a week there are other aspects to this project that need to be completed to meet the deadline. Check the [www.herronisland.org](http://www.herronisland.org) where the days and dates for construction will be posted.

#### Reminder:

**Beginning January 14, 2012, the Water Utility Board Meeting will start at 10:00 a.m. and the HMC Monthly Board meeting will begin immediately following the Water Utility Board Meeting. We are doing this in an effort to give Carolyn time to prepare the approved checks so they are ready for Board Member signatures at the end of the meetings.**

**The proposed Water Utility Bylaws are posted online for Member comments before they go out to the Membership for a vote. They are located on the front page of the website under the "Island Water" box. Any comments should be sent back to the Island Manager and the Board by January 5<sup>th</sup>. The Board will vote to approve them at the January meeting and they will go out to the Membership for a vote in February. If you do not have online access you can request a paper copy from the office.**



## Emergency Preparedness Tip of the Month Look at Your Hot Water Tank!

In spite of the fact that we are all concentrating on the holiday festivities, your Emergency Preparedness Committee is remembering those out-of-focus issues that are of major importance.

This month's focus is on our Hot Water Tanks.

### Hot Water Tanks!?! What?

The mundane, unrecognized hot water tank functions 24/7 and is taken for granted. How many gallons of water does your tank hold? Have you considered that these gallons of water are of tremendous value after an earthquake? This is wonderfully clean water to drink and cook with. Unless...it's flooded your home or the tank itself has fallen over and maybe started a fire that destroyed your home.

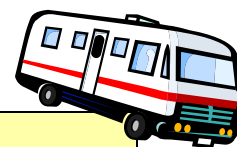
Here's a novel holiday gift idea. Strap that Water Tank securely to protect your home and family. Here's how to do it:

- Use heavy-gauge metal strapping, rather than plumber's tape which is not strong enough.
- Strap both the top and the bottom.
- Make it snug. Overlap the strapping.
- Use several 1/4" x 3" or longer screws and oversized washers on studs. For concrete, use expansion bolts instead of screws.
- Use flexible connectors.

Commercially available kits can be purchased at most hardware stores and come complete with all you need.

**Please join us at our next meeting on January 14, 12:30 in the Community Center. See you there.**

To see the December Island Manager Report, Winter Ferry Schedule, and other documents normally in the Beachcomber, please go to the HMC Website at [herronisland.org](http://herronisland.org).



## Opportunity To Rent Your Property

There is a potential opportunity for Islanders to rent either their home, RV or RV parking spot with septic and water connections. During the water system construction workers may be looking to rent on island versus commuting. If you are interested in renting out your property and make a few extra dollars please send an email to the office with your contact information and what you have available. Send it as soon as possible. The office will provide the information to the contractor. From this point on any transactions that may take place will be between you and the potential renting party. The anticipated construction will begin March 1<sup>st</sup>.

## Volunteers

**We have several volunteer opportunities available:**

### **Roads Committee:**

With the absence of Al Moren we are looking for Committee Members to help until he is able to return. Currently Al is chairman of the committee, but he has no members to help him. Committee members would be working with Dick Mowry to make sure that potholes are filled, downed trees removed from the roads and helping to keep the roads in the best condition possible. Members of this committee can be either HMC Members or Residents.

### **Volunteer Firefighter Team:**

Two Members have recently expressed interest in forming a volunteer firefighter team, but we need three to four before we can approach Fire District #16 about training. If any Members are interested please contact the office.

**Other Committees looking for volunteers are Rules and Emergency Preparedness.** To be on the Rules committee you must be a Member of HMC. To be on the Emergency Preparedness committee you can be a Member or a Resident. If you are interested, contact the Island Manager and the Board.