

# Water Lines

MountPleasantWaterworks.com



MOUNT PLEASANT WATERWORKS

January 2010

## Mount Pleasant Waterworks Rates Increase 9%

Mount Pleasant Waterworks customers will notice an increase in their monthly water and wastewater bill as the result of a 9% rate increase. The new rate will be reflected on monthly bills with water usage after January 1, 2010. The 9% rate increase is in water and wastewater basic facility charges and volumetric rates. The adjustment amounts to about a \$3.97 increase for the average household using 5,000 gallons per month.

“At the beginning of the fiscal year we avoided raising rates through major cutbacks in our budget including no salary increases and our first ever reduction in staff. We refused a rate increase in June 2009 because of the financial hardship being felt by so many of our customers. However, reduced water consumption because of the economic conditions and wet weather has caused our revenues to be off even more than we projected six months ago. We have made every effort to save money, even reduced our debt payments, but it has not been enough to correct our financial situation,” stated Dr. William Golightly, Commission Chair. He continued, “The budget problems have been made worse by the economic conditions essentially eliminating our collection of developer impact fees. Our next concern is the potential effect on our level of service to our customers if we cut staff even more. We are not willing to sacrifice the safety, availability, and quality of our drinking water and wastewater treatment.”

The new rate is needed to fund rising energy costs, increased expense of materials, supplies, operations, replacement of aging pipes and equipment, and to keep drinking water and the environment clean and safe. Without the rate increase, we would be in violation of a debt coverage requirement in our bond ordinances. Such a violation could reduce our credit rating and lead to even larger rate increases in the future.

“Mount Pleasant Waterworks is facing unprecedented economic challenges. Customer growth is slower than I have ever seen; in fact our number of active accounts has decreased. Throughout this year, we have- and will continue- to stay focused on what is best for our customers. We are not willing to lower the consistent level of service we provide our customers,” stated Clay Duffie, General Manager. “We will continue to implement as many cost saving ideas as possible, but we can only do so much to lower costs. We need water sales just like any business needs revenue to survive.”

Even with the increase, MPW customers still enjoy the lowest rates in Charleston County.

## Cover Your Irrigation System's Backflow Prevention Device this Winter

All irrigation meters are required to have backflow preventers installed to protect the public water system. Since these are above ground devices, they are particularly prone to freezing if not covered in the winter. If you haven't already, you need to do this now to prevent the costly expense of a burst pipe. Hardware or lawn irrigation supply stores have insulation in various forms that aesthetically enhance landscaping while protecting backflow preventers from freezing.



***The Mount Pleasant Waterworks Operations Center will be closed on Monday, January 18, 2010 for Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Please call 843-884-9626 in case of a water or wastewater emergency and on-call personnel will assist you.***



***The January Commission meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 19, 2010 due to the holiday.***

## Winter Water Trivia

1. At which of the following temperatures does water spontaneously freeze?

- A. 18° F      B. 32° F  
C. 0° F        D. -40° F



2. Which of the following is not affected by wind chill?

- A. Person      B. Dog  
C. Car Radiator D. Bird

3. What is the difference between sleet, hail, and freezing rain?

4. True or False: It must be 32° or colder for it to snow.

5. On the average, one inch of rain is equivalent to how many inches of snow?

- A. 10 inches    B. 1 inch  
C. 5 inches     D. A foot

6. Can it snow from clear skies?

7. What is more hazardous to trees and power lines?

- A. One inch of wet snow  
B. One inch of ice

The answers are in the far right column.

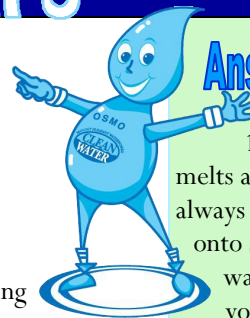
## Winter Trivia Facts

*El Nino* refers to a warming of the Pacific Equatorial waters and a slackening of the Trade Winds over those waters. *El Nino* weather patterns can influence our hurricane season.

*La Nina* refers to a cooling of the Pacific Equatorial waters in an increase in the Trade Winds over those waters. It is not uncommon for *La Nina* to follow a strong *El Nino*.

The MPW Commission Newsletter, Water Lines, is produced in-house and mailed to customers each month with bills and statements. Current and past issues can also be viewed and downloaded from our website.

## Save Money on Your Water Bill



### Reduce Hot Water Use

You can lower your water heating costs by using and wasting less hot water in your home.

#### Lower the thermostat on your water heater.

① For each 10° reduction in water temperature, you can save between 3%-5% in energy costs.

② Although some manufacturers set water heater thermostats at 140°F, most households usually only require them set at 120°F. Water heated at 140° F also poses a safety hazard-scalding.

③ Reducing your water temperature to 120°F also slows mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes. This helps your water heater last longer and operate at its maximum efficiency. (Flush the water heater every six to twelve months to remove sediment from the bottom of the tank.)

#### Other Water and Energy Savers

④ Insulate the water heater, as well as the hot-water pipes within a foot or so from the tank.

⑤ Switch off the hot-water system when going away for more than two weeks.

⑥ Install a timer and use off-peak power for an electric water heater. You can save on energy by installing a timer that turns it off at night when you don't use hot water and/or during your utility's peak demand times.

### GO PAPERLESS,

#### Sign Up For Electronic Billing This Month

Want to reduce your incoming mail and help keep your water bill at an affordable rate? Electronic billing through Mount Pleasant Waterworks' Easy Pay system is easy to use. After you sign up you will receive a monthly email when your bill is available to be viewed. Electronic billing saves MPW money and that keeps your water and wastewater bill the second lowest in the tri-county area.

To go paperless today, visit our website and sign up for Easy Pay Online.



**MPW Operations Center**  
**1619 Rifle Range Road**  
**Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.**  
**884-9626 (phone)**

**customerservice@mpwonline.com**  
**Email requests will be processed**  
**the following business day.**

## Answers to Winter Trivia

1. **Answer: D.** Ice always melts at 32° F, but water does not always freeze at 32° F. It must freeze onto something. However, at -40°, water freezes spontaneously. If you poured a cup of water out of a window with the air temperature outside at 40° F, the water would freeze before it struck the ground. You would be pretty cold too!

2. **Answer: C.** Wind chill is the combination of wind and temperature and is based on the rate of heat loss from exposed skin such as that of a person or animal. As the wind increases, heat is carried away from the body at an accelerated rate, driving the body temperature down. Wind chill has no effect on cars or other objects.

3. **Answer:** Hail is a chunk or stone of ice dropped from a thunderstorm. Sleet is frozen rain.



Freezing rain is liquid rain that freezes to a surface such as the road or a tree.

4. **Answer: False.** It has been known to snow with temperatures in the mid 40°s. Temperatures are below 32° F up in the clouds where the snow is forming.

5. **Answer: A.** 10 inches of snow melts down to about an inch of liquid rain.

6. **Answer: Yes.** Ice crystals sometimes fall from clear skies when temperatures are in the single digits or colder.

7. **Answer: B.** An inch of ice is heavier than wet snow and is hazardous enough to cause power lines and trees to break.