

# Hamilton Creek Metropolitan District

August 2003

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**Water Repairs** The process of completing the water repairs continues to move SLOWLY forward. Water from the new source (Hamilton Creek surface water) was first used in the system in mid-May. Using a surface water source has more extensive regulatory requirements than for the existing well water. One of the requirements is a turbidity meter that registers the clarity of the water. While the clarity is not in itself an indication of water quality problems, it is one tool used by the State of Colorado Health Department for water monitoring. The new pump station has two turbidity meters and one particle counter that record data into a computer used to run the water system. The purpose of the equipment in the new pump station is to remove turbidity. When all of the control equipment in the pump house was finally installed and ready for use in mid-May it was the same day that peak spring run off started. The higher turbidity levels and color in the water associated with spring run off made final calibration of the equipment impossible.

The District began using the new water source exclusively at the end of June. Early in July, continued problems with meeting turbidity levels caused the system to shut down at times. To maintain an adequate supply of water, we have been pumping a mix of water including the new source water and the existing ground water from the wells. This results in water that meets the fluoride MCL standard and also results in better water than previously provided solely from the wells. During this period water operator Matt Willitts has identified the turbidity problem as very fine particles from 0.2 microns to 1.0 micron in size. The filters used by the system provide filtration down to 2.0 microns. The reason for the 2.0 micron filter level is particulates above this level could carry contaminants not allowed in public water supplies. The very small particulates that are causing the current turbidity problem do not effect water quality or the safety of the water, but they certainly effect the ability of the District to pump at the frequency and volume needed.

The District believes it has solved the problem with the particulates by using a standard water treatment process of adding a small amount of polymer to cluster the small particles. This has no effect on the quality or taste of the water. However, once this was determined, there was a new problem with the intake of the water at the Creek. Work is currently ongoing to correct the intake problem. It is estimated that the correction of the intake will take two weeks. While every effort is being made to continue mixing the two water sources, it is possible more water from the wells will need to be used during the intake repairs.

This has been a long and difficult process to complete the water change over. Continued progress is being made and hopefully we are near to the point when all water service will be from the high quality Creek water

## Current Water Restrictions

- Outside irrigation is limited to before 9 AM or after 6 PM.
- Use of a watering can or a hand held hose with a shut off nozzle is ALLOWED at any time.

**Legal and Financial Update.** The District Court has still not ruled on the January trial regarding the appeal issues returned to the Court concerning if fluoride was in the water in 1990 and if the intent of the parties in 1990 was that the interest accrual on unpaid interest ended with the principal payment on the Bonds. When this case first started in 1999 the District made an agreement with the State of Colorado to make changes to the water system to remove fluoride within two years. Situations beyond the control of the District, including the continued court case, the inability to secure long-term financing for the water improvements, and the time to find a suitable water source delayed the process. The agreement allowed for delays that were not within the control of the District. The State of Colorado has decided that the water repair was not completed within the two year agreement and has filed court action to fine the District \$10,000. The judge in the case will consider this during a hearing at the end of August. The District feels the State's position is ridiculous as the delays in obtaining new water were beyond its control, and the fact the system has been constructed (at a considerable financial hardship to the District).

The District is operating near to the budget for 2003 and is projected to have a small income over expenses in 2003. The 2003 budget had anticipated acquiring long-term funding of the water project after a ruling by the Court. The long-term funding would cover the 2002 deficit caused by the water repair work and the ongoing legal actions. Without the Court ruling, the District attempted in the first half of 2003 to reduce expenses to recover some of the 2002 deficit. However, the continued work on the water repair project, additional legal action and work to stop the spread of the pine beetles has limited the spending reductions. Even without the long-term funding, the District should recover from the current financial issues within the next two years. The District continues to work on funding over five years for the water repairs that will restore the financial health of the District immediately rather than in the next two years without long-term funding.