

Mayor's Letter

February 21, 2021

BACK TO NORMAL. We incurred very little structural damage to our facilities due to the record cold and energy supply issues. We had a broken pipe partially flood Town Hall, but nothing important was damaged. Relative to other communities throughout the state we should be very thankful and recognize how fortunate we are today. A great deal of the credit is due to CoServ. They maintained communications with us and managed the rolling blackouts very efficiently. We had one power outage when a transformer failed on Parkwood. We requested help from CoServ, they responded quickly with repair crews working into the frigid night to restore power. We all heard the Oncor horror stories. CoServ's planning was terrific. What about us ?

WE HAVE PLANS and procedures for cold weather and we took action the week before the storm. One of our vulnerable areas is where the suction line at the bottom of the ground storage tank is exposed before it



goes underground to the pumphouse. They are insulated, but we wanted to be ready for the worst, so we added special heat tape to warm the pipes to eliminate them from freezing. Likewise, we inspected and re-insulated the wells. **Operationally I made the decision to only run our two smallest wells (yes, we did not use our big well).** I also had the control electrodes in the storage tank raised so that the wells would activate when the water level dropped below 80 percent capacity. Why ? Because this meant that the wells would come on about every third power cycle and they would move water through the system making it difficult to freeze. **In our normal winter settings, the wells typically only come on every other day.** Just like a dripping faucet, by cycling the wells more often, we weren't going to freeze. So, it was actually good to use some water, but nothing big unless the power was on.



Over the years we have added capacity to the system and this also helped us. When the power is out, people continue to use water, which reduces the system pressure because the pumps are off. If the pressure drops below 20 psi, then a "boil water" notice is issued. Under TCEQ rules we are required to have pressure pumps that can move 500 gpm (gallons per minute.) **However, in LWV our pumps can move 1600 gpm.** What this means is that when the power came on and our pressure had dropped from 65 psi to 45 psi, the pumps would fire up and we would be back at 65 psi within five minutes. That's why we never lost the pressure plane and you aren't having to boil your water.

Why didn't the pumphouse freeze ? A couple of years ago we rehabbed the pump house where the water system controls are located. We added HVAC to keep the electronics cool during the summer and the transfer pipes and pumps warm during the winter. Rather than insulation, we foam encapsulated the building (and the one in Rocky Point) and filled all of the old pipe openings and gaps. We were able to maintain 65 degrees in the building even with the power cycling off and on. We also made enhancements to our controls - we added motor safety devices which would protect the well motors from power issues (like power cycling off and on while they were operating).

OVER 

EMERGENCY GENERATORS. Yes we have a portable one. We ran it for several days, but not here in LWV, we used it to run our Rocky Point Water System. The area outside our city is served by Oncor, and they just shut the power off totally for several days - it didn't rotate. So, we used our generator to run the wells and pressure pumps to keep the water system up and running. Despite having no electricity for days, the pumphouse never froze. Years ago, the MDD rehabbed the building, foam encapsulating it and replacing all of the PVC lines with steel ones, just like we had done back in LWV. Most importantly, they installed a digital control panel and quick connects for an external generator in case they lost power. It was good planning and it worked perfectly.

ROAD UPDATE. Prior to the cold weather, I requested and received written approval from Ed Bell and the Town Engineers to use our MELTDOWN 20 de-icing product on the concrete roads. Several years ago, we purchased the materials and a truck-mounted spreader, **and created an ice removal plan**, which prioritizes certain streets and intersections. We applied the product on Wednesday and Thursday primarily focusing on Highridge, the Highridge-Melody hill and intersection, and then the other intersections in town. We used about half of our stock. We specifically chose that product because it is ecologically friendly and will not harm animals or fish. Its not cheap, and many cities won't use it because of the expense, but given our lakefront location, it is the best product for us.

Ed Bell will be back this week. Excavation is continuing on Melody Lane. Paving should restart quickly on south Highridge and the Carrie/Melody Intersection. As I have stated many times, we have not accepted any roads yet - we have not even done the inspection walk on Stowe. I anticipate substantial completion of the project in May, with Ed Bell completely finished and leaving sometime in June.

SAM HILL REZONING. Many of you who live within 200 feet of the wooded property at the front of Town will be receiving legal notice of a zoning change request by Sam Hill. **In April of 2020** the Town rezoned the 78 acres that Sam Hill and the LEISD own that were inside of Lakewood Village (the wooded area at the front of town when you turn on Lakecrest). Sam Hill now owns the triangle area along Eldorado that we annexed into the Town last month. **Since it is now inside the Town, we have to zone it.** As part of the annexation agreement, Sam Hill will give the Town approximately 1/3 of the triangle property for a park, future site for a new Town Hall, and a new Town entrance. All of the Sam Hill property is going to be developed at the same time so it makes sense to zone all of the Sam Hill property together. It's like we zoned Sam Hills front yard in April 2020 and in Jan 2021 they now own the backyard. So now, rather than zoning the backyard separately, lets just do everything together with one zoning for the whole property. Its more efficient because the overall zoning is a special planned development category which is highly restrictive on the construction methods, house styles, landscaping, lighting and aesthetics, **and it applies to all of the Sam Hill development** The application information is available on the town website.

Forget the cold. Spring is almost here. There's never been a better time to be in Lakewood Village.

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Mayor



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