



UP THE CREEK
November 1, 2010

These wonderful autumn days that we (I, at least) wish could last forever are ending nevertheless. And with them ends the fiscal year of your Association. November 30 was decreed in the olden days to be the last day of business for the fiscal year. We don't ask why. We just do it. This means that the next two newsletters will be hectoring you on three main subjects: (1) get your water bill caught up, (2) get ready for winter, and (3) come to the annual meeting.

Item (1) is aimed at those few of you who have been less than meticulous in clearing your account each month. The business arrangement between the Association and its members is fundamentally simple: the Association supplies its members with water; the members in turn reimburse the Association for the cost of doing so. Those who choose not to honor this arrangement place the burden on the backs of the rest of the members who do. It is only rarely, and with extreme reluctance, that the Association elects to discontinue its contribution (the water). These occasions are fraught with bitterness and inconvenience, but eventually result in the bill getting paid. Please take heed.

Item (2), winter: This is the time of year that we often get phone calls asking us to turn off the water because the house will be empty for awhile, often for the entire winter. We are happy to do this, but we always advise taking further steps. "Winterizing" a house is the best protection. This means removing all the water from the household plumbing and putting antifreeze into all the drain traps. Unless you possess greater than average plumbing skills, it is best to hire professionals for this job. People sometimes protest that this surely isn't necessary because the heat will be left on, and the neighbor will be checking the place. This will work, if you have absolute faith in the reliability of your heating system and your neighbor. A failure of either one, and it's hard to imagine the damage done by a broken water pipe until you've seen it.

Another thing to bear in mind before winter arrives is the security of your water meter. Be sure the lid is tightly on the meter pit. After it gets covered with snow, if you have reason to open the pit, shovel the snow back onto the lid after closing it up. Snow contributes to insulating the meter.

We often advise people who are concerned about freezing even while they are living in their house to let a light trickle of water run. This is a good way to prevent freezing of the specific pipe that the water is running through. It will not protect the whole plumbing system, of course.

Item (3), the Annual Stockholders Meeting, is the place where you learn about and control the operation of your Association. You will learn where your money was spent this year, and where it is proposed to be spent next year. You will meet the Board of Directors, and vote to retain or replace them in office. You will participate in all discussions and cast your vote on important issues. And, you will be served coffee and cookies as a reward for your efforts.

This year, one of the principal items for your consideration will be the budget for 2011. It is not news to anyone that economic conditions in our community are not what they were a few years ago. That fact impacts you and your ability to meet your financial obligations, as well as impacting your water system. Our bills go on too, unrelenting and ever increasing. It is a challenge to balance our increasing expenses against our declining revenues. Sounds like a familiar tune, I expect.

Later this month, you will receive the official announcement of this meeting, along with a proxy card. The card is for you to appoint a representative in case you are unable to attend in person.

Please make plans now to attend this important meeting. It will be held on December 14, 2010 at the Cedaredge Community Center, 7:00 pm. We hope to see you there.