



STAFF REPORT

TO: Chairman and Board Members
FROM: Mark Foree, General Manager
DATE: September 9, 2014
SUBJECT: **General Manager's Report**

Attached please find the written reports from the Management team including the Operations Report (*Attachment A*), the Customer Services Report (*Attachment B*), and the Water Resource and the Annexation Activity Report (*Attachment C*) and the Web Usage and Social Media Report (*Attachment D*).

Also included in your agenda packet are press clippings from July 16 through September 9, 2014.



STAFF REPORT

TO: Board of Directors
THRU: Mark Foree, General Manager
FROM: Scott Estes, Director of Engineering
DATE: September 10, 2014
SUBJECT: Operations Report for September 2014 Board Meeting

(A) Water Supply

Truckee River Flows - Truckee River flows at the CA/NV state line are about 120 cubic feet per second (cfs) at the moment. The required Floriston Rate is 500 cfs this time of year. Floriston Rates or “normal river flows” were met until the first week of August, when we began releasing some of our drought reserves from upstream reservoirs.

Reservoir Storage - The elevation of Lake Tahoe is now 6223.36 feet. This is a storage volume of 43,900 acre-feet (AF) which is about 6% of maximum storage capacity. Boca Reservoir has 6,700 acre-feet of water currently in storage, or 16% its maximum capacity. Combined, Floriston Rate water storage is approximately 7% of maximum storage capacity. Donner Lake is still 86% full with 8,130 AF of storage, and Independence Lake is also just about full (94% capacity) at 16,400 AF. TMWA’s Donner and Independence lakes are the only two reservoirs on the system even remotely close to being full after three exceptionally dry years in a row. Prosser Reservoir storage is currently 8,000 AF which is 27% of its maximum storage capacity of 29,800 acre-feet. Stampede Reservoir’s storage is currently 57,650 AF which is 28% of its maximum capacity of 226,000 acre-feet.

Runoff - The official rise at Lake Tahoe this runoff season was only 0.29 feet or 22% of average, and runoff in the Truckee River Basin finished the year at 25% of average. This third significantly below average runoff season in a row will have a major impact on the region as upstream reservoir storage which is used to make required rates of flow at the CA/NV state line was exhausted at the end of July.

River Flows – The required river flows at the CA/NV state line (Floriston Rates) of 500 CFS can no longer be met. River flows continue to drop off as reservoir storage is depleted.

Outlook – TMWA will be negatively impacted as a direct result of our third consecutive below-average runoff season. When river flows began dropping off at the end of July, TMWA had to start relying on more groundwater pumping and supplemental releases from our upstream drought reserves in order to meet the needs of our customers. This is the first time since TMWA

was formed in 2001, and the first time since the summer of 1994 that upstream drought reserves will have been used in order to meet customer demand. We will continue to make direct releases from Boca and Stampede reservoirs and then Donner Lake during September to augment the natural flow of the river to insure we have sufficient amounts of surface water to meet the demands of our water customers. Since beginning releases of privately owned storage on August 3rd, we have used about 2600 acre-feet or 10% of our total drought reserves from upstream storage.

(B) Water Production

Demand – Customer demand averaged 99 MGD last week reflecting a reduction of about 10% in average demand conditions for this time of year. Through August, TMWA water demands were just slightly less than last year (98%) through the same point in time. The Chalk Bluff water treatment plant is on-line and meeting about half of TMWA’s customer demands. The other half of TMWA’s customer demands are being met with groundwater pumping from TMWA’s wells.

(C) Hydro Production

Generation – Hydro generation ceased on August 2, 2014 when adequate river flows were no longer available. It is likely that hydro generation opportunities will not be available again until the spring runoff season begins or a series of significant winter storms arrive in the region.



STAFF REPORT

TO: Chairman and Board Members
THRU: Mark Foree, General Manager
FROM: Kim Mazeres, Customer Relations Director
DATE: September 8, 2014
SUBJECT: **Customer Service Report**

The following is a summary of Customer Service activity since the July Board meeting.

Ombudsman

There were thirteen (13) calls to the Ombudsman in July & August. They included: four high bill complaints; one complaint from a customer whose neighbor was upset because he thought he was overwatering; a complaint about our use of out-of-state vendors; a complaint about the \$25 account activation fee; a concern about a meter installation; two move-in requests; a Truckee, California water customer who was directed to the proper water utility; a low pressure complaint; and, a customer with a question about the water that goes to Pyramid Lake. All questions and concerns were answered to the customers' satisfaction.

Communications

Since the July Board meeting there were numerous media articles and stories on: drought, water supply, conservation, request for 10% reduction in outdoor water use starting the end of July, relocation of fish from TMWA's hydroelectric canals as the plants were being shut down due to low water levels, and consolidation customer workshops.

Presentations were given to the following groups: Mark Foree on water supply to 60 Reno Soroptomists; Bill Hauck on water supply to 60 people at UNR Cooperative Extension; Kim Mazeres on water supply and consolidation to 35 realtors at Reno Dickson Realty and 25 realtors at Sparks Dickson Realty; and, Andy Gebhardt on a variety of water-related topics to 62 sixth grade students at Desert Heights Elementary School.

Two tours were given of the Chalk Bluff Water Treatment Plant: to 66 students from Summit Christian Church and 11 students from Legacy Martial Arts summer class. Three tours were given of the Verdi Hydroelectric Plant to: 16 students from several Traner Middle School summer school classes and six staff from the Governor's Office on Energy. One tour was given

to several people of the Hug High Garden that TMWA sponsored through our Landscape Retrofit Program.

Attached is the website / social media report (Agenda Item 13.D) for fiscal year 2014. In addition to the usual activity, we have recently been hit with a high number of comments regarding our advertising. Please see the report for details.

Responsible Water Use

299 watering variances issued this year, with 26 currently active – 14 in Reno, 10 in Sparks and 2 in Washoe County.

Customer Calls – July & August

- 18,156 phone calls handled
- Average handling time of 4 minutes, 16 seconds a call
- Average speed of answer – 30 seconds

Billing – July & August

- 192,214 bills issued
- 488 (.3%) corrected bills

Service Orders – July & August

- 13,922 service orders taken
- 7,598 (55%) move-ins / move-outs
- 1,514 (11%) cut-out-for-non-payment and cut-in after receiving payments, including deposits and checks for tamper
- 1,422 (10%) new meter sets and meter/register/ERT exchanges and equipment checks
- 790 (6%) zero consumption meter checks
- 718 (5%) problems / emergencies, including cut-out for customer repairs, dirty water, no water, leaks, pressure complaints, safety issues, installing water meter blankets, etc.
- 711 (5%) re-read meters
- 320 (2%) various collection actions, including hanging 48-hour notices for elderly and disabled customers, returned mail and/or unpaid deposits, and handling of additional deposits
- 319 (2%) high-bill complaints / audit and water usage review requests
- 101 (1%) meter retrofit, including billing and non-billing meter sets, requests to go to the metered rate and mandatory conversions to the metered rate for new tenants

Remittance – July & August

- 51,323 mailed-in payments
- 39,702 electronic payments
- 31,605 payments via RapidPay (EFT)
- 20,506 one-time bank account payments
- 8,900 store payments
- 6,141 payments via drop box or at front desk
- 6,498 credit card payments

Collections – July & August

- 27,043 accounts received a late charge
- Mailed 15,071 10-day delinquent notices, 7.9% of accounts
- Mailed 3,443 48-hour delinquent notices, 1.8% of accounts
- 485 accounts eligible for disconnect
- 456 accounts actually disconnected (includes accounts that bounced a check in order to prevent disconnect or to restore service)
- 0.17% write-off to revenue

New business / New Construction – July & August

- 36 active jobs currently in process
- Over \$1.9 million in new business fees/facility charges collected

Meter Statistics – Fiscal Year to Date

- 1 meter retrofits completed
- 272 meters yet to be installed on flat-rate accounts
- 54 meter exchanges completed
- 97 new business meter sets completed
- 94,406 total meters installed (billing and non-billing)
- 4,438 total non-billing meters currently installed



STAFF REPORT

TO: Chairman and Board Members
THRU: Mark Foree, General Manager
FROM: John Erwin, Natural Resources
DATE: September 9, 2014
SUBJECT: Report Water Resource and Annexation Activity

RULE 7

Rule 7 water resource purchases and will-serve commitment sales against purchased water resources through this reporting period:

Beginning Balance		7,706.02 AF
Purchases of water rights	0.00 AF	
Refunds	0.00 AF	
Sales	-3.61 AF	
Adjustment	0.00 AF	
Ending Balance		7,702.41 AF
Price per acre foot at report date:		\$7,700

ANNEXATIONS

No annexations to report.



TO: Chairman and Board Members
THRU: Mark Foree, General Manager
FROM: Robert Charpentier, Communications Specialist
DATE: September 5, 2014
SUBJECT: Web & Social Media Overview for Fiscal Year 2014

Web & Social Media Overview for Fiscal Year 2014

Highlights for Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14)

- **Website Traffic Climbs:** visitor numbers increase 12% over FY 2013
- **Drought Messaging:** “Reduce Your Use by 10%” campaign supported via web and social media meets goal through first five weeks of run.
- **Technology Shift:** mobile and tablet traffic to tmwa.com increase 42% and 64% respectively.
- **Boosting Success:** TMWA’s Facebook following grows by 82% and increases our content’s visibility from hundreds to thousands of viewers.
- **Blogging Gains Traction:** “Water Works!” blog visits increase from 26 views in March to 256 so far in September – an 869% growth over seven months.
- **Social-Media-Monitoring Wins:**
 - Erroneous Environmental Working Group report on TMWA’s water quality. Rapid response keeps aggregation of flawed report from damaging TMWA credibility.
 - Intense social-media campaign pressures TMWA to remove conservation ads from KKOH’s broadcast of the Rush Limbaugh radio talk show. Our analysis revealed this was a coordinated, out-of-state effort with virtually no local following or impact.

Website Results for FY 2014

During FY14, the TMWA website experienced a steady increase in traffic over the same period in FY13, with visitor numbers ticking up nearly 12%. Of this number, 53% were returning visitors and 47% came

to tmwa.com for the first time ever. The average visit duration was just under two minutes, with the majority of visitors focused on employment, contact information, and payment information.

There was a significant jump in the number of visits to TMWA’s assigned-day watering (+55%), lake level (+50%) and residential payment options pages (+63%). The overall number of page views also increased 5.84% year over year from 335,325 to 354,903.

Mobile Traffic Growth

Though desktop and laptop computers still account for over three quarters of visits to tmwa.com, the use of mobile devices to access the site continues to rise quickly—now accounting for nearly a quarter of all inbound traffic.

<u>Device</u>	<u>FY 2013/Visits</u>	<u>FY 2014/Visits</u>	<u>Change</u>
Desktop.....	280,068/(83.2%)	270,027/(76.4%)	-3.59%
Mobile.....	41,514/(12.3%)	59,074/(16.7%)	+42.3%
Tablet.....	14,976/(4.5%)	24,569/(6.9%)	+64%

Top Content for FY14 (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014)

The most visited pages on tmwa.com (listed below) for FY14 are similar what we have seen in the past. After the homepage, traffic went mostly to our employment, online payment, and “contact us” pages. We are also seeing an expected rise in visits to the “Doing Business With TMWA” page – which is consistent with annual business cycles.

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Pageviews</u>	<u>%Pageviews</u>
1	Homepage	263,814	46%
2	Employment.....	48,692	8.4%
4	Residential/Payment Options.....	39,384	7%
3	Contact Us	31,275	5.4%
5	Customer Service, Residential.....	16,646	3%

Drought Messaging

With the arrival of September, we are now far enough along in our conservation efforts to have an idea of how much water our community is actually saving. At the end of July TMWA began using our website, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter as part of our overall effort to encourage customers to reduce outdoor water use by 10% to help conserve our upstream drought reserves. Though it is difficult to draw a hard line between any one of these channels and conservation outcome, customer demand has dropped 10%

through the first five weeks of our voluntary conservation campaign (compared to the same five weeks of 2013).

TMWA Social Media



Currently TMWA has **1005 Twitter followers** and **456 Facebook fans**. There is a current Twitter feed on the *tmwa.com* homepage that is updated daily to reflect current topics.

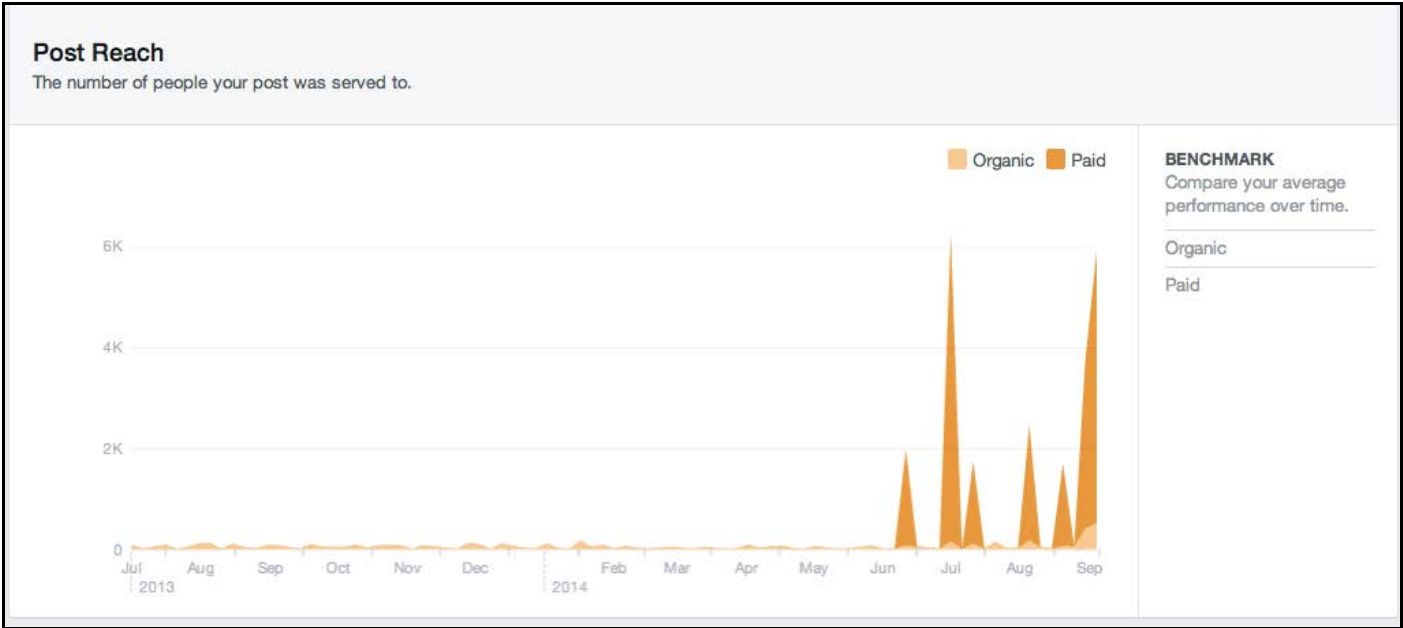
Facebook Post “Boosting”

We have seen excellent results from our test program to increase viewers of some of our Facebook messages, as well as increasing our followers, by “boosting” certain messages. Boosting is a paid promotional service through which TMWA’s postings are circulated to audiences within a specified location this case, our service area. Normally our postings are only seen by Facebook users who have “liked” TMWA’s Facebook page, or by the “friends” of those users. Through “boosting,” *we have seen the visibility of our Facebook postings jump from dozens to thousands*. This program was initially intended to be conducted throughout the summer and was meant to help support our conservation messaging. Given its success we will continue to use boosting to promote critical messaging.

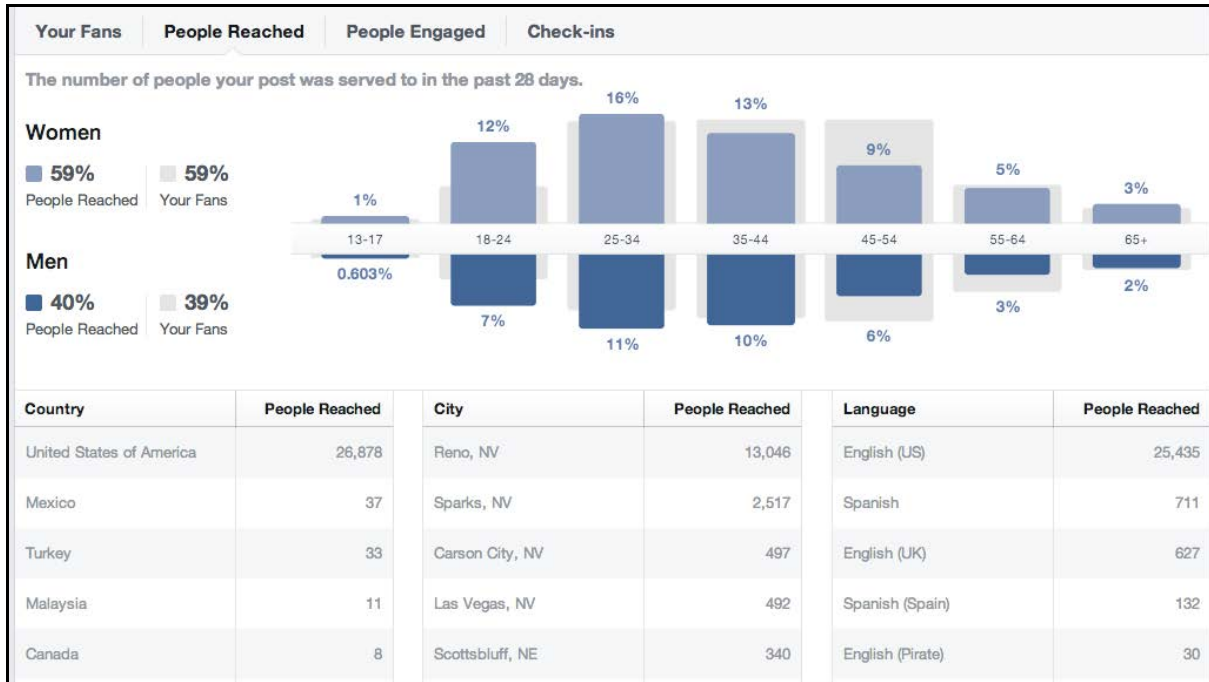
The chart below shows Facebook “like” growth between 7/1/13 to 9/5/14, an increase from 251 to 456. The boosting campaign began on 6/1/14.



This chart shows the number of Facebook users being reached by TMWA posts. The dark-orange spikes represent boosted posts. Also notable in this chart is the growth of TMWA’s “organic,” non-paid, reach. This is almost certainly attributable to the larger fan following (likes) which, in turn, is attributable to paid boosting efforts. Even if our boosting were terminated, the visibility dividends already gained would persist.

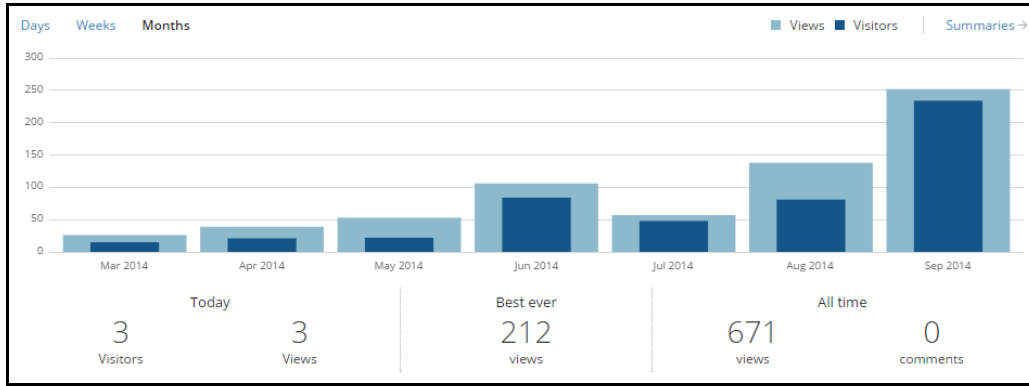


Demographics: the chart below gives a snapshot of who has seen TMWA's Facebook posts between 8/7/14 and 9/5/14. It also demonstrates that with the help of boosting, our Facebook posts actually had more individual viewers than our webpage, at 26,878 vs. 22,916 respectively. Obviously the nature and depth of these engagements are very different—our website had 49,941 pageviews in that period—but it does illustrate the reach boosting provides.



Water Works! – TMWA’s Informational Blog

The “Water Works!” blog was established with the objective of providing deeper content to our social media followers. Posts cover issues ranging from consolidation to drought and provide links back to tmwa.com where additional information can be found. Since launch, the blog has seen a steady increase in click-through readership.



<http://tmwawaterworks.wordpress.com/>

WATER WORKS! POSTS FROM THE WATER EXPERTS AT TRUCKEE MEADOWS WATER AUTHORITY

September 2, 2014
Leave a comment

Water Supply Update for the Week Ending August 31, 2014

With the arrival of September, we are now far enough along in our conservation efforts to have an idea of how much water our community is actually saving. As you may recall, at the end of July TMWA began asking our customers to reduce outdoor water use by 10% to help conserve our upstream drought reserves. As it has in the past, the community has come through. Customer demand is down a total of 10% through the first five weeks of our voluntary conservation campaign (compared to the same five weeks of 2013). Customer demand averaged 98.3 million gallons a day (MGD) last week.

We continue to make supplemental releases of water from Stampede reservoir in order to meet customer demand. Reservoir releases from drought storage in both Stampede and Donner Lake will continue through September and into October when we expect demand to drop to the point where releases from reserves will no longer be needed. Over the last two weeks TMWA has used 1,800 acre-feet, or roughly 7% of our total upstream drought supply, to-date. Flow at the CA/NV state line was approximately 165 cubic feet per second (cfs) this morning.

Categories: TMWA, Water Report | Permalink | 108

RECENT POSTS

- Water Supply Update for the Week Ending August 31, 2014
- TMWA Water Quality Lab Recognized for "outstanding analytical excellence!"
- Water Supply Update for the Week Ending August 3, 2014
- Why is TMWA Waiting to Begin Additional Water Conservation Measures?
- Water Supply Update for the Week Ending June 8, 2014

RECENT COMMENTS

CATEGORIES

- TMWA
- Uncategorized
- Water Quality
- Water Report

Social-Media Monitoring

Though TMWA constantly monitors social media channels for information and chatter that is either useful or related to our organization, there were two issues in particular that required special attention. The first was a reemergence of the erroneous Environmental Working Group report which listed Reno-area water as among the worst in the country; the second was a focused effort to get TMWA to remove our ads from the Rush Limbaugh radio show.

False Environmental Working Group, Water Quality Report

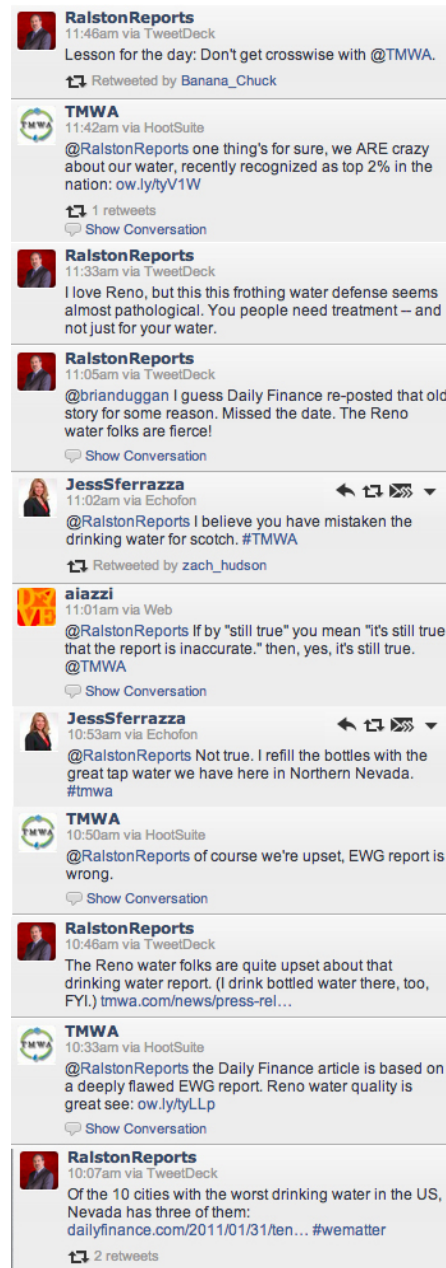
Every few months we have seen a smattering of tweets and Facebook posts linking to a story by “Daily Finance” regarding the quality of Reno’s water. This story was based on inaccurate, misleading and irresponsible information from a report published by The Environmental Working Group (EWG) back in December 2009. We have consistently responded to these social postings, both refuting the bad information and providing links to our Water Quality report.

After about six months of silence, January and February saw a large number of postings with links to the Daily Finance story. Many of these were from people in the Reno-Sparks area. The general assertion was that TMWA’s water quality was among the worst in the nation – a claim that is demonstrably not true.

Again, TMWA’s response was rapid and vigorous. It is both notable and gratifying that TMWA received a great deal of support from local tweeters and Facebook users (see example right).

In April, after being contacted by TMWA’s public relations agency, Daily Finance added a note to their article letting readers know that TMWA has contested EWG’s results. It bears noting that EWG has admitted the data for their report was flawed but, so far, has refused to either update it on their website or respond to Daily Finance’s request for clarification.

We have seen no additional social posts on this topic since February.



TMWA Response to Anti Rush Limbaugh Social Media Campaign

On the first of August, TMWA was mentioned in the first of 45 tweets on Twitter objecting to the fact that TMWA conservation ads play on KKOH Radio during the Rush Limbaugh show. These tweeters objected to Limbaugh’s positions on a variety of issues and asked that TMWA ask KKOH to remove our ads from his timeslot. Ten similar messages were posted on TMWA’s Facebook page and emails in the same vein were sent to both the TMWA Board of Directors email box and to TMWA Customer Service.

The total number of messages in August from all channels was 60. Many of these messages were from a single sender and, as far as we were able to determine, only one was from the Reno area. Most comments came from senders in the Mid-Western U.S. and some from as far away as Spain.

We examined the Twitter accounts of the senders and found that TMWA was only one among many organizations they were addressing. It is our conclusion is that this effort was organized by an individual—or individuals—in the Chicago area.

It is important to note that TMWA buys advertising space on KKOH based on the demographics and audience size. We did not ask specifically for our ads to be placed on the Rush Limbaugh show—nor have we ever asked that they not be.

Generally we have chosen to not respond to any of these tweets or comments as we had no desire to enter a debate regarding the content of the Rush Limbaugh show. In the few instances where we did reply, we emphasized that the TMWA conservation message was relevant to all of our customers and that ad placement was based entirely on getting that message to them.

TMWA's YouTube Channel: <http://www.youtube.com/user/truckeemeadowswater>



The sixth video in the “TMWA How-To” series has gone live with the launch of “How to Reduce Your Water Use 10%.” This video is intended to support our overall conservation message this summer. As predicted, the how-to videos are generally performing better than the “TMWA at Work” series, with view counts rising more quickly. We have begun shooting our ninth “TMWA at Work” video, “Fleish Hydroelectric Tunnel/Flume Project.” We expect to make additions to both the “How to” and “At Work” series throughout the year.

Current “TMWA How-to” videos:

- [How to Reduce Your Water Use 10%](#)
- [Spring Sprinkler System Start-Up](#)
- [How to Shut off Your Home's Water in an Emergency](#)
- [How to Use Your Water Meter to Determine if you have a Leak](#)
- [How to Test for and Fix a Leaky Toilet Flapper](#)
- [How to Make an Online Bill Payment from Your Checking Account](#)

Current “TMWA at Work” videos:

- [Stead Water Tank Rehabilitation](#) (new)
- [Partnership For Safe Water Award](#)
- [Idlewild Pump Station Improvements](#)
- [Steamboat Spillway, Flume Repair](#)
- [Fleish 'Railcar Bridge](#)
- [Water Main Repair on Haskell St.](#)
- [Highland Canal Improvement Project](#)
- [Ice Fighting](#)

Pending Videos:

- Fleish Hydroelectric Tunnel/Flume Project
- Winterization

The idea behind the production of TMWA videos is to provide useful, hands-on tips and information to our customers while also informing them about the various projects we have in progress. The latter demonstrates TMWA's expertise in planning and executing plant operations and infrastructure improvements. Given TMWA's excellent track record in both these categories, these videos should provide valuable reinforcement of our key value proposition: "*Quality. Delivered.*"

TMWA also manages the following informational websites:

- www.communityforestry.org:
- www.howdoyousave.org:
- www.tmwastorage.com:
- www.tmwaacademy.com:
- www.tmwandscapeguide.com:
- www.truckeeriverfund.org: