

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 1 9

## IN THIS ISSUE

- TMWA's Financial Management Success
- Smart About Water Quick Fact
- Join TMWA's Conservation Team
- Workshops and Tours Calendar Enclosed
- Update Your Contact Information With TMWA



## SMART ABOUT WATER QUICK FACT:

Americans use about 341 billion gallons of tap water every day. Tap water is vital and something to be thankful for. It is hard to imagine a day without it.

## SHREWD DEBT MANAGEMENT SAVES OVER \$50 MILLION SINCE TMWA'S INCEPTION

TMWA has saved tens of millions of dollars since its inception by remaining vigilant and nimble in the management of its long-term debt. The bulk of TMWA's debt came in 2001, when the City of Reno, the City of Sparks, and Washoe County (RSW) partnered to purchase the water utility from Sierra Pacific Power Company (Sierra) for \$354M.

In September of 2000, Sierra announced it would sell its water business, ending over a century in which the company or its direct predecessors operated both power and water in our community. Local leaders faced the possibility of our region's primary water provider being sold to an out-of-state company. This wouldn't necessarily have been a bad thing, but they judged water to be too essential for our community to leave it to chance.

In October of 2000, RSW submitted a joint proposal to purchase the water utility from Sierra. Shortly after, Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) was born.

To purchase the utility, over \$452M in revenue-backed bonds were sold—\$354M to purchase the water and hydroelectric assets from Sierra with the remainder used for improvements to the water system, capital reserves, staffing, and operational costs (insurance, office space, computers, desks, etc.). TMWA was literally starting from scratch and a lot needed to be done in a very short time.

“The 2001 bonds were basically the mortgage on the house,” said Michele Sullivan, TMWA's chief financial officer. “TMWA has taken on additional debt since its inception—rising to a peak of a little over \$556M in 2008—but that first bond issuance has always represented the bulk of what we had to manage. When you're dealing with hundreds of millions of dollars in debt, interest rates can make a profound cost difference over the life of the loan or, in TMWA's case, the period before a bond series matures and must be repaid.”

“TMWA's finance team has always been very proactive in finding opportunities to refund older bond series by issuing newer ones at a lower interest rate,” Sullivan explained. “By doing this, we've lowered our cost-of-debt obligation by well over \$50M since TMWA was founded.”

Since 2015, TMWA's long-term debt has been reduced by over \$76M. This has been largely due to the premiums TMWA has earned on its lower-interest bond issuances.

CONTINUED ON BACK

## CONTINUED FROM FRONT:

“Though we are a public agency, from day one, TMWA has prided itself on operating like a business,” said Sullivan. “The way we manage our bond debt is a prime example of this. Our debt management policy requires that we realize at least three percent savings before we can do a refunding. We’ve almost always done better than that. The bottom line for our customers is that lower interest rates mean a lower cost of operations, which, in turn, can help keep water rates as low as possible.”

## GET A FUN SUMMER JOB: JOIN TMWA'S SUMMER CONSERVATION STAFF

Annual hiring for TMWA's seasonal water conservation consultant team will begin in March. We provide the training, vehicle, and equipment; you become a true champion for water conservation programs in the Truckee Meadows. Responsibilities include educating the public on TMWA's water conservation and assigned-day watering rules, looking for leaks in sprinkler systems, and responding to water-waste reports.

We've found that most people with leaks and other outdoor watering problems don't even know they have them. Our conservation consultants' mission is to identify these problems and help our customers find a solution—and save water.

If you're friendly, organized, and a good communicator, this job may be for you. This is a temporary, full-time position—not to exceed 1,039 hours of employment in a year. The job starts in April and ends in October.

For details, go to [www.jobs.tmwa.com](http://www.jobs.tmwa.com) in March to apply. For more information, contact Chuck Swegles in the Conservation Department at (775) 834-8008 or [cswegles@tmwa.com](mailto:cswegles@tmwa.com).

## TMWA SCHEDULES LANDSCAPE WORKSHOPS AND TOURS FOR 2019

Learn about water quality, hydroelectric power, biodiverse gardens, irrigation system start-up, and more at TMWA's workshops and tours. Scheduled throughout 2019, the free events are listed in a separate brochure with this mailing. Save the calendar, and prepare to learn a lot about water and landscaping in 2019.

## TAKE A MINUTE AND UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Do we have your current contact information? Have you changed your phone number, or is your cell phone now the best way to contact you? If so, please update your primary contact number on your account. It's unlikely we'll ever have to call you regarding a water emergency, but if we do, we need your current number. All you have to do is log into your account at [www.tmwa.com/login](http://www.tmwa.com/login) and update the number, or give us a call at (775) 834-8080 and let us do it for you. Simple!

## WHERE TO CALL

GENERAL INQUIRIES:	334-8080
EMERGENCY REPAIR:	334-8090
WATER CONSERVATION:	334-8005
WATER QUALITY:	334-8118
WATER RIGHTS:	334-8029
OMBUDSMAN:	848-0813



Truckee Meadows Water Authority is a not-for-profit, community-owned water utility, overseen by elected officials and citizen appointees from Reno, Sparks and Washoe County. TMWA employs a highly skilled team who ensure the treatment, delivery and availability of high-quality drinking water around the clock for more than 400,000 residents of the Truckee Meadows.

## HOLIDAYS & EVENTS

**STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
MARCH 5 AT 3:00 P.M.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
MARCH 20 AT 10:00 A.M.

**IRRIGATION SYSTEM START-UP WORKSHOP**  
MARCH 26 AT 5:30 P.M.

Find locations and details for all workshops and meetings here: [tmwa.com/meeting](http://tmwa.com/meeting)

