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Highlands Newsletter for October 2010

1 message

Jim Hennessey <designprof@centurytel.net>

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To: Jim Hennessey <designprof@centurytel.net>

Hello Neighbors. We are sending out the newsletter by e-mail this time in order to reduce paper-waste, printing and mailing costs. Let us know if you do not want to receive this.

Orcas Highlands Newsletter

October, 2010

We hope everyone had a wonderful summer. What with beautiful weather and lots of visitors, things are just now beginning to calm down a bit for most of us.

We have two wildfire mitigation opportunities this autumn.

FIRST, the Washington DNR has scheduled its chipper and several fire staff to visit the Highlands on November 1-3. DNR staff will chip all green waste (branches and other vegetation) that you have placed by the roadside...butt ends toward the road. We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to make your property safer during fire season. For your information, the chips are generally broadcast out onto the forest floor, which can help soil productivity. Alternatively, you can have the chips put into piles you can spread as mulch, although the chips are not a great quality, clean chip because of the amount of green needles and leaves that are produced in the chipping process.

SECOND, DNR staff will be making a wildfire presentation to all of us on the evening of **Tuesday, November 2, at 7:00** at Judy Cook's home (250 Switchback Road). You are all invited to attend. You will learn about wildfire activity in this part of the state and be provided with good wildfire mitigation/prevention information. If you have questions about any of this, call Judy at 5028 or e-mail her at leraascook@aol.com.

Water Update. The development of the well drilled by ESWD in our Highlands Tract A Common Area (along Olga Rd) is progressing. Water rights have been applied for, and a source approval is in the works. The necessary DOE notices were published in the Sounder and no objections were filed in the 30 day waiting period. This resulted in a 180 day permit to pump the well. A 72 hour pumping test @ 20 gallons per minute was initiated and simultaneous readings were being taken at several local wells to determine if pumping our well lowered the water level in those wells.

One of the primary endpoints of the 72 hour test is for the well to "stabilize", or the water column in the well to stop dropping as the pumping continued, this occurred after 96 hours, with about 2/3 of the column (about 400 feet) still remaining. The pump was then turned off and the recovery of the well back to pre-study levels was monitored. This whole procedure generated a huge amount of data that the hydrogeologist is analyzing. His report will be available the end of October.

As we move into Autumn and experience chillier nighttime temperatures, it is time to consider the fact that forecasters say La Nina may bring us a rough winter this year. Officials at NOAA are encouraging homeowners to start preparing for the winter season now so that you won't get left in the cold when all the "hot" items are sold out. The Board wants to make sure every home in our community is ready for winter.

Here's what you should have:

- Flashlight and extra batteries.
- Battery-powered NOAA Weather Radio and portable (AM-FM) radio to receive emergency information. These may be your links to the outside world.
- Extra food and water. High energy food, such as dried fruit or candy, and food requiring no cooking or refrigeration is best.
- Extra supply of medicine and baby items.
- First-aid kit.
- Heating fuel. Fuel carriers may not reach you for days after a severe winter storm.
- Emergency heating source, such as a fireplace, wood stove, space heater, etc. Learn to use them properly to prevent a fire. Have proper ventilation.
- Fire extinguisher and smoke detector. Test units regularly to ensure they are working properly.

Frozen water pipes aren't life threatening, however frozen or broken water pipes do cause damage to homes each winter. If pipes in the walls aren't properly insulated; they can freeze and rupture. (An eighth-of-an-inch crack in a pipe can release up to 250 gallons of water a day.)

What you can do:

- Locate and insulate pipes most susceptible to freezing-- typically those near outer walls, in crawl spaces, or in the attic. Insulation made especially for this purpose is available.
- Seal any leaks that allow cold air inside where pipes are located.
- Disconnect garden hoses

If it gets really cold:

- It is not a bad idea to let hot and cold water trickle at night from a faucet on an outside wall.
- Open cabinet doors to allow more heat to get to uninsulated pipes under a sink or appliance near an outer wall.
- Make sure heat is left on and set no lower than 55 degrees.
- If you plan to be away: (1) Have someone check your house daily to make sure the heat is still on to prevent freezing, or (2) drain and shut off the water system.

We are talking to two snowplowing contractors and they tell us they are already booked with customers. This means we might experience delays in getting the Highlands roads cleared. Be prepared to stay at home and avoid any unnecessary auto trips. If you don't have a vehicle that is sufficiently outfitted for winter driving, ask a neighbor to pick up food supplies for you...don't be shy! If you park down at the bottom of Lindsay Rd., stay on the South side of the mailboxes. Do not park along Lindsay, North of the mailboxes, as the road and shoulder needs to remain clear for

traffic.

More information will be sent by e-mail as it develops.
But let's get through Halloween and Thanksgiving first!

The Highlands Board

p.s. We need more Highlands e-mail addresses! Ask your neighbor if they have e-mail and if they are on our mailing list. Send e-mail addresses to Jim Hennessey - designprof@centurytel.net
