

YOU can help make a difference in our neighborhood by reading this annual conservation newsletter – learn to save money and preserve water, a precious resource!



January 2019

Cherry Creek III

Special edition!

*For owners and residents of the
Third Cherry Creek Townhouse Corporation
www.cherrycreek3.com or call (303) 834-0311*

Some good news about water in the HOA – and how the news can get better in the year ahead!

Although residents do a pretty good job with water conservation in Cherry Creek 3, we could do much better if *everyone* does their part.

Here are some facts: during the 2017-18 budget year, Cherry Creek 3 purchased 22.446 million gallons of water from Denver Water. That was an approximate 1.9 million decrease from the previous budget season. (However, our water bill rose due to increased rates from Denver Water.)

In 2014-15, Cherry Creek 3 set its modern-day record by using 20.84 million gallons. That was 15.874 million fewer gallons than its all-time high consumption, 36.7 million gallons in the 2008-09 fiscal year.

During most of the past five years, consumption in the community has been in the 22-23 million gallon range. Is it possible to reduce the water bill to 20 million gallons? Yes, but only if the majority of us adopt improved water-efficiency practices.

Want \$50, \$100 or more for practicing water efficiency? See page 3!



Saving money and the environment matters

Why no one should take water and sewage for granted: it's expensive and will not get cheaper!

Something unusual happened in Cherry Creek 3 during the past year that just a few people noticed. In the most recent budget year (Oct. 1, 2017 – Sept. 30, 2018), the cost for sewage in the community was greater than the cost of water.

It was the first time in our HOA's history. Cherry Creek 3 spent \$74,656 for sewage with Denver Wastewater and \$64,836 for water from Denver Water. Combined, the \$139,492 for water and sewage was the largest single expense in the Association's budget.

Sewage bills continue to rise. Denver Wastewater will hike its rates again by 4% in 2019 and Denver Water will increase its rates in January.

The Board believes it is responsible to promote water conservation and efficiency to every adult and child who lives here. When residents successfully practice water conservation, less water is used and the amount billed for sewage will be less, too. (Rate hikes excluded.)

Included in this special edition are stories containing news about water, the past successes of Cherry Creek 3's efforts and its plans for the immediate future. Also included are some ideas to help everyone get personally involved as all of us tackle this important neighborhood topic. There is a quiz page to test your knowledge, too. Happy reading!

Critical time for us: January through March 2019

Denver Water and Denver Wastewater closely monitor Cherry Creek 3's water consumption during the first three months of each year. The average of those three months are used to determine two things: (1) the basis for which water-rate tiers will be established for the remainder of the year and (2) the amount Denver Wastewater will charge the HOA for its sewage service for the rest of 2019.

If we, as a community, give extra effort to our water usage by practicing efficiency, our water and sewer bills can be lower. If we use more water from January-March, both the water and sewer bills will increase.

Facts & Figures: Average usage and costs for each Cherry Creek 3 home

This article is based on the HOA's 2017-18 fiscal year (Oct. 1, 2017 - Sept. 30, 2018).

- Water consumed: 22.4 million gallons. Average per day: 61,495 gallons per day for the neighborhood or 245 gallons consumed daily in each home in the 251-condo complex.
- The highest water consumption months are in the summer. Last year, the HOA used 2.94 million gallons of water in June, 2.66 million gallons in July and 2.48 million gallons in August. Water needs are typically greater then because the swimming pool is open and lawns are irrigated three times a week.
- General estimates say the average person in the Denver area uses about 70 gallons a day, including water for drinking, cooking, laundry, bathing, etc. Nearly 20 years ago, the average resident used 22% more water before a statewide effort began stressing the need for conservation.
- Cherry Creek 3 paid \$64,835 for water and \$74,656 for sewage. Broken down, each owner paid \$258 for water and \$297 for sewage. (Combined, each owner paid \$555 during the last budget year, or \$46.25 per month from the monthly maintenance dues. [Note: Because the community is 53 years old, the budget includes an additional \$28,000 to repair water or sewer lines throughout the complex.]

Here's how the average person uses water daily in Colorado...

(Courtesy of the Colorado Water Conservation Board and the Water Research Association)



24% - Toilets: WaterSense © grades toilets by their efficiency. A High-Efficient Toilet (HET) uses between from .8 to 1.28 gallons per flush, depending on the toilet model. [Some Cherry Creek 3 homes have original toilets from the 1960s that use 3.5 gallons per flush. Replacing these toilets with a HET model helps save thousands of gallons of water annually – and it lowers sewage use charges, too.

20% - Faucets: Regulate water in a sink by using a water-saving aerator.

20% - Showers: Limiting time in the shower by a couple of minutes daily and using a lower-flow shower head reduces water consumption.

16% - Clothes washers: A front-loading, high-efficiency washing machine typically uses about one-third the water of an older, top-loading machine. Most WaterSense-labeled washing machines use between 13 and 25 gallons a load. Older washers can use between 25 and 40 gallons per load.

13% - Leaks: An unrepaired dripping faucet can waste thousands of gallons a month – even if it's just a few drops every minute. A toilet with a faulty flapper can lose even more.

3% - Baths.

2% - Dishwashers: Newer dishwashers are designed to clean dishes using less water.

2% - Other.

NOTE: A 2016 Colorado law mandates that only water-efficient appliances can be sold in stores. Always check to make sure the new water device you are purchasing carries the EPA's WaterSense logo.



Want cash back? Consider getting increased “Efficiency Reward Incentives” for installing new water-efficient items in your Cherry Creek 3 home this year!

In 2019, Cherry Creek 3 is offering higher incentives to owners who purchase and install qualified high-efficiency toilets, front-loading washing machines and water-saving dishwashers. (If you are thinking about replacing one or more toilets, you also may get rebate money from Denver Water if you qualify!)

This is the 3rd year the HOA is offering efficiency rewards. We are among the first HOAs in the state to offer such a rebate program. **By installing a high-efficiency device, you are helping Cherry Creek 3 reduce its water and sewage bills. The HOA is offering \$100 for new toilets and front-loading washing machines and \$50 for new dishwashers that meet the requirements below:**

1. This offer begins Feb. 1, 2019 and ends Aug. 31, 2019. Only water devices that will be installed permanently in the neighborhood are eligible.
2. Owners seeking water efficiency rewards must furnish ALL of the following information:
 - A. Brand name and model of the eligible device, along with a copy of the purchase receipt that must be dated during the eligibility period. This information will be used to independently verify that the toilets, washing machines or dishwashers are water-saving devices. (Note: Most devices will bear an EPA “WaterSense” logo on the box. Sorry, an “Energy Star” sticker is not an indication of water efficiency.) A photo (can be a phone’s camera photo) of the new device must be included as proof of installation in Cherry Creek 3. As an alternative, you can have a Cherry Creek 3 representative stop by your home to verify the installation.
3. Cherry Creek 3 doesn’t recommend brands or models. However, if you are installing a High-Efficiency Toilet and want to apply for a Denver Water rebate in addition to the HOA reward, you can go to Denver Water’s web site for a list of toilets eligible for their rebate. (Sorry, the HOA will not submit a rebate on your behalf to Denver Water. We will, however, be happy to answer questions you may have before submitting your rebate request for Denver Water’s offer.)

Qualifying high-efficiency water devices and rebate amount offered by Cherry Creek 3:

- High-Efficiency Toilets (HETs) using no more than 1.1 gallons per flush - **\$100 rebate. If you qualify for both the Denver Water and Cherry Creek 3 rebate rewards, you’ll get a total of \$200!** (Limit 3 toilets per home from Denver Water, maximum of 4 toilets from Cherry Creek 3.)
- New dishwashers must use 6 or fewer gallons per load. **\$50 rebate**
- New front-loading washing machines must use no more than 25 gallons per load. **\$100 rebate.**
- *Last year, the HOA rebate offers were \$75 for new toilets and washing machines.*

Please submit ALL requested information and photos to:

Cherry Creek 3 Water Efficiency Rewards Program
9084 E. Nassau Ave.,
Denver, CO 80237

Have questions?

General questions: Jim Robson, CMA, Property Manager, Realty One Property Management:
jrobson@realtyoneproppmgmt.com

Specific questions about devices and efficiency: Don Ireland, HOA President: cc3president@gmail.com

Cherry Creek 3 reserves the right to modify or discontinue this program at any time. Please allow up to 4 weeks for a check to be issued.

Have an old basement toilet that you’ve been thinking about replacing?

Is your old laundry machine slowly failing or not cleaning properly?

If so, make the move to a more efficient energy & water model in 2019 and get \$\$\$ back!

Quiz time: Test your knowledge about water & Cherry Creek 3:

TRUE OR FALSE:

1. Research shows people who are informed about water, on average, reduce their usage by 7.8%.
2. Colorado's population is expected to nearly double, to nearly 10 million people, by 2050. The state's water plan says that when the population reaches that point, there may not be enough water for everyone.
3. Cherry Creek 3's irrigation controllers contain sensors, which will turn off sprinklers if it begins raining.
4. You should flush the toilet immediately after flicking cigarette ashes into it or throwing an insect into it.
5. Children should be taught water is a precious resource and they shouldn't just randomly flush toilets.
6. Washing your vehicle in carports is allowed in Cherry Creek 3.
7. Cherry Creek 3 has won multiple awards for water conservation and replacing many former Kentucky Blue Grass sections with low-water Xeriscape plants. Awards have been given by: Colorado WaterWise, Plant Select, The State of Colorado's Environmental Leadership Program and Audubon Rockies.
8. Lawns mowed at a height of 3-1/2 inches encourage deeper roots and improve moisture retention and need less water.
9. Lawns and gardens should not be watered between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. to reduce evaporation.
10. Running a half-full washing machine or dishwasher doesn't impact water usage.
11. Reducing your showering time by only 1 or 2 minutes could save up to 700 gallons a month.
12. Blue grass, the most commonly used turf grass at homes, is native to Colorado.
13. Arborists and horticulturalists are not concerned about the recent lack of precipitation in Denver.

Answers: 1 – true. 2 –true. 3-true. 4-false. 5-true. 6 – false. 7-true. 8-true. 9-true. 10-false. 11-true. 12-false. 13-false

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. A Michigan State study, funded by the National Science Foundation, contends that if water bill-rates continue to rise at their current levels, the number of U.S. households unable to pay their monthly water bills by 2022 will increase to ____ percent. Answers: A. 12 B. 24. C. 36. D. 40 E. None of the above.
2. A water-conservation ad campaign suggested, "If it's yellow, let it mellow. If it's brown, flush it down," in which state a few years ago? Answers: A. Alaska B. California C. Colorado D. Arkansas
3. People who practice effective conservation measures use a single glass of water each time when they: A. Brush their teeth B. Shave their face C. Shave their legs D. All of the above. E. None of the above.
4. Water can be contaminated downstream by the following: A. Dog poop on lawns that isn't picked up and disposed of properly. B. Oil spills on driveways or streets. C. Insecticides or chemicals spilled onto outside surfaces. D. All of the above. E. None of the above.
5. Baby wipes or wipes labeled as "flushable" shouldn't be flushed in Cherry Creek 3 because: A. They could create underground sewer line clogs. B. Products aren't always what the package claims. C. Local plumbers have discovered flushable wipes have contributed to sewer back-ups. D. All of the above.
6. Low-water plants, including native plants and species recommended by Plant Select, are quickly growing in popularity across the state. Some communities now mandating low-water landscapes or offering rebates for such plantings include: A. The City of Fountain. B. Aspen. C. Thornton. D. Northglenn. E. Glendale. F. All, except D. G. All, except E.
7. Leaders from homeowners' associations in Colorado have learned about Cherry Creek 3's water-conservation efforts after seeing the HOA in which documentaries? A. Hometown Habitat: Stories of Bringing Nature Home. B. A Drop in Time. C. Doing More with Less: The Challenge and Opportunity of Water Efficiency. E. WaterWorld. F. A & C only. G. B & D only. H. All of the above.
8. A running toilet or unfixed water leak in your home could waste this much water each month: A. Up to 50 gallons. B. Up to 50,000 gallons. C. Up to 2,500 gallons. D. Up to 75,000 gallons.
9. How do local restaurants, including Snooze, use water left behind in customers' glasses? A. Dump it down the drain. B. Put it into containers and later water their plants with it. C. Put it in toilet tanks.
10. Who said: "The most important thing I've learned about water in the last eight years is that we're all connected. People make fun of the cliché, that in Colorado 'whiskey's for drinking and water's for fighting.' But the bottom line is that water is one of our most precious resources." A. Mayor Michael Hancock B. Governor-elect Jared Polis. C. Molly Brown. D. Gov. John Hickenlooper

Answers: 1-36. 2-California. 3-D, all of the above. 4-D, All of the Above. 5-D, all of the above. 6-G, All, except Glendale. 7-F, answers A&C. 8-B, up to 50,000 gallons. F 9-B, save it to water plants. 10-D, Gov. Hickenlooper
Additional water-saving tips and information can be found on Cherry Creek 3's web site, www.cherrycreek3.com, and at Colorado WaterWise organization's web page: www.lovecoloradowater.org.

Cherry Creek 3 offers free items related to water efficiency! Get yours!

Want to play a role in helping the neighborhood become more water efficient? Here are a few things the HOA will deliver to your back patio, upon request:

- Toilet leak test kit. The kit is fast and easy to use. You'll know quickly if your toilet is leaking, potentially losing thousands of gallons of water per year.
- Free energy-efficient shower head. Just unscrew your old shower head and install this new one.
- Faucet aerators. It installs in a minute when you unscrew the old one from a kitchen or bathroom faucet. (May not work on all models of faucets.)

If you would like to participate, please send an e-mail to: jrobson@ropmco.com. Delivery could take a few days. The Association will not install water-saving devices nor test your toilet for potential leaks.

Routinely check your basement!

It's a good idea to check your basement at least once or twice a week. Here's why:

- In the front room of your basement (the room below your living room – facing your front yard), the main water line enters your home in the corner opposite of your front door. Check it for leaks. Also, if you hear a loud “roar” or “water rushing” sound while in your basement, call (303) 834-0311 and report it immediately. Such noises may indicate a leak is occurring in the yard somewhere near the front of your home.
- During winter, avoid a potential water line freeze by maintaining heat in your front basement room.
- Check to assure that sewage is not backing up into a shower stall or onto the basement floor.
- Never put grease, fibrous fruits and vegetables (example: celery), potato peels, rice or pasta, baby wipes, cloth or fabric items, coffee grounds and egg shells into your sewer. They can create a clog in your individual sewer somewhere in the line before it connects into the HOA's main sewer line.
- Per HOA policy, each owner is responsible for getting their sewer cleaned thoroughly and regularly (once every two or three years). Plumbing inside each home is the responsibility of the owner. The HOA will repair broken water and sewer lines outside homes at no expense to the individual owner. However, the HOA will not unclog your individual sewer line inside or outside your home. Owners are responsible for any water or sewage damages inside their home, regardless of the cause of a leak or back-up.

A little insight into Cherry Creek 3's relationship with water use

When most of us get our Xcel Energy bill each month, we typically look at the total amount and see what part of the bill is for electricity and how much is for natural gas cost.

Because Cherry Creek 3 HOA pays the water and sewage bill for the entire complex monthly, the Board analyzes each bill a variety of ways. Personally, I look at the total amount of the bill. It's typical for Cherry Creek 3 to get an \$11,000 bill during the months from November to March, when the sprinkler system isn't running and the swimming pool is closed. (By the way, Denver Water charges a lower rate, \$2.60 per thousand gallons, for water during the winter months and twice that rate between April and October. We also are charged extra if we exceed Denver Water's budget prediction of what our average monthly consumption averages.)

Every month, I list the amount of water consumed, the price for that consumption and the cost for sewage on a spreadsheet that I began compiling in 2007. Once I update the sheet, I'm able to compare current water usage with the same month one, two or 10 years ago. Denver Water sends a water budget report to the Board every month.

The spreadsheet helps us identify any underground-water leaks. (If it's inside a home, we need owners to get those leaks fixed quickly because we're all paying for it.) We also lift sewage manholes around the property regularly to determine if there could be a water leak. We can tell a potential leak if there is a large amount of clean, clear water running in our sewer lines.

During the warm-weather months, we don't activate our sprinkler system until late May – an efficiency method recommended by experts. We also try to respond quickly if a sprinkler head is broken or a large pool of water is reported in a yard area.

It takes all of us – residents and the Board – to help keep Cherry Creek 3 a water-wise community. **Thanks for helping make a difference.**

- By HOA President Don Ireland (cc3president@gmail.com)

