

How the water goes in here and comes out there in Seaside

City project designed to make treating public water more effective, less expensive

By Katherine Lacaze
Seaside Signal

Did you know the way Seaside drinking water comes into your home is completely different than it was two months ago?

A variable intake system installed in August at the Peterson Point Reservoir carries water to the city's treatment plant before the tap flows for customers. The new system reduces the use of chemicals and requires less labor to maintain.

The \$83,000 installation took place from Aug. 10-16, performed by Astoria's Bergerson Construction. Engineering and designing was done in-house, reducing the overall cost, Water Foreman John McKeivitt said.

The transition went "extremely well with no interruption of service to the citizens of Seaside," McKeivitt said. "We realized seamless coordination and scheduling for the project."

Crews now have a better starting product to work with during the treatment process, he said, ultimately resulting in lower annual operating costs. "Our objective is to give you crystal clear water."

From river to tap

Seaside's main source for water is the south fork of the Necanicum River, which flows by gravity to the Peterson Point lake, a 50-million gallon raw water reservoir. The secondary source is a pump station that draws from the main stem of the river, where the water quality is worse.

Since the late 1990s, water has flowed from the Peterson Point Reservoir to the treatment plant through a stationary intake screen at a depth of about 30 feet. Over the years, the department discovered high levels



JOHN MCKEIVITT/SUBMITTED PHOTO

The city of Seaside had a new variable intake system installed at the Peterson Point Reservoir in August. The system will help reduce the department's annual operating costs by bringing cleaner water to the treatment plant.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/SEASIDE SIGNAL

With the use of a flexible pipe, the new intake system at the Peterson Point Reservoir makes use of the existing intake infrastructure.

of sediment in the water as it entered the treatment plant.

The city hired McKeivitt about two years ago primarily to "look at the system and help with it," he said.

McKeivitt engineered a new system moving the intake to the middle of the reservoir, away from the edge and the direct influence of raw untreated water. The open end of the pipe is surrounded by a screen to prevent

larger debris and fish from entering the system.

The system is attached to a simple float that can set the depth of the screen, allowing Public Works to pull water from various levels, depending on factors influencing the water quality, McKeivitt said. For instance, the lake often warms some time between noon and 2 p.m., causing the water to rotate and stirring up organisms.

Calculating those types of factors, the department will know where to set the screen to intake the cleanest water — "the sweet spot," he said.

The goal, McKeivitt added, is to provide the treatment plant "as consistent a quality of water as possible year-round" so crews won't have to "monkey with the chemicals" as much, reducing manpower and expenses. Customers will not taste a difference in

their water, but the work and chemical product needed to achieve the acceptable water quality will be reduced.

Gallons of water

The water treatment plant's capacity is about 4 million gallons per day. McKeivitt projects the plant will need expansion in the future, so the facility site was designed to add more treatment capacity when needed.

From the treatment plant, the water flows by gravity to two smaller enclosed reservoirs — one by the Peterson Point reservoir to the south of Seaside and a north reservoir — "and

everywhere in between," as it is distributed to public water users, McKeivitt said.

The south reservoir holds about 4 million gallons of water and the north reservoir holds 2.6 million gallons.

Because Seaside's permanent population of approximately 6,100 people increases seasonally, the distribution system is capable of serving the larger tourist-based population.

Average demand for water during the week is about 1.8 to 2 million gallons per day. During busy weekends, the demand can jump to more than 3.5 million gallons per day.

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