

Hornbrook CSD Water System Update, Saturday July 14, 2018

Water System Damage

During the July 5 Klamathon Fire, the Hornbrook CSD water system lost one groundwater well and the roof over our main 98,000 gallon drinking water reservoir. The CSD's remaining 2 groundwater wells and second 92,000 drinking water reservoir were unharmed in the fire. The fire was followed by an extended power outage, so the remaining wells were not able to replenish the water in the tanks, and the remaining stored water was quickly depleted through use of fire hydrants in town, broken pipes in burning buildings, and personal use of water by residents attempting to protect properties by using



garden hoses. This water use created a high water demand on the water system all at once, causing a siphoning effect in both the good and burned tank. Charred wood and other debris in Reservoir #1 was quickly drawn in to the pipes throughout the water system in town.

Water Service Partially Restored

Once power was restored, the emergency water source from Rancheria Creek was diverted into Reservoir #1, and Klamath River water was brought in by CalFire tank trucks. With both Reservoirs full, CSD staff began filling the water system, purging out trapped air and flushing the lines to remove debris. When the evacuation order was lifted, people returning to their properties began using water to clean up, water dried gardens and plants. With only two (of three) wells functioning, the tanks were quickly draining, so flushing operations have been halted to keep the system full of water for use for sanitation, firefighting, etc. Since there was still debris in the lines, and untreated river water had to be used to fill the system; a "DO NOT DRINK" order is in effect until

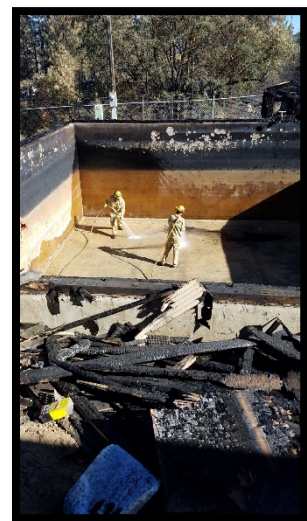
Reservoir #1 can be covered, and water samples show the water safe to drink.

Current Water System Problems

Water Supply - Current water demand is greater than the water that can be produced by the two remaining wells. We ask that everyone do their part to conserve as much water as possible by not using the water for irrigation of any type of ornamental plantings, and keep watering of plants and gardens to the minimum required to sustain life. Try to find alternate water supplies such as private wells for all outside watering.

Water System Function – Water service is partially restored to the community. Unfortunately as of this morning, one of the two remaining wells has failed, and we are working to get a contractor out ASAP to restore the pump, if that is the problem. Hopefully we are not experiencing an issue with water supply into Well #4. Loss of this second well means that loss of water supply is imminent, possibly by the end of today. **PLEASE PRACTICE MAXIMUM CONSERVATION AND PLEASE NOTIFY ANYONE YOU SEE USING WATER WASTEFULLY.**

The buried water mains throughout town were filled during the fire with pieces of charred wood, plastic, metal and other debris. This has caused some customer service pipes and fixtures to plug up and malfunction, have low pressure or not have any water at all. Until the burned Well #2 can be



put back online and the lines adequately flushed, unfortunately the debris will continue to cause plumbing trouble. The best way to avoid toilet damage is to flush by using a bucket of water, drawn from an outside faucet. Bathroom and kitchen aerators (strainer screen) will need to be cleaned more often. If you use a whole-house or other water filter system, please check and clean it more frequently. Again, **DO NOT DRINK** the water, even if filtered by your home system.

We are continuously working to purge air out of the system and get water restored to all homes. We have found that as of today, **portions of the system east of the RR tracks** are still without water, and we have engineers and others on site to assist in developing a solution. We may have to remove all water meters in the system temporarily to remove debris, as that is a likely location for debris to get stuck.

Restoring the Water System

We have been working this entire week with our insurance company to secure approval to contract for the necessary replacement well equipment and tank roof. Unfortunately, the insurance company is requiring multiple contractor estimates, which in turn requires a certain amount of engineering to secure acceptable quotes. The state has offered financial assistance for what insurance does not cover; but we do need to jump through the insurance hoops successfully first. Engineers from Pace Civil Engineering are on site today, preparing to meet with contractors to implement a plan to restore the system ASAP. If by Monday the insurance company does not authorize us to waive the bidding process, we will have to put political pressure on the state to fund the water system fixes even without insurance. Working with the insurance company has been a nightmare!

The fix of the water system involves:

1. Replacing the plumbing, electrical and building on Well #2
2. Replacing the roof over Reservoir #1 and possibly installing a floating sanitary seal (cover)
3. Filling and flushing the system thoroughly
4. Removing and cleaning water meters
5. Possibly installing additional well(s) to provide source backup

Other Resources

Bottled drinking water is and will be available throughout the duration of this event. Water is currently available at the Hornbrook Fire Station, Chevron Station and Church. Please check the county [Facebook](#) page.

