

Aspendell Mutual Water Company
and
Volunteer Fire Department

NEWSLETTER
May 30, 2008

WILDFIRES

Wildfires around Aspendell continue to be a major concern. Wildfires can start from a number of sources, including lightning strikes, campfires not extinguished properly and careless smokers. Wildfires can spread very rapidly and early deployment of our fire engines is critical to containing a fire. Everyone, whether a permanent or part-time resident, should be familiar with the operation of the equipment. Times and locations of fire training are posted at the firehouse and Fire Chief Ken Kuencer (760- 872-3271) is available for training sessions at your convenience. Additionally, it is extremely important that all home owners clear at least 30 feet from their homes. Several homes have heavy growth right up to the house, making it virtually impossible to protect the home in the event of a fire. This also increases the fire hazard to neighboring residences and the community as a whole. A gasoline-powered weed eater and chain saws are available at the fire house and a trailer is available to haul leaves and brush to the dump. At this point, the US Forest Service has not made a decision about providing a brush chipper this year. We hope to have a decision to report at the annual meeting.

BARRICADE

Thanks to Peggy and Roger Wilhelm, many members of the Aspendell community have purchased Barricade. Barricade is a fire-retardant compound that is sprayed on your home with a water hose. It protects your home from an approaching fire (see the video on aspendell.org website, depicting the effectiveness of Barricade). A reminder to those of you who purchased Barricade: you must keep it from freezing, and it should be shaken periodically. Barbara Harthorn has prepared a map showing where homeowners store their Barricade. The map will be kept in the firehouse and on each of the fire engines. If you have not already done so, please give your Barricade storage information to Barbara via e-mail (harthorn@isber.ucsb.edu) or call her at 805-687-4405. If you would like to purchase Barricade, please contact the Wilhelms at 760-872-3306 or 805-529-8147, or via e-mail (aspdoll@aol.com).

ANNUAL HOSE TESTING PARTY AND BARBECUE

In order to maintain our Fire Department ISO rating, we have to conduct and document year round fire training, have the Crown fire engine pump tested, and pressure test the hoses. The hose testing is scheduled for **June 28th, beginning at 9:00 a.m.** It is a big job and we need your help. The celebration barbecue will be held at the McConnell's Eagles Nest, with the social hour starting at 5:00 p.m., and dinner at 6:00 p.m. Please join us, whether or not you are able to help with the hose testing!

YOUR WATER SYSTEM

We are very fortunate to have a very good water system with excellent water quality in Aspendell. The fact that we have cool temperatures and are away from most sources of contamination is a big factor. Each month, Inyo County tests our water for coliform bacteria and the tests have always been negative. Over 65 tests have been conducted on our water system

over the years and the results have been either non-detect or within limits. While we have ample water, all residents can do their part by repairing leaks, which, even if small, can waste thousands of gallons a day. **IMPORTANT!!** Several sections of our water system have no full time residents, so if you have been away from your home for a while, be sure to run your water for 15-20 minutes to freshen the supply.

WHITE PINE WATER LINE AND HYDRANT REPLACEMENT

This past year, the ¾" water line on White Pine Road, which served three houses, was replaced by a 4" line, with a fire hydrant at the end of the line. The work was done by RG Plumbing, the lowest competitive bidder. Major unexpected problems were encountered in replacing the line because we were unable to run the new line alongside the road as planned. This was infeasible because of interference with electrical and telephone lines that were not known at the start. As a result, the line had to be laid under the road. Large boulders necessitated bringing in a rock crusher, at substantial expense. Also, the pavement had to be replaced, which was not considered in the original bid. The leaking fire hydrants on Iris and Cataract were also replaced. In this case, Kendall Engineering was the lowest competitive bidder and completed the work.

INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE WATER SYSTEM

It has been determined that an independent assessment of the Aspendell water system should be conducted. In the course of looking for someone qualified to conduct the assessment, one of our community members, Bruce Burnworth, volunteered his services. Bruce is a registered civil engineer with extensive water system experience. He is a Principal Engineer for Penfield and Smith. Bruce is eminently qualified to conduct the assessment and we are most grateful for his assistance. The Water Board has provided the information Bruce has requested and will assist in any way possible. The status of the assessment will be reported at the annual membership meeting on July 5, 2008.

ASPENDELL WEBSITE (www.aspendell.org)

The Aspendell website has been in operation since 2003 thanks to Roy Harthorn. The website offers current and forecast weather, road condition information, local tips and lore, a photo gallery, avalanche bulletins, new fire protection information, and minutes (both draft and final) of AMWC meeting minutes. The website includes instructions for submitting e-mail news. Our thanks to Roy for a great addition to our community!

ANNUAL ARCHER PICNIC

The annual Archer picnic (named in honor of long-time residents and community advocates Jim and Lois Archer) will be held at 175 Columbine Dr. starting at 5 p.m. on July 5th. This is a potluck event that is fun and provides a wonderful way to renew friendships, meet new members of the Aspendell community, and try out new recipes! Please bring a main dish, salad and/or dessert to feed your family and 8 others.

COUNTY SERVICE AREA (CSA) #2 – SEWER SYSTEM

CSA #2 is not connected to the AMWC in any way, but serves a vital function for the entire Aspendell community. Inyo County operates the sewer system that serves the community, with the assistance of an advisory committee made up of three members of the Aspendell

community. We thank these members for their service. **IMPORTANT!!** If you experience or observe a sewer overflow, blockage or construction damage to a sewer line, it is imperative that you contact one of the following as soon as possible:

Bob Caddoo 872-7213
Hugh Cornett 873-3772
Wayne Winch 872-4462

If you are unable to contact one of these CSA #2 advisors, please contact:

Mike Conklin, Inyo County Public Works 878-0201

Please note that this is updated contact information that replaces the data in your 2007 Aspendell directory. We suggest that you place this information in your Directory.

CLEARING AROUND HOUSES

If you need assistance with clearing around your home or other odd jobs, you can contact Sean Peavy at 760-872-6788. This young man works at Cardinal Resort during the summer months but can make arrangements to provide assistance. Aspendell residents can also recommend the following:

Tree trimming: Tom Jackson – 872-2873 (see the great job at Paula Coombes home)
Brush removal: Robert Jennings – 937-1524

ANNUAL MEETING AND FIRE TRAINING

Please see the enclosed agenda for the annual membership meeting, scheduled to begin at 9:00 a.m. on July 5, 2008, at the firehouse. Note that fire training is scheduled for 1:00 p.m. on July 5, 2008. Please participate!

Sincerely,

The Aspendell Mutual Water Company Board and Fire Chief

Lew McConnell – President
Paula Coombes – Vice-President
Elfriede Geiger – Member at large

Bob Tomko – Treasurer
Joanne Schneider - Secretary
Ken Kuencer – Fire Chief

NOTICE – APOA MEETING

Jim Blankenship, Sharon Ford and Charlene and Tim Reed (the new APOA Board members) invite you to participate in an informal, open discussion on issues affecting the Aspendell community. An agenda for the meeting will be prepared and made available at the meeting. The agenda will also will be posted at the fire house and on the aspendell.org website. The meeting will be held at 11:30 a.m. at the fire house. We hope that you'll join us!