

PINERY PIPELINE OCTOBER 2026



Please join us at our District Office for our monthly Board Meetings typically held at 6:00pm on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Our Upcoming Board Meetings will be held at 6:00pm on Wednesday, October 14th and November 18th.

From your Board of Directors

As the watering season winds down, I would like to thank everyone for working within this summer's restrictions. We would rather not have imposed them, but a very dry winter followed by a very hot summer made them necessary.

In a typical year, the District aims to deliver about 70% of its water from renewable Cherry Creek sources and only 30% from deep wells in the nonrenewable Denver Basin aquifers. This year that ratio was roughly reversed, and we relied heavily on our deep wells to meet demand. Even so, we still had to pump a significant amount of water from the creek while our rights were "out of priority." Colorado water law works on "first in time, first in right". When the creek runs low, older (senior) water rights are served first. Under the District's court-approved augmentation plan, any creek water we pump during those periods must be returned to the creek. Think of it as a loan that must be repaid.

To make sure we can return enough water to stay within our augmentation plan, the Board has extended watering restrictions through October 31.

This has been one of the most challenging years the District has faced, and we are acting on what we learned. Our primary effort is starting the process to expand Walker Reservoir and add a new deep well at the reservoir site. Together, these projects will increase our storage and our ability to fill it when our Cherry Creek rights are out of priority, so we are better prepared for the next dry year.

This time of year also means looking ahead, including setting next year's budget, rates, and fees. Based on customer input, the Board is considering a switch from our current tiered rates to a water budget structure, an approach that is increasingly common in Colorado and across the West. Under a water budget, each customer receives an annual allocation tailored to their property. The proposal under consideration includes:

- 5,000 gallons per month for indoor use (about 165 gallons per day).
- A customized outdoor allowance based on the water needed to keep Kentucky bluegrass healthy on 30% of your lot, capped at 30% of a one-acre lot. For example, a quarter-acre lot would receive enough water for about 3,300 square feet of lawn. Lots of one acre or larger would be capped at about 13,000 square feet.
- Your outdoor budget would be spread across the watering season based on historical use, with more water available in the hottest months.



The Board will review the first draft of the new rate structure at our regular meeting on Wednesday, October 14, at 6 PM in the District office. If you would like to learn more about water budgets and the specific structure being considered, I encourage you to attend. The public hearing on the proposed rates and fees will take place at the regular Board meeting in November.

Josh Connors, Director, Pinery Water and Wastewater District

PREPARE YOUR SPRINKLER SYSTEM FOR WINTER

As temperatures begin to drop, it is time to start preparing your irrigation system for the winter months. Freezing temperatures can cause water left in sprinkler lines, backflow devices, valves, and other components to freeze and potentially cause damage.



Winterize Before Freezing Temperatures Arrive

Taking the time to properly winterize your sprinkler system before freezing temperatures arrive can help protect your irrigation system and prevent costly repairs.

If you have an underground sprinkler system, consider having it **professionally winterized or “blown out”** before the first hard freeze. A professional winterization removes water from the irrigation lines and sprinkler components using compressed air.

Before winterizing your system:

- **Check for leaks or damage.** Look over sprinkler heads, valves and other visible components for leaks or damage that should be repaired before winter.
- **Turn off or adjust your irrigation controller.** Once regular watering is no longer needed, adjust your controller to prevent unnecessary watering.
- **Schedule your winterization early.** Do not wait until after the first freeze. Scheduling ahead can help ensure your system is winterized before freezing temperatures arrive.
- **Protect your backflow prevention device.** Backflow devices can be damaged if water remains inside and freezes. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations or have the device properly winterized.
- **Have your system professionally blown out.** A professional can use the appropriate equipment to remove water from each irrigation zone and help reduce the risk of freeze damage.
- **Do not wait until after a freeze.** Once water has frozen inside the system, damage may already have occurred.



STILL WATERING? REMEMBER THE RESTRICTIONS

Although the weather is getting colder, some landscapes may still need occasional watering during October. **Mandatory watering restrictions have been extended through October.** If you choose to water during October, you must continue following the two-day-per-week watering schedule assigned to your property address. Please do not water outside of your designated watering days. Watering outside of the mandatory restrictions will result in watering violation charges being assessed to your account. As temperatures continue to fall, remember that your landscape typically requires less water. Check your lawn and plants before watering and adjust your irrigation schedule accordingly.

A little preparation before winter can help protect your irrigation system from freeze damage and unnecessary repairs. As we transition out of the irrigation season, thank you for continuing to conserve water and follow the mandatory watering restrictions extended through October.

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