

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend. This is Jim Burke with local news and commentary for Thursday, August 15, 2024.

This press release came in from the City of Port Townsend just yesterday: A mandatory water conservation notice has been issued by the City of Port Townsend to all city water customers while a leak in the main water transmission line is being assessed and repaired. This conservation notice includes several steps that customers could take, including reducing outdoor water use for irrigation, taking shorter showers, operating dish and clothes washers only when full, and fixing leaky faucets and/or toilets. This conservation measure will remain in effect until further notice.

The City and Port Townsend Paper Corporation (Mill) are working under the terms of the Water Use Agreement to repair the leak. Due to the transmission line being shut down, water supply is being provided by the City Lake Reservoir. The City Lake Reservoir can provide water for a minimum of 5 days under normal operations. The City and Mill are both implementing water conservation measures to extend the amount of time the City Lake Reservoir can provide water. During the summer, the City uses approximately 2 million gallons per day; the Mill uses approximately 11 million gallons per day.

The leak, in a steep and difficult-to-access location, is the result of a cracked fitting which was discharging approximately 400 gallons of water per minute. This leak eroded soil near the transmission line on the hillside near Snow Creek. Property owners along the affected area of the pipeline are being notified and City staff are coordinating as appropriate with regional and state agencies. Initial assessment in the field by City staff is that quick and successful pipeline repair is likely in the coming few days. Further information will be provided when available. Many thanks to City and Mill water system maintenance staff for their response efforts.

A reminder that the All County Picnic this Sunday, August 18 is at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds from 11am until 4pm. Join your neighbors and find out how you can be part of local resilience in the event of a county or state-wide emergency.

And, the Jefferson Board of County Commissioners meeting this coming Monday, August 19 is canceled.

From the *Peninsula Daily News*: Four electric vehicles are being considered by different departments within Jefferson County. Josh Montgomery, the county's public works fleet manager, presented an electric vehicle (EV) workshop on Monday to the Board of County Commissioners, who rejected a resource request last week for a gas- or diesel-fueled truck for the new office of the Fire Marshal. Public Works Director Monte Reinders said Tuesday, "It's a new thing for Jefferson County and Jefferson County's fleet. No one's opposed to it, but there's a lot to get used to. First of all, we've got to have charging stations at our facilities, which we currently don't."

The county owns one electric vehicle, a Chevy Bolt. Two years ago, the state Department of Ecology adopted California's vehicle emission standards, which require that, by 2035, 100 percent of new vehicle sales for passenger cars, light-duty trucks, and medium-duty vehicles must have zero emissions, according to their website. Of the four EV purchases the county is considering, two would be replacements for retiring fleet vehicles, one would test functionality as a pursuit vehicle for the sheriff's department, and one would be for the office of the Fire Marshal, Montgomery said.

He offered commissioners a side-by-side comparison that showed while the initial costs of EVs are more expensive, they are projected to save on expenses through the life of the vehicle when fuel or charge and maintenance are taken into consideration. The discrepancy in initial costs between EVs and combustion vehicles would require additional funding for the fleet. The commissioners said they were likely to support EV purchases. The commissioners passed a motion for fleets and public works to move ahead with the four vehicles discussed, to further consider charging station options and to work on developing an EV policy moving forward.

The health department, public works, the sheriff's office, and the office of the fire marshal are departments currently on deck to add EVs. Fire Marshal Phil Cecere, who also attended Monday's meeting, said he had been able to try a Ford F-150 Lightning truck during the week, as well as look into its specs. He concluded that the vehicle would serve his office's needs. The Office of the Fire Marshal does not currently have a vehicle.

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news Monday through Friday at noon and 5pm and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us at news@kptz.org. I'm Jim Burke. Thanks for listening.