

Technical Memorandum

To: Tom Skjelstad, General Manager

From: Catherine Hansford

Date: April 7, 2016

Subject: Ski Area Wastewater Fee Comparison

Purpose

On March 8th, the State Water Resource Control Board suggested the Donner Summit Public Utility District (DSPUD) complete a comparison of wastewater fees for ski areas in the western United States. HEC collected information for 23 ski areas located in California, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, and Nevada. **Table 1** summarizes the wastewater fees of the comparison ski areas.

Major Findings

The rate comparison makes the following major findings:

1. DSPUD's rate structure is on par with other wastewater providers servicing ski areas.
2. Of the 17 comparison wastewater purveyors who provide wastewater service to ski areas, 10 bill on a per Equivalent Dwelling Unit (EDU) or per unit basis. Billing on a per unit basis is essentially the same as on a per EDU basis. Because EDU calculations vary from place to place, accurate comparisons of estimated bills cannot be done. Even so, DSPUD's charge per EDU of \$167.00 per month is more than four times greater than the next highest charge per EDU of the wastewater providers surveyed, the City of Big Bear Lake. The City of Big Bear Lake, which provides service to Big Bear and Snow Summit ski areas, has a charge of \$36.49 per EDU per month. Other ski areas paying per EDU or unit include June Mountain, Alpine Meadows, Homewood, Tahoe Donner Downhill, and Northstar in California, Beaver Creek, Vail, and Breckenridge in Colorado, and Alta in Utah.
3. Five of the comparison wastewater purveyors bill on a base and flow charge, and 2 bill by flow charge only. Snyderville Basin Water Reclamation District, which provides wastewater services to Park City and Deer Valley, Utah, charges a base rate per EDU and a flow charge based on water meter reads. Snyderville is the only provider with this type of rate structure in the comparison. Kirkwood has the same base charge of \$34.75 for all customers each month. Flow charges are based on monthly water use. Incline Village GID wastewater base charges are by water meter size, and flow charges are based on monthly water use.

4. The Town of Jackson, wastewater provider for Snow King, Wyoming, bills based on average winter water use for single family residential and actual water use for all other residential and non-residential customer types. The Town of Jackson is the only provider in the comparison that incorporates wastewater strength (BOD and TSS) factors in its rate structure.
5. Unique in the comparison, Squaw PSD charges the ski area a base charge plus flow rate. The flow rate is only applied when sewer flows exceed 75,000 gallons per meter per year. This is the only provider with sewer meters.
6. Bear Valley ski area in California and Steamboat Springs in Colorado are charged solely on flow, as measured through their water meters.
7. For Squaw Valley, Alpine Meadows, Homewood, and Tahoe Donner Downhill, it should be noted the rate in the table only includes collection fee charges. Wastewater treatment is provided by the Tahoe-Truckee Sanitation Agency (TTSA) and billed under a separate fee schedule. Although Northstar's wastewater treatment service is provided by TTSA, Northstar's TTSA fees are included in their rates. TTSA bills based on the type of units in the resort and/or number of fixtures; essentially a per EDU rate structure. TTSA ski area customers, with the exception of Northstar, pay wastewater treatment fees with property tax bills.

Table 1
Donner Summit PUD
Ski Area Wastewater Fees Comparison

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Provider		Level of Treatment	Ski Area	Customer Classification	Billing Frequency	Bill Basis	Base per Month	Flow (kgal)	Residential Billing		Notes
									Base per Month	Flow (kgal)	
CALIFORNIA											
Flat Rate										[1]	
	Donner Summit PUD	Tertiary	Sugar Bowl	n.a.	Monthly	per EDU	\$167.00		\$167.00		
			Boreal	n.a.	Monthly	per EDU	\$167.00		\$167.00		
			Soda Springs	n.a.	Monthly	per EDU	\$167.00		\$167.00		
1	City of Big Bear Lake	No Treatment	Donner Ski Ranch	n.a.	Monthly	per EDU	\$167.00		\$167.00		
			Big Bear	n.a.	Annual	per EDU	\$36.49		\$36.49		
2	June Lakes Public Utility District	Secondary	Snow Summit	n.a.	Annual	per EDU	\$36.49		\$36.49		
3	Alpine Springs CWD	No Treatment	June Mountain	Based on unit type [2]	Monthly	per unit	NOTES		\$24.26		
			Alpine Meadows	Based on fixtures	Annually	per unit	\$6.52		\$6.52		
4	Tahoe City Public Utility District	No Treatment	Homewood	Based on unit type [2]	Quarterly	per unit	NOTES		\$39.95		
5	Truckee Sanitary District	No Treatment	Tahoe Donner Downhill	Based on unit type [2]	Monthly	per unit	NOTES		\$14.50		
6	Northstar CSD	No Treatment	Northstar	Based on unit type [2]	Monthly	per unit	NOTES		\$85.81		
7	TTSA (Wastewater Treatment)	Tertiary	NOTES	Based on unit type [2]	Semi-Annual	per unit	NOTES		\$25.50		
Flow Rate											
8	Kirkwood Meadows PUD	Tertiary	Kirkwood	n.a.	Monthly	base/flow	\$34.75	\$16.88	\$34.75	\$16.88	
9	Squaw Valley PSD	No Treatment	Squaw Valley	Commercial/Industrial	Annually	base/flow	\$79.50	\$12.74	\$45.00	\$0.00	
10	Bear Valley Water District	Primary	Bear Valley	Commercial	Monthly	flow	\$0.00	\$64.00	\$90.37	\$0.00	
OTHER											
Flat Rate											
11	Eagle River Water and Sanitation District	Secondary	Beaver Creek - CO	n.a.	Monthly	per EDU	\$34.47		\$34.47		
			Vail - CO	n.a.	Monthly	per EDU	\$34.47		\$34.47		
12	Upper Blue Sanitation District	Tertiary	Breckenridge - CO	n.a.	Quarterly	per EDU	\$26.00		\$26.00		
13	Town of Alta	No Treatment	Alta - UT	n.a.	Annually	per EDU	\$31.25		\$31.25		
Flow Rate											
14	IVGID	Secondary	Diamond Peak - NV	Commercial	Monthly	meter size/flow	\$1,545.84	\$2.90	\$46.38	\$2.90	
15	Snyderville Basin Water Reclamation District	Tertiary	Park City - UT	n.a.	Monthly	per EDU/flow	\$27.46	\$2.61	\$27.46	\$2.61	
			Deer Valley - UT	n.a.	Monthly	per EDU/flow	\$27.46	\$2.61	\$27.46	\$2.61	
16	Mount Werner Water and Sanitation District	No Treatment	Steamboat Springs - CO	Commercial	Quarterly	flow	\$0.00	\$5.55	\$42.57	\$0.00	
17	Town of Jackson	Tertiary	Snow King - WY	Based on unit type [2]	Monthly	meter size/flow	\$153.23	\$1.67	\$7.05	\$1.67	

Source: Provider billing departments.

[1] TTSA fees not included for Squaw Valley, Alpine Meadows, Homewood, and Tahoe Donner Downhill.

[2] Examples of billing for different unit types: restaurants billed by number of seats, car wash by number of bays, laundries by number of machines, and other businesses by number of plumbing fixtures.

ski rates