



# **Oak Lodge Sanitary District Surface Water Management Customer Survey Results**

**March 2010**



# Oak Lodge Sanitary District – Surface Water Management Customer Survey

## Results - March 2010

The Oak Lodge Sanitary District is preparing a Strategic Plan to identify future priorities for its surface water management program. An important part of the strategic planning process is to get feedback from customers on the District's current program. A survey mailed to every customer asked about surface water issues, quality of local streams, information needs and the District's priorities for the future. More than 1,000 customers representing a cross-section of the community responded. The survey results will be used by the District to focus efforts and resources on customers' top priorities.

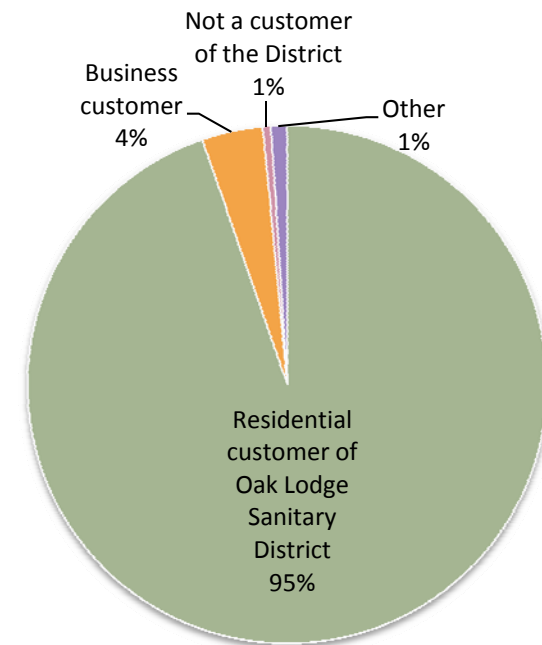
### *Survey Respondents' Profile*

95% of respondents are residential customers. Oak Lodge Sanitary District is service area is mostly residential (86% of District land is zoned single/multi family residential).



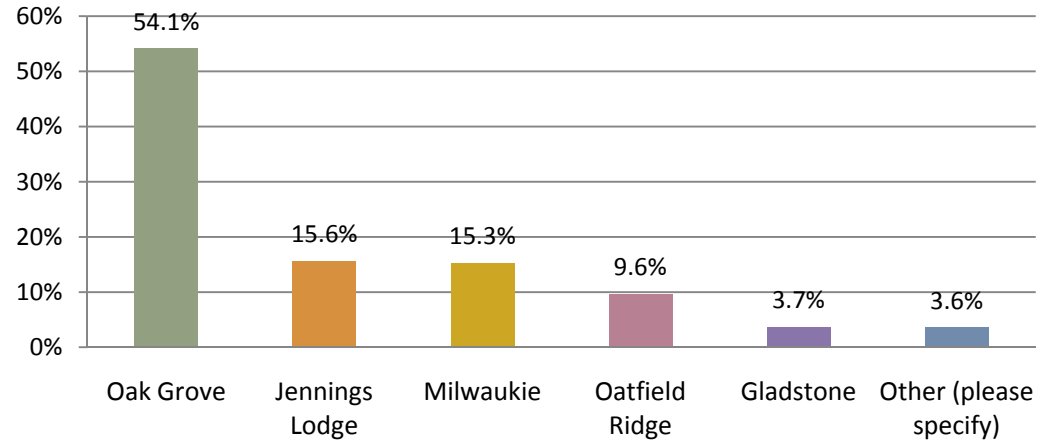
**Oak Lodge Sanitary District provides surface water management services for 32,000 area residents.**

### I am a:



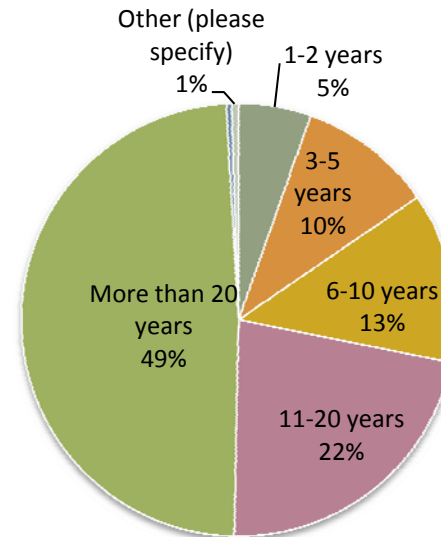
Over half of all respondents are from Oak Grove, Oak Lodge Sanitary District's largest customer base. A good mix of customers from other areas are also represented in the survey.

### My home / business is in:



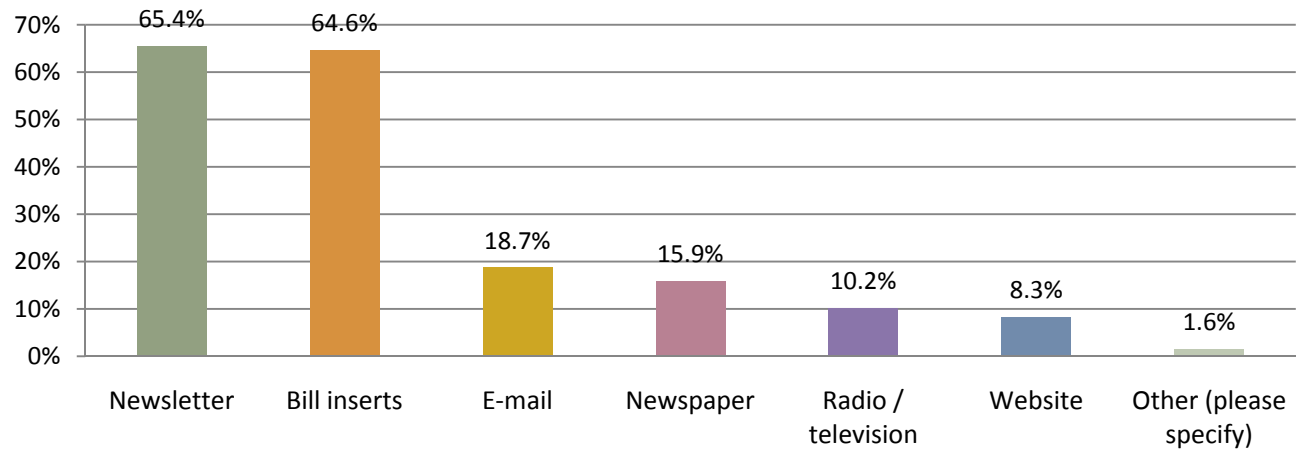
Also consistent with area demographics, most respondents are long-term Oak Lodge Sanitary District residents (almost half have lived in the area more than 20 years.)

### I have been an Oak Lodge Sanitary District customer:



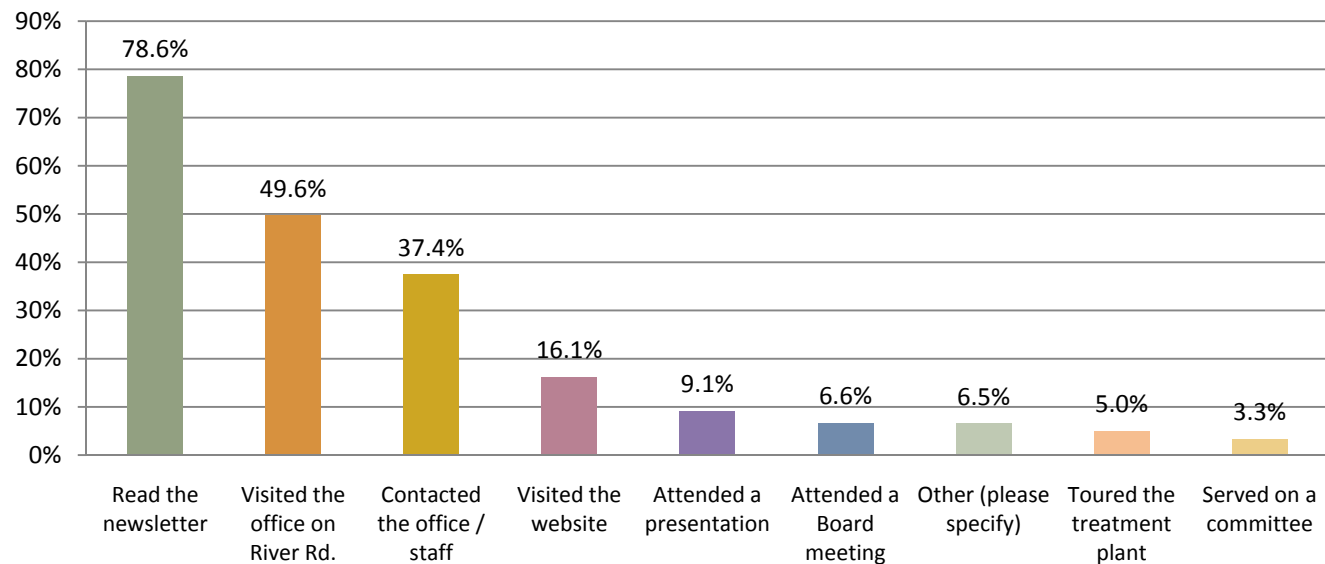
Customers say the best way to get information about Oak Lodge Sanitary District is through the District's newsletter and utility bill inserts.

### The best way for me to stay informed about surface water management is:



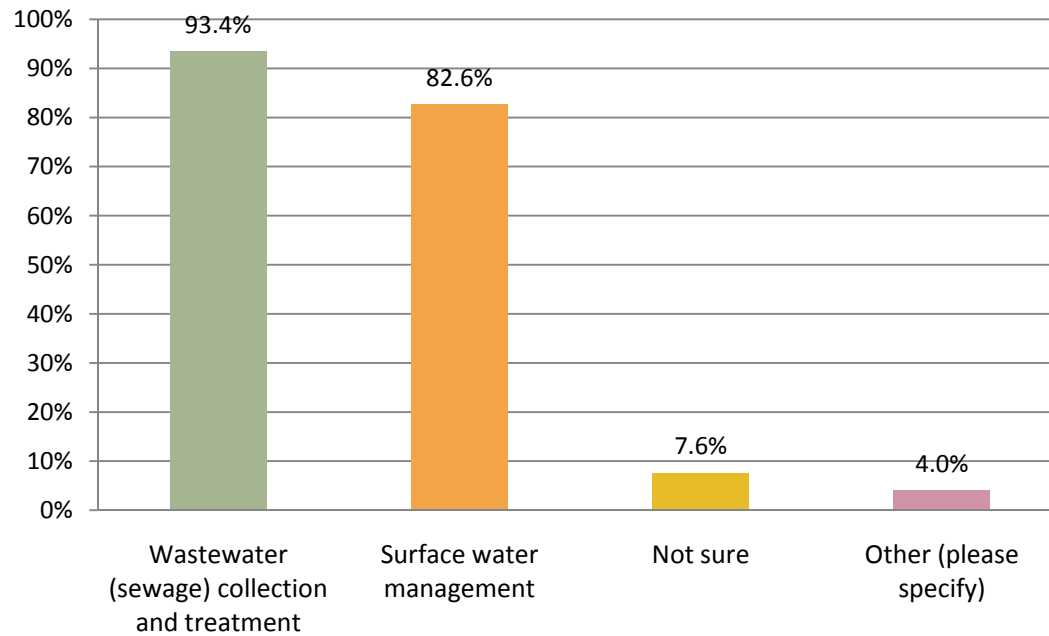
Along with reading the District newsletter (79%), many customers (49%) have visited the Administrative Office located on River Road or had direct contact with staff (37%).

### My interactions with the Oak Lodge Sanitary District include:



Almost all customers know the District provides wastewater services. The percent of customers who know the District provides surface water services has increased from 70% to 83% since the 2009 customer survey. A fact sheet mailed with the survey may have contributed to this increase in awareness of the District's role in surface water management.

### The District provides the following services:



## Surface Water Issues

### Water Quality

Two-thirds of survey respondents think water quality in local streams and lakes is good or excellent. Only 4% rate water quality as poor.

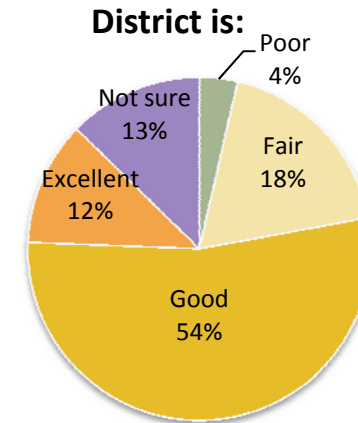
Top water quality concerns include polluted runoff from streets and yards (45%), sewage overflow into streams (33%) and pollution from industrial / other sources (23%).

### Water Quantity

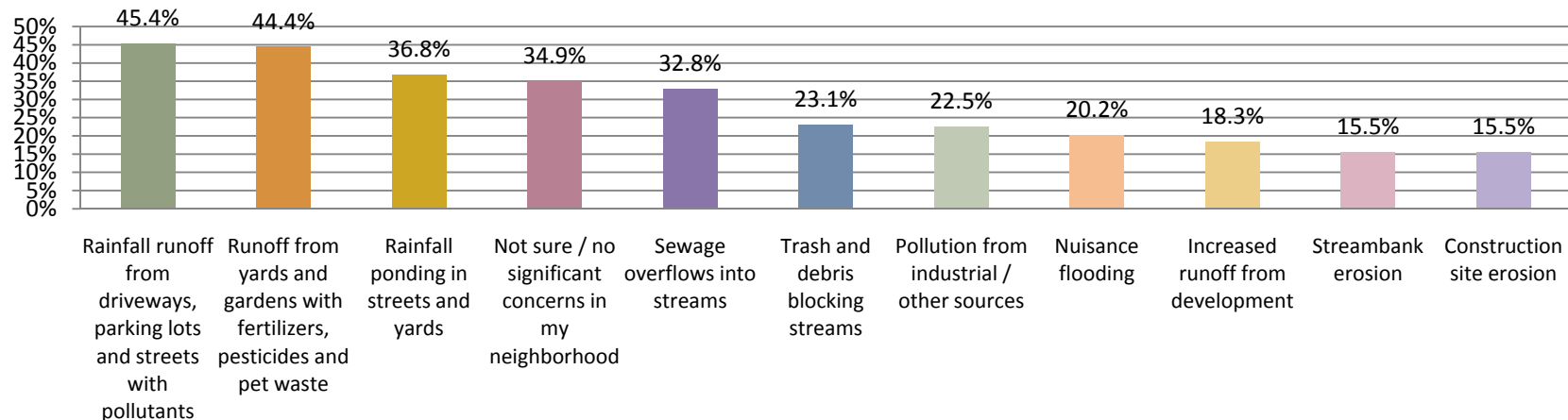
Ponding of water in streets and yards (37%) is a concern for one-third of customers, followed by trash and debris blocking streams (23%) and nuisance flooding (20%).

One-third of customers say they have “no significant concerns in my neighborhood”, which indicates surface water issues aren’t perceived as a problem by everyone.

**To the best of your knowledge, overall water quality of streams and lakes in the Oak Lodge**

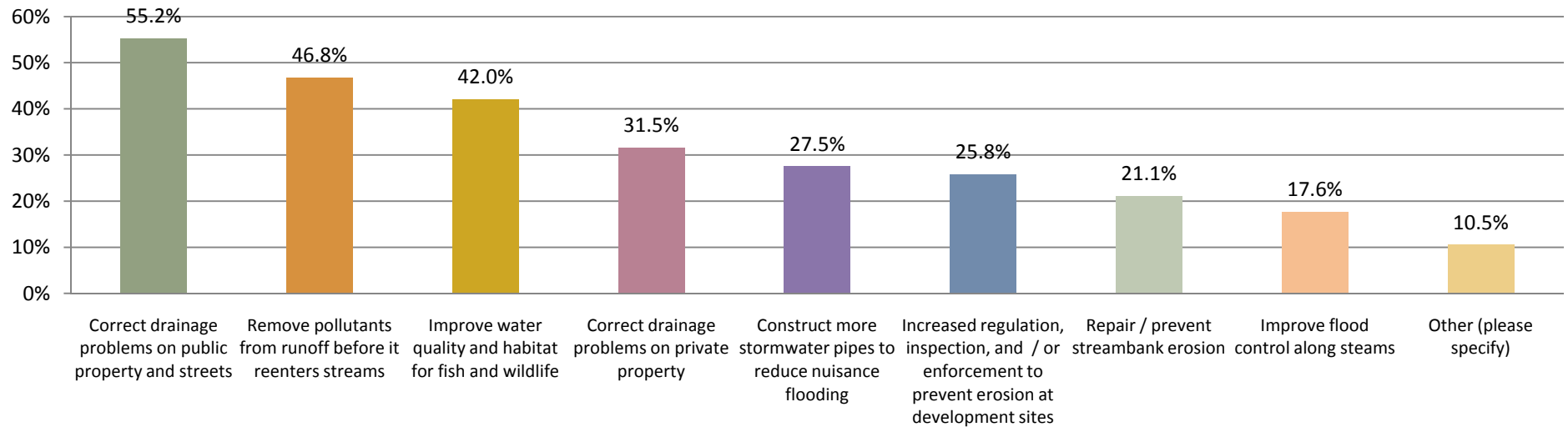


### Do any of the following surface water issues in your neighborhood concern you?

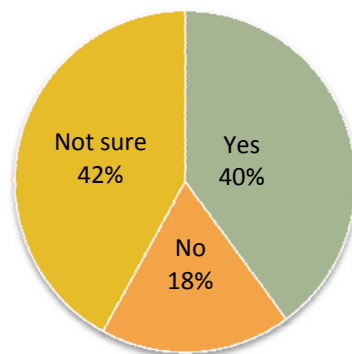


## SWM Priorities

### Which District activities do you think are most important for surface water management?



### Important enough for the District to spend more money?



The three top priorities for District SWM activities are:

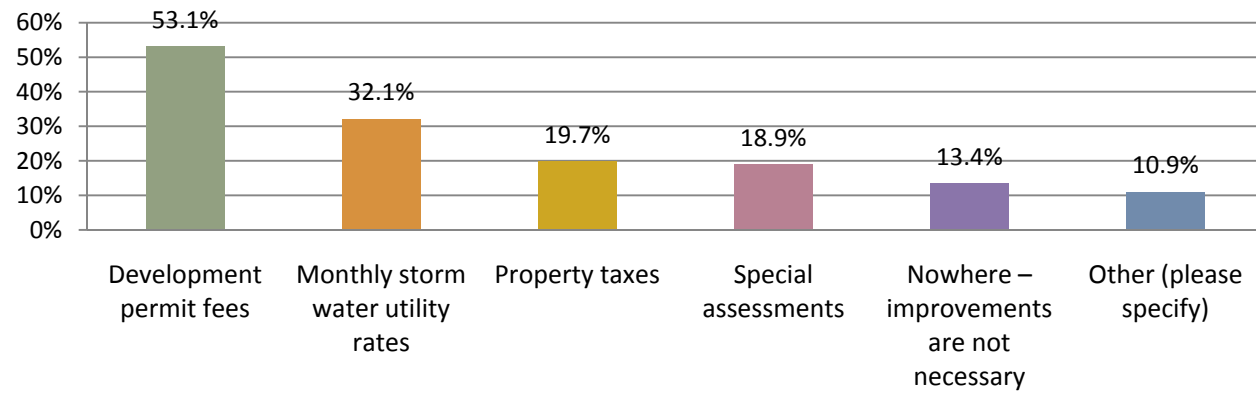
- ✓ Correct drainage problems on public property/streets (55%)
- ✓ Remove pollutants from runoff (47%)
- ✓ Improve water quality and habitat (42%)

Most customers aren't yet convinced there is a need to spend more money on surface water management.

## Surface Water Management Revenue Sources

Customers' preferred funding sources to support SWM activities are development fees (53%) and monthly rates (32%).

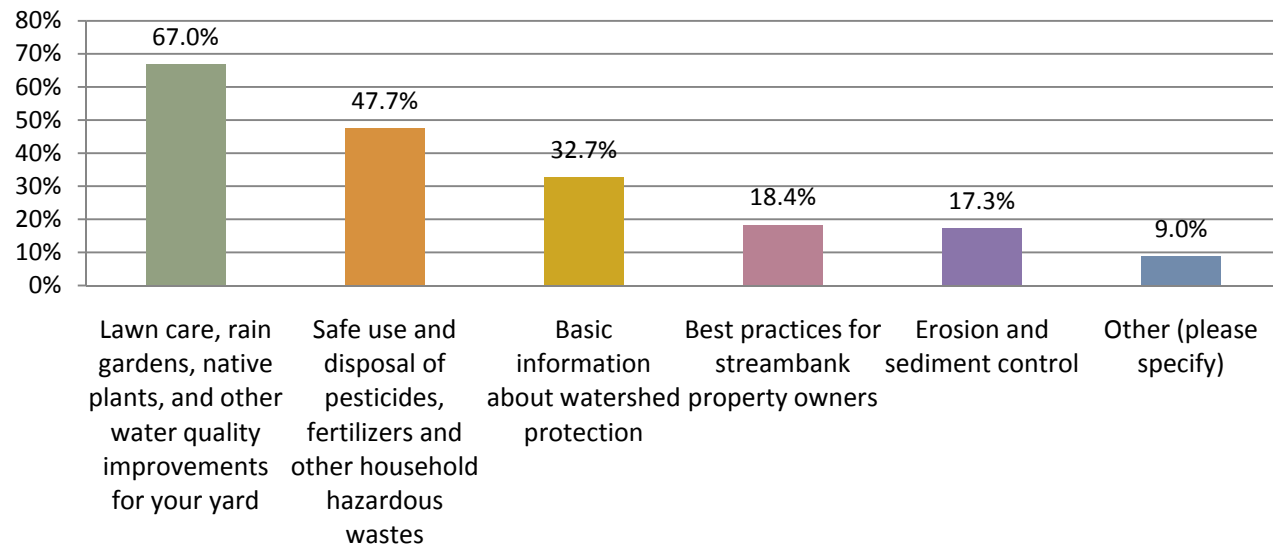
Where should revenues to improve the surface water system come from?



## More Information?

Two-thirds of customers want more information on lawn care and other water quality improvements in their yards. Nearly half ask for information on safe use and disposal of pesticides, etc.

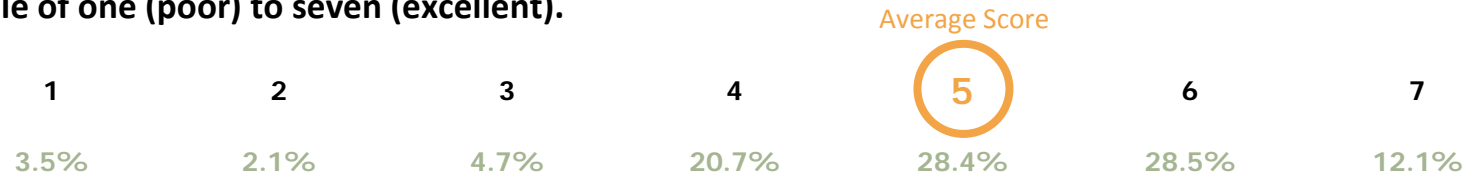
Would you like to receive more information on surface water management?



## Customer Service Rating

Customers rate the quality of the District's surface water management service as 5 on a scale of one (poor) to seven (excellent). This rating compares to customers' 2009 rating of 6 for the District's wastewater service.

**How would you rate the surface water management services you receive from Oak Lodge Sanitary District, on a scale of one (poor) to seven (excellent).**



## Customer Comments

Customers were asked to provide any feedback they had on the Surface Water Management Program. Respondents' comments focused on the lack of stormwater facilities, in-the-field stormwater service and jurisdictional coordination. Flooding, ponding of water and rainwater runoff appear to be of more concern to customers than water quality, which was rarely mentioned except for the need for education. Similar to the 2009 customer survey, District staff received plenty of kudos for their great customer service. Following are examples of comments received.

### Lack of Stormwater Facilities

*Our street has only 2 storm drains on the entire circle and we often have water sitting on the street at the curb.*

*We have a pump under our house as do many of our neighbors. Having only a small dry well on our street doesn't help much here! Can you help us?*

*There are definite waste water/runoff problems in my neighborhood -- since there is little underground piping water collects in big puddles at the road sides -- puddles will oil slick on top and flooding roadside areas. Sure would be great to have services out here! Since there is no effort to cut roadside plants, blackberries, and ivy, they clog what little drainage there is.*

*My rating is a bit on the tough side since I am frustrated with our drainage situation and believe that the issue is due to lack of water management (i.e. drainage, culverts, etc) and the fact that we have spent the last 2 1/2 years of living here trying to get improvement help and have felt to get the run around. While the people we have spoken with have been more than kind, we have never felt that there was any real commitment to solving the problem. We have high hopes for the Trolley Trail improvements.*

*To the best of my knowledge there is no storm/surface water management in my neighborhood (River Rd. between Courtney and Oak Grove Blvd). Because of the grade and crown of River Rd., water will run off the street and pool/flood private properties.*

## **Lack of Service**

*I do not see what surface water management does for our neighborhood.*

*Don't know if any surface management services exist.*

*We live on a street that floods anytime there's more than an inch of rain. Other streets around us are the same. We wonder what we are paying for?*

*Why my bill is so high and where does my money go to and what exactly am I paying for?*

*Not sure what services we have been provided as homeowners. No direct service has been received that I can recall. I have never seen anything in our neighborhood being repaired or maintained or changed. Are you doing something remotely?*

*Lived on a "private cul-de-sac" with approx. 5 storm drains plus a "ditch" that is littered with debris and garbage - we (as neighbors) are tired of "cleaning up". Never once saw the "storm drains" cleaned in 17 years! Where is the \$6/mo. going to manage these surface water drains? I (and neighbors) made numerous calls but to no avail!*

*A surface water representative examined my problem and did nothing. A drainage ditch to the storm sewer was filled with no place for runoff to go. This caused my property to flood.*

*Couldn't really rate question 14 because there are little if any surface water services in my part of the district...not bad, not good...just not.*

*I live on a flag lot off a cul-de-sac. All the surface water from the street drains to the back of my property into an open ditch. I contacted Oak Lodge months ago about cleaning out the ditch. A man came out and said they would take care of it. It never happened. It still needs cleaning out.*

*The drain on our street hasn't been cleaned in years.*

*My only complaint would be that it took photos of our street and several phone calls and letters to get your attention. Once we got it, we got good service.*

## **Flooding a Problem for Some**

*The annual flooding is a major problem.*

*Fix the high water on Jennings Ave.*

*We get a lot of rain. Keeping the streets drained of flooding and/or ponding is a big concern*

*Good job overall! I am concerned, however, for neighbors to the south who suffer from flooding problems associated with Boardman Creek and wetlands in that area. Streamside waters along the Trolley Trail there-- and especially nearby street run-off-- look terribly polluted.*

## **Lack of Jurisdictional Coordination**

*Personnel at OLSD do not seem to care about residence owners, telling us the problem is ours and not the District. County officials point to the District management as needing to correct issues - not residence owners.*

*I have contacted OLSD about flooding several times. It seems that no one can do anything because of lack of money, they don't "actually manage" that area and/or it's not their problem to correct. The surface water is not being managed so it's flooding the streams, the yards, the streets and homes. I have been told that I should attend meetings, and I should, but... what meetings? Meetings w/OLSD, Clackamas County, Parks & Rec, Jennings Lodge, etc..? Since no one is responsible, what meetings do I attend?*

*A lot more could be done in this area if the District had the cooperation of the State and County. In fact, I'd be happier (and happy to pay extra) if the District were to take over much of this responsibility from the County (and maybe the State, too).*

*I applaud the District's effort to update its SWM/Watershed plan and program. There's a lot that needs to be done but with the District's leadership in cooperation with other jurisdictions significant, measurable, and cost effective impacts/improvements can be made for current and future generations and the environment.*

*We should be protecting watershed and upstream areas such as 3-creeks/ N. Clackamas Park & make the country do the same.*

*I have my own dry wells for drain/rain water. The County is running water down the street onto my private road causing a "lake" and I pay \$12 every 2 months for nothing.*

## **Stormwater Rates a Concern**

*DON'T RAISE OUR RATES!!!!!!!!!!!! WE ARE ALL HURTING!!!!!!!!!!!! DON'T RAISE OUR RATES!!!!!!!!!!!!*

*I don't think this is the right time to be asking or thinking about raising the price of any service. People are having a rough time just trying to get by.*

*Seniors need no more rate increases. We are on a fixed income and nobody got an increase in Soc Security this year. I have been here 43+ years.*

*Keep the costs down as much as possible! Utilities as a whole are very expensive!*

*I feel we are paying a premium price for so service, I would not mind paying to price if the service was better and codes were being enforced.*

## **Suggestions for Customer Education**

*Promote, educate and assist with rain gardens; permeable driveways, sidewalks; alternatives to pesticides, weed killers, etc.*

*Increase public awareness of surface water. Stringfield Park is great; please repeat with the Jennings Wetlands, Risley Park, and River Forest Lake and all streams*

*As a resident of Oak Grove, I would strongly encourage the OLSD to start an extensive campaign to establish swales and rain gardens whenever possible in place of underground pipes, for stormwater management.*

## **Kudos for District Staff**

*The people in your office are very friendly and professional. That is one of the reasons I voted for increased funding in the last election.*

*With lots of needs to be met and only so much money to get those things accomplished, our District works very hard at making those things happen for us. Thank you.*

*Thank you for all of your hard work to keep our neighborhood clean and healthy!*

*Great job Oak Lodge Sanitary!! Grew up in Milwaukie and now back as a homeowner and love being here for the reason the utility companies here are super. No complaints, just praise.*

*The people in the office are attentive and polite.*



BARNEY & WORTH, INC.

1211 SW FIFTH AVE, STE 1140  
PORTLAND, OREGON 97204-3732  
503/222-0146 phone 503/274-7955 fax

[www.barneyandworth.com](http://www.barneyandworth.com)