

December 2025 Sky Country Estates MDWCA Newsletter

I hope you all had a great Thanksgiving holiday and may now need to lose a few pounds. It happens. Then you have the Christmas and New Year's holidays to contend with. Good luck, but enjoy.

Our water system, due to the prolonged drought, I'm sorry to say is stressed. During the summer months we were able to supplement our water supply by purchasing water and having it hauled up the mountain. We purchased water from June through September. This coincides with the summer and weekend home use of many of the part-time residents that come up and enjoy our mountain in the summer. Sky Country Estates is a beautiful place to be all year round.

Now that the extra summer water use has lowered, we hoped our wells will be able to supply the demand of the many full-time residences in Sky Country Estates. In the past years that has been the case. Unfortunately this year that has changed.

Part of that is the additional number of full-time residences. The biggest part is the reduction in the water produced from our wells. We have two functional wells. Well # 2 output has dropped to 400 gallons per 24-hour day and dropping. Well # 3 output is 600 gallons per 24-hour day. That is a total of 1,000 gallons of water from our wells per 24-hour day.

The current daily water use varies from 900 gallons per day to 1200 gallons per day, averaging around 1,100 gallons per day. As you can see, at the current production and use rates, our storage tank is dropping by about 100 gallons per day. At that rate it will not take long to deplete our storage and cause problems supplying water to the residences consistently. As the full-time residents know, due to the winter weather, our roads, specifically the part of Big Dipper Road on the switchbacks, becomes snow packed and slippery. After the 2-inch snowfall December 4th it has started already. This prevents us from purchasing and having water hauled up to our storage tank. For safety reasons our water supplier will not attempt to navigate the icy and slippery roads with the big heavy truck. Fully understandable.

As I see it the only way to try and avoid water supply issues until spring when the roads clear is to reduce water use. Our residents, for the most part, have been very good at conserving water and I don't like asking for more, but we must do something.

My suggestions to reduce water use I think will help considerably, more of an ask. When doing the dishes using a dishwasher, wait until you have a full load. This will reduce the number of times the dish washer runs. The same goes for manual dish washing. When washing clothes, only wash full loads, no partial loads. Another is to reduce the frequency of showers and

take a shower instead of taking a bath. If you take a shower once a day, change to every other day or more. If you take a shower twice a week, reduce that to once a week.

All these actions will help reduce the amount of daily water use and could possibly eliminate any shortage of water issues. It will help. Normally well production increases in the fall but not this year. It would be great if it did increase but I don't see any signs of that happening.

Our water system improvement project is to eliminate the water challenges of our water system. To that end, we have been granted a \$275,000 grant for the engineering and design of the entire project. We will close on that grant on January 2nd, 2026. At that time the engineers will start working on the design and construction of our project with the goal of having the second and third phases of our project ready for construction this summer.

The first phase of the project is the design of all phases and that will start upon closing of the grant on January 2nd, 2026. The second phase is additional water supply by well or wells. The third phase is a new storage tank. Phase four is replacement of the supply line from well # 3 to the storage tank and phase five is replacement of all water lines and installation of meters.

To pay for phase two and three we have applied for a grant for each. The water supply request is \$710,000 and the storage tank request is \$1,357,127. These grants are from the New Mexico Legislature Capital Outlay program. I, along with our engineering firm of Souder Miller and Associates will present our requests to area legislators on December 16. The goal is to get the grants during the new legislative session starting in January 2026 and be ready to start construction in summer of 2026.

The water system improvement project will give us a first-class water system with an adequate water supply that we all thought we were getting when we bought property in Sky Country Estates, some of us years ago.

The bottom line is we need everyone to conserve water this winter if we want to have water. The best way everyone can help is to reduce water use.

Your Board of Directors holds monthly meetings on the second Wednesday of the month. You are invited to join in the Board meeting either in person or by conference call. Meeting information is available on our website www.skycountryestateswater.com. Also check your email prior to the meeting date for meeting information.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all.

Ed Koch

President, Sky Country Estates Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association

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