

JANUARY 2019  
1ST QUARTER NEWSLETTER



**GALLAGHER AMENDMENT:**

Happy New Year! It's time to think snow. We need some for so many reasons.

As we welcome in 2019, the district is exploring options to help us maintain our solid financial status in the years to come. You read and maybe even voted on some Gallagher issues, such as the Evergreen Fire Department put forth. The Gallagher Amendment will be a frequent topic here as it has the potential to have a financial impact on us.

It began in 1982 as a well-intentioned amendment to prevent inflated property tax hikes. In a nutshell, it holds the ratio of residential to non-residential property value in the state to specific levels. Given the recent growth in our economy, jobs, population, housing and our home values increases that have occurred. The Amendment forces a greater financial obligation onto non-residential properties as our home values rise. This is done by adjusting the mill rates on our home properties lower. The potential for reduced revenues could adversely affect our ability to maintain our District's infrastructure.

The amendment's impact has us concerned for the Brook Forest Water District. Our neighbors and a broader swath of Evergreen residents supported Evergreen Fire District in its efforts to stem falling revenues from property tax receipts this past November. We are evaluating the potential impact the Gallagher Amendment will have on our District and intend to keep you informed of our findings. Look for more information in your District's newsletter and emails.

**UPDATE YOUR PERSONAL CONTACT**

**INFO:**

Please help us by filing out the PINK slip that will accompany your 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter invoice. When a water main breaks and service needs to be shut off to your property, if we DO NOT have your CURRENT information, we CANNOT contact you in advance to let you know. Please complete the information even if you think we have your information to ensure that we have the correct, up to date phone number and email address.

**Waterline Replacement Project**

Phase I & II of the Forest Estates Water Line Replacement project has been completed. Thank you to all for your patience with the traffic and construction equipment and materials as we completed the work. If you have any questions you can always email us at [brookforestwaterdistrict@gmail.com](mailto:brookforestwaterdistrict@gmail.com) or call us at 800-544-9903.

**Winter Time Shut Offs:**

If you will be going out of town during the winter months for an extended period of time (at a minimum one quarter, not more than three quarters), you may request that your water be shut off at the street for non-use. The quarterly fee will be \$60 per quarter, equivalent to our Readiness-to-Serve charge (see Appendix A of the District Rules and Regs on our website). In order for our System Operator (Dominic) to shut your water off, all bills owing on the property must be paid prior to any shut off and the property owner must pay the District in advance for the turn off and turn on fee, in the amount as stated in Appendix A of the District Rules and Regs – see Section 8.09 B. of the District Rules and Regs for further information.

**Septic Systems:**

All District residents use septic systems, it is important to know that your septic system is your responsibility! According to the EPA the following are the 4 top things you can do to protect your septic system:

1. Regularly inspect your system and pump your tank as necessary.
2. Use water efficiently.
3. Don't dispose of household hazardous wastes in sinks or toilets.
4. Care for your drainfield.

An EPA guide to using and maintaining your septic system can be found on our website under "Publications".

**Property Transfer Fee Approved:**

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**50 Amazing Facts About Water – Sometimes Interesting – Sometimes Disturbing:**

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31. For every six ounces of caffeine or alcohol you consume, an additional 10 to 12 oz. of water is needed to rehydrate you.
32. We lose over 2 quarts (64 oz.) of water every day through the normal vapor exchange of our skin, otherwise known as perspiration.
33. It is a little known fact, but insufficient water consumption is actually a risk factor for colon, breast and urinary tract cancers such as cancers of the kidneys, bladder, prostate, and testicles. Hydration is critical to blood circulation to allow immune system cells to reach damaged tissues in greater numbers.
34. In 1998 the National Resources Defense Council completed a 4-year test of 103 bottles of water and found that 1/3 of them contained bacteria and other chemicals at levels exceeding industry standards.
35. Did you know that 25% of the bottled water on the market is drawn from municipal taps?

**Late Fee and Rate Reminder:**

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**District Board Meetings:**

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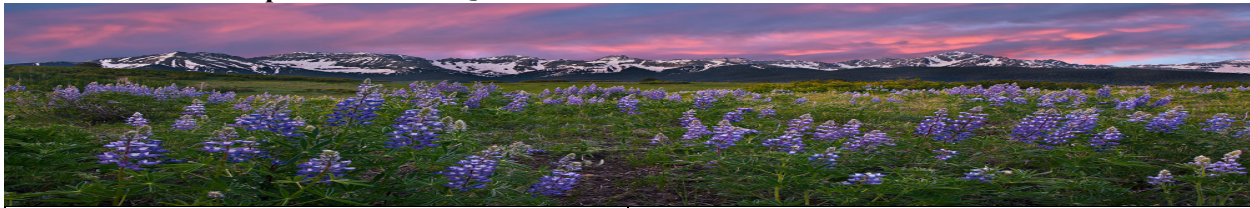
*Tony Langowski, Vice President*

*Dave Pellegrini, Treasurer*

*Ilse Ramsey*

*Bruce Nicklow*

April 2019 - 2nd QUARTER SPRINGTIME NEWSLETTER



**GALLAGHER AMENDMENT:**

In our January newsletter this year we shared with you some information on what the Gallagher amendment is and its impact, in this issue we would like to take give you additional information on what it means for the District:

**The Gallagher Amendment... Why is it important the Brook Forest Water District?**

“ . . . The G.A. shall adjust the ratio of valuation for assessment for residential real property. . . as is necessary to ensure that the percentage of the aggregate statewide valuation for assessment which is attributable to residential real property shall remain the same as it was in the year immediately preceding the year in which such change occurs.”

**What is it?** Simply put, the Gallagher Amendment was an amendment to the Colorado Constitution, named for Senator Dennis Gallagher, it was intended to prevent the growth of property tax from residential property from increasing as a part of the State’s total annual property tax revenue more than from non-residential property. Since residential property values have increased faster than nonresidential properties, this ratio has been adjusted continually. The ratio for residential property has been at 7.96% for many years, but with the recent increase residential property assessment, this ratio must be changed to stay within the G. A. guidelines. How are property taxes calculated?

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Actual property value} \times \text{Assessment Ratio} &= \\ &= \text{Assessed Value} \\ \text{Assessed Value} \times \text{Local Mill Levy} &= \text{Tax} \end{aligned}$$

The impact of the Gallagher Amendment causes the Residential Assessment Ratio (RAR) to reduce when the residential property values increase in relation to non-residential values and was intended to also go up when residential property values declined. The RAR has declined steadily from 21% in 1982, to 7.2% in 2018. A decrease in the RAR of 7.96% to 7.2% from 2017 to 2019, caused an 11% loss in property tax revenues to local government throughout the State of Colorado. Estimates have the RAR declining from 2019 to 2020 from 7.2% to a low of 6.11%, causing an additional 15% in lost property tax revenue to local governments.

**Why is it important?** Without the ability to increase the Mill Levy without an election (Tax Payers Bill of Rights - TABOR) a District will lose property tax revenue as the assessed property **The Gallagher Amendment allows Districts to increase their Mill Levy enough in order to maintain the same property tax revenue that it had received in the prior year, even though the property values may decrease.** Adjusting the Mill Levy will allow a stabilization in the Property tax revenue the District . receives. The November 2018 election had many Special Districts throughout the State included on their ballots the Gallagher Amendment issue to keep their property tax revenues stable. Many Districts were successful in passing this ballot issue to be able to maintain their current operations, Evergreen Fire Protection District was one of those Districts. Our Board of Directors intends to present this issue on the November 2019 Ballot. More to come in this years’ Newsletters regarding the Gallagher Amendment and what you need to know for the November election.

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**JULY 2019– 3RD QUARTER SUMMERTIME NEWSLETTER**



**SUMMERTIME IS HERE!**

**PLEASE REMEMBER NO OUTSIDE WATERING**

**FIRE MITIGATION:**

It’s nice to see trucks and trailer loads of slash being hauled out of our neighborhoods. Bags of raked stuff line our driveways waiting for pick-up. Clearly our district customers have taken protecting their properties to heart.

A healthy ponderosa forest averages 12-15 trees per acre. Consider removing all of the waist high and lower growth and especially the leafy scrub brush that tends to grow around the base of mature ponderosa. These small ground level trees and brush form the “candles” that allow flames to creep up a tree and ignite into the crowns.

Also consider asking tree removal and fire mitigation services to walk your property to obtain a plan and an estimate to bring your land into a safer condition. It will give you an idea of how an expert views your property and provide you with a plan to tackle all at once or in small steps over time. A journey begins with the first step.

House address numbers are still needed on many of the home in the District. Mainly for EMS services rushing to your home, but also for the fire protection services. Black numbers tacked to a tree offer little help to responding emergency teams. A better solution is high contrast between numbers and background, like black numbers on white tiles at the end of your driveway. The time saved finding you could mean the difference between life and death someday.

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- 36. Pure water (solely hydrogen and oxygen atoms) has a neutral pH of 7, which is neither acidic nor basic.
- 37. Four liters (1gallon) of gasoline can contaminate approximately 2.8 million liters (750,000 gallons) of water.
- 38. If all new sources of contamination could be eliminated, in 10 years, 98% of all available groundwater would then be free of pollution.
- 39. There are 12,000 different toxic chemical compounds in industrial use today, and more than 500 new chemicals are developed each year.
- 40. Water dissolves more substances than any other liquid. Wherever it travels, water carries chemicals, minerals, and nutrients with it.

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## Gallagher Amendment – What is that?

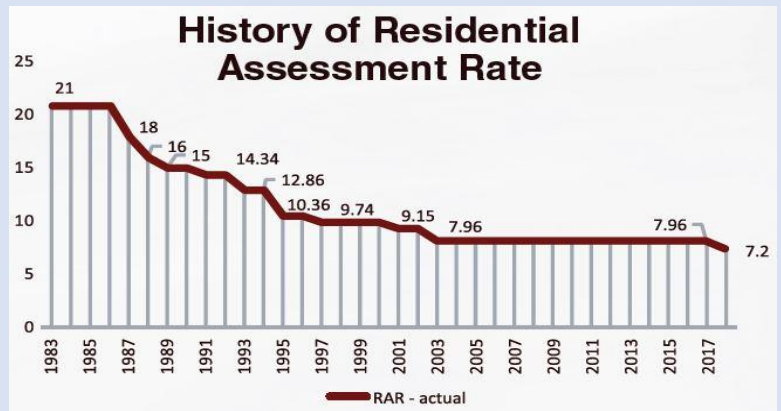
Election Time is around the corner – Tuesday, November 5, 2019

Brook Forest Water District has an item on the ballot – 6A and needs your vote!

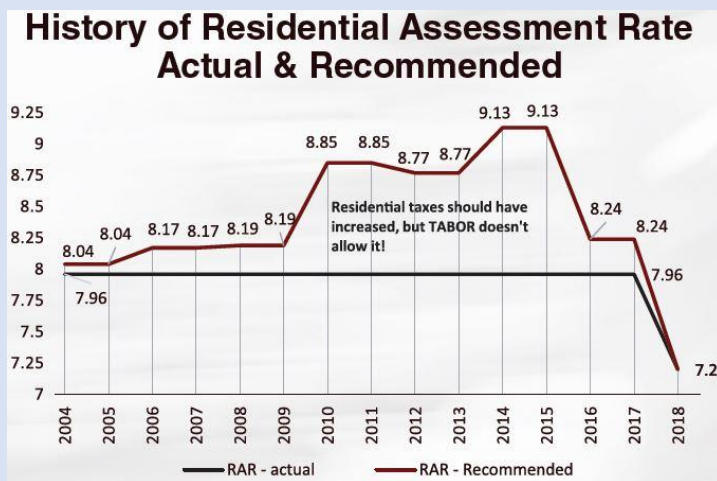
What is the residential assessment rate and how does it impact taxes?

A property owner is not taxed on the total appraised value of his or her property. Since becoming law in 1982, the Gallagher Amendment has required non-residential property (i.e., commercial, industrial, agricultural, vacant land, etc.) to be taxed at 29% of its actual appraised value. In 1982, residential property was taxed at 21% of its actual appraised value, which is commonly referred to as the residential assessment rate.

However, the **Gallagher Amendment** requires the Colorado Legislature to adjust the residential assessment rate in every odd year to ensure residential property owners pay no more than 45% of the total property tax burden in the State of Colorado.



Due to the steady increase in residential property values in the State, from 1982 to 2003, the residential assessment rate dropped from 21% to 7.96% where it stayed until 2017. Then in 2017, the Colorado legislature further reduced the residential assessment rate to 7.2%.



**What does this mean for Brook Forest Water District?**

BFWD currently receives approximately 50% of budgeted revenue from property taxes. If the District's property tax revenue source was decreased due to a decline in the residential assessment rate the District would have a hard time paying vendors for services (i.e., utilities,

water main break repairs, general maintenance and repairs, etc.). Estimates have shown that the residential assessment rate could drop as low as 6.2%. The preliminary assessed valuation for the District's 2020 budget will generate an estimated \$206,024 in property tax revenue, the residential assessment rate is set at 7.65%, however, if the residential assessment rate was 6.2% instead of the 7.65% for budget year 2020, a loss of approximately \$39,062 would be taken by the District in property tax revenue received.

**Voting for Ballot Issue 6A** – You are authorizing Brook Forest Water District to stabilize revenue with an increased mill levy to keep property tax revenues it will lose if the Gallagher Amendment forces further reductions in the residential assessment rate. In the future, if the Gallagher Amendment requires the residential assessment rate to be increased, Brook Forest Water District would be required to reduce its mill levy. This concept is referred to as “de-Gallagherizing”.

**OCTOBER 2019– 4TH QUARTER NEWSLETTER**

**NEWSLETTER**

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- 41. Freshwater animals are disappearing five times faster than land animals.
- 42. Each day the sun evaporates a trillion tons of water.
- 43. The weight a person loses directly after intense physical activity is weight from water, not fat.
- 44. It takes 5,680 liters or water (1,500 gallons) of water to process one barrel of beer.
- 45. At birth, water accounts for approximately 80 percent of an infant’s body weight.

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