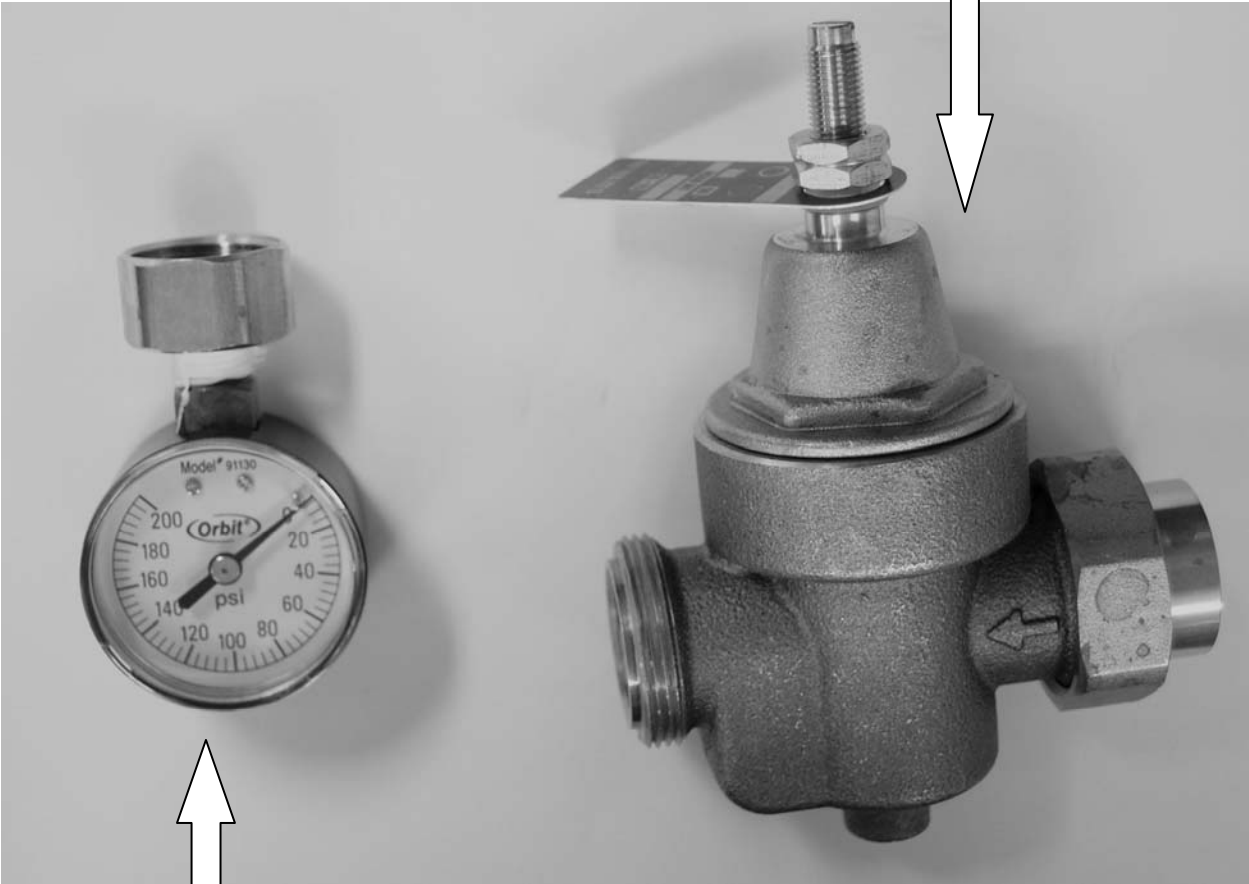


Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Powdersville Water District's Plans to Increase System Water Pressure in April, 2010

- 1. Why is the water district planning to increase water pressure throughout the water system?** For several years, the district's staff and Board of Directors have been concerned about meeting current and future demands of the rapid growth experienced in Powdersville and the surrounding area. Currently, many of our customers have marginal water pressure and fire hydrant flows. This is not good knowing that more growth is on the horizon. In an effort to provide all PWD customers with "top notch" service, the district has embarked on a \$4M project to ready the system for more growth and increase pressures and flows to all customers, regardless of their location in the system. These improvements will bring a much better level of service to all customers and will provide a foundation for the district to grow over the next 25 years. We are not only planning for the future, but we are equalizing the level of service for all customers. There are many positive aspects of better water pressure: the sheer convenience of a good shower and kitchen flow to more effective flushing of your toilets will be an enjoyable change, the ability to operate two or more plumbing fixtures at the same time, increased ability to irrigate your property, increased fire flows from hydrants that translates into more effective fire protection that should decrease home insurance premiums. Your water district wants all customers to experience this level of service.
- 2. What changes can the customer expect from these new system improvements?** First, you must understand that the hilly terrain of the water district presents certain challenges. The elevation of each customer's property is directly related to the amount of system pressure at that specific tap. For every 2.3 feet of change in elevation, one psi (pounds per square inch) of pressure will occur. So, if you live in a small valley 46 feet below your neighbor's property, you will experience 20 psi difference at your property versus your neighbor (46 ft. divided by 2.3 equals 20 psi). This means that your neighbor could experience a comfortable 65 psi and you could experience 85 psi, which should be protected. Many times, this can occur on the same street or highway. Therefore, it is very common for neighbors to have very different water pressure at their taps. With this fluctuation in pressure, it is difficult for the district to regulate this for all customers and still provide good pressures to every customer. Therefore, the most effective way to control this is to have each customer check their water pressure and determine if a pressure regulating valve is needed on their individual water tap to protect their house or building plumbing. The water district is currently building a new elevated water tank near Hwy. 153 that will be higher than the older tank that it will replace. The fact that we are increasing the elevation of the new tank means that your water pressure will likely increase in April, 2010 when the tank is put on line. That is why we want you to look at this now, so that you will be prepared and not inconvenienced by a situation that could have been preventable.
- 3. How do I know if I need a pressure regulating valve?** First, make sure that you do not have a pressure regulating valve already installed. If you do not have one, we advise you to visit a Lowe's or Home Depot and purchase a water pressure gauge (that adapts to your outdoor faucet) for about \$10 (see attached picture). We have checked with both stores in Easley and they have them in stock or you may visit our office and we have a limited supply of the gauges for cost at \$10 each. Once you have the gauge, screw it on to your outdoor faucet. Make sure no other water fixtures are on in the house or building. Turn the faucet on and record the pressure reading. If your pressure is higher than 60 psi, we recommend that you purchase a pressure regulating valve that is adjustable. These can be purchased at Lowes and Home Depot for about \$30. We have a limited supply available at PWD's office for \$30, as well.

- 4. Where does this valve need to be installed?** This device needs to be installed on your water line that is serving your house or building before it connects to your internal plumbing. This way, it will protect all of your house or building plumbing. The adjustable pressure regulating valve (see attached picture) will be pre-set at the factory for 50 psi. In other words, if the line pressure at the street is 90 psi, your pressure at the house or building will be stepped down to 50 psi automatically by the valve, thereby protecting your plumbing. If you want to adjust the valve to 60 psi, you may do this by turning the adjustment screw on the top of the valve and verifying the building pressure with the same pressure gauge used and at the same location.
- 5. How do I install the pressure regulating valve?** If you know how to perform minor plumbing repairs or if you have ever repaired a sprinkler irrigation line, you can probably install this device yourself. PWD recommends that you install the valve in a small irrigation turf box about 3 feet downstream of your water meter with the adjustment screw aimed up for easy access. If this is beyond your capability, we have local plumbing contractors that we can recommend.
- 6. How much will all of this cost?** If you buy a pressure gauge now and record a pressure 60 psi or lower, you are done and you will spend about \$10. If your pressure exceeds 60 psi and you buy a pressure regulating valve for \$30 and if you have plumbing skills, you will spend about \$40 plus some sweat equity. If you need to hire a plumber and provide the valve, the installation price should be between \$100 to \$300. Prices may vary depending on the work conditions. Any of these options are far less than a major plumbing repair would be if this protection is not used.
- 7. Why do I have to pay for this?** As described in question #2 above, the fact that the terrain in our water system varies drastically by location due to elevation, makes it very difficult for the water district to provide the same pressure to each individual tap. The only way to protect individual buildings or dwellings from higher pressures (due to elevation) is to install a pressure regulating device on the customer's property. The water district has no right to enter private property. Therefore, it would be impossible for the district to install and maintain a pressure regulating valve on each customer's private property. Unfortunately, our role is limited to recommending and assisting customers the best that we can. That is why we are proactively notifying our customers of this change that will occur in the system. We apologize for the inconvenience, but we hope that you will see the added benefit of your and our labors.
- 8. When should I get started?** Now. You still have several months before this system change will occur, but don't put this off and forget about it. If you know of an elderly person that may need assistance, please notify them of this issue. If you are a renter, please bring this issue to the attention of your landlord.
- 9. Is this mandatory?** No, this is a warning and a recommendation from the water district. Any modifications that you make to your private plumbing are strictly voluntary. The water district cannot assume any responsibility for any type of work performed or damage to plumbing on private property that is connected to the water system. Please accept this as an advisory notice only.

Pressure Reducing Valve with adjustment screw



Pressure Gauge with faucet adapter