

The Pipeline

July/August 2006

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Hours of Operation:
Monday-Friday
8:00 am—5:00 pm
Closed Sat, Sun, &
Holidays

Emergency? Call us
@ 360-750-5876
24 hours per day/
7 days per week

Commissioners:
Neil Kimsey
Denny Kiggins
Norm Harker

Manager:
Bob Bandarra

CRWWD Stats... (Jan.– April '06)

- Processed 22,586 calls
- Connected approximately 3 homes to sewer per day
- 120 injury-free days in the field
- 20 new subdivisions
- 5 new commercial projects

Is Our Name Too Long to Write Out?

Is Clark Regional Wastewater District too long to write on your check? Feel free to make it payable to **CRWWD**.

Playing What If St. Helens Blew

The last day of May, 50 organizations and more than 500 people around Southwest Washington, performed a practice drill simulation of Mount St. Helen's erupting and sending massive ash plumes into the air again. This time the wind blew it over Clark County.

It didn't happen, but it's not farfetched. Southwest Washington's active volcano is one of seven around Washington that the U.S. Geological Survey classifies as a "very high threat." However, more than likely, prevailing winds would carry most of the ash away from the county. **But just in case, the Clark Regional Emergency Services Agency (CRESA) staged an emergency preparedness exercise around the county at 20 locations in response to a simulated eruption to find out how the 50 organizations would react.**

According to Hugh Findlay, District Risk Management Administrator, CRWWD participated to test its capabilities to respond to such an emergency. **During the exercise, the District set up an incident command center and a limited emergency operations center to respond to the simulated disaster.** Part of the exercise involved monitoring all of the District's 50 pump stations using its SCADA system and then responding with portable emergency generators to the critical pumping stations that had experienced a power outage.

This test provided the District with experience in setting up command and response centers and about the logistics of moving portable generators to multiple locations in the face of primary road closures due to accidents and stalled vehicles. **Based on the drill, CRWWD confirmed that it is one generator short for a system-wide emergency. That will be addressed this year when the budgeted building generator is installed this summer.** "Generally everything went well," said Findlay. "We experienced how to meet changing environmental conditions and how communication is crucial to our response."

Parade of Bands—Winners...Again

On Saturday, May 20, the District participated in the Hazel Dell Parade of Bands. District Maintenance staff created a working sternwheeler for this year's entry. **Once again, the District was a winner—receiving 1st Place in the Non-Commercial category, as well as the Spirit Award.** Thank you to all of our customers that cheered us on during the event. See you next year!



Moving?—Tell Your Utility Providers



When a property is sold, some residents think that their broker, mortgage company or lender checked on all utility (including sewer) balances, and their agents would also notify the utility companies of their departure. “Not so,” said Bob Bandarra, District Manager. **“It’s the responsibility of property owners to notify their utility companies when they are moving in or out.”**

Real estate, mortgage companies and lenders only check to see whether there are any unpaid utility bills that could halt the transaction. Normally, any unpaid balances become a prorated part of the closing costs. “It’s simply not their (broker, mortgage company or lender) responsibility to notify utility companies of the departure or arrival of a property owner,” said Bandarra. “We want people to know that so they are not getting a financial surprise.”

Contacting your existing utility provider is easy; just call the phone number on a recent bill. For CRWWD, call 750-5876 and speak to the Finance Department. Forgetting to make the call could mean that you’re liable for utility bills the new owners incur.

During the purchase of a new home, check with the real estate agent to find out who the utility providers are and contact them. This means notifying your TV, Internet, electric, water, garbage, phone company and sewer provider.

When Fiber Isn’t Good

What’s the first rule of taking care of your sewer system? “If it doesn’t tear, don’t flush it down your toilet,” warned Rick Nelson, District Maintenance Manager.

Trying to tear a product is one way to check quickly. **If it doesn’t tear or tear cleanly, throw it in the garbage.** Products reinforced with plastic or nylon fibers, bulked up with fiber for durability (like paper towels), or latex products (gloves or condoms) aren’t intended for the sewer system, explained Nelson.

What’s biodegradable and what isn’t can be confusing, he admits. Currently there are no Washington State laws holding manufacturers to one definition for what’s biodegradable. This means manufacturers are all using different definitions for the term. So for now it’s up to consumers to check the labels of hand wipes, baby wipes, paper towels, mop heads, cleaning cloths and diapers.

When you flush these products down the toilet, they travel through (up to) 300 miles of the District’s sewer pipes, often

Checking Web Avoids Backup

Planning ahead and staying in touch with the building going on in the District in conjunction with the Salmon Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant expansion just got easier thanks to Jane Cushman, Phase 4 Program Assistant.

Cushman designed a new Website for the Salmon Creek Wastewater System’s Phase 4 Expansion (www.cleanwaterpartners.net). The site took her about three weeks to develop using Dreamweaver and went live in April.

The site is already popular and got more than 11,000 hits in both April and May. “So far residents, contractors and developers are finding this site helpful,” said Cushman, who also noted that the site was designed to be easily accessed by either dial up or broadband Internet connections.

The Website lists all the expansion projects on the home page. Clicking on any project name shows the activities going on with that project. And clicking on “Traffic Impacts” on the left side menu reveals a map of the construction zones. Moving a mouse cursor over different areas of the map shows the traffic impact on an area. Each area that’s under construction also has photos showing how the project is progressing.

You also can reach the site off the www.crwwd.com home page by clicking on “ABCs of Sewer” at the middle of the page. Then scrolling down to “Salmon Creek Wastewater Management System”, and clicking on that.

through pump stations. When making this journey, they wrap around the sewer pump impellers. Our two-person crew must then remove the grayish pulp, costing the District and our customers extra labor costs, increasing pump maintenance and potentially causing failures, which can impact rates.

Residents of Meadow Glade and Hockinson need to be especially cautious with latex and plastic products, said Nelson. These areas depend on STEP (septic tank effluent pumps) systems designed to handle water, not solids. Solids coming out of residences drop into a holding tank. Flushed latex and plastic products float across the holding tank and, on their way, clog the pumps.

And the second rule? “Unless the product label says ‘flushable,’ put it in the trash, not the toilet,” Nelson said.

