

The Pipeline

May/June 2006

8000 NE 52 Court
PO Box 8979
Vancouver, WA 98668

Phone: 360-750-5876
Fax: 360-750-7570

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.- March '06)

- Processed 17,178 calls
- Connected approximately 4 homes to sewer per day
- 59 injury-free days in the field
- 9 new subdivisions
- 2 new commercial projects

Shortcuts Speed Up Customer Service

Last year the Clark Regional Wastewater District fielded more than 70,000 customer phone calls. To meet the growing call volume and keep up its high level of service, the District installed a new automated phone system in March.

The new system will help you connect to the right department faster. Now when you call the District at 750-5876, you can skip right to the department you want by using the "speed-dial" shortcuts listed here. (If you lose this shortcut list, you can find it on the web site.)

FOR ALL EMERGENCIES → Press 0

Billing & Finance → Press 1

Billing Inquiries → Press 1
Long-Term Contracts → Press 2
Low Income Senior Citizens Program → Press 3
General Information → Press 4
Accounts Payable Process → Press 5

Engineering & Inspections → Press 2

Schedule Sewer Inspection → Press 1
Sewer Availability Questions → Press 2
Property Development Questions → Press 3
Construction Project Questions → Press 4
Pretreatment → Press 5
Salmon Creek Treatment Plant Expansion → Press 6
All Other Inquiries → Press 7

Maintenance & Service → Press 3

Administration & Human Resources → Press 4

Board of Commissioners Inquiries → Press 1
Personnel (Human Resources) → Press 2
Claims → Press 3
Public Information Officer → Press 4
General Inquiries → Press 5

District Location/Driving Directions/General Information → Press 5

District Location/Driving Directions → Press 1
Hours of Operation → Press 2
How to Make Payments → Press 3

Company Directory → Press 6

If you know who you want to speak with, a contact list on the web site (www.crwwd.com) includes direct contact numbers and e-mail addresses for District staff members. Direct any questions about the new system to Kim Thur at 993-8822 or e-mail her at kthur@crwwd.com.

REMEMBER...



Your toilet is NOT a trash can!

Neighborhood Meeting Speakers Available

"The District wants to talk to neighborhood associations—especially those wishing to know more about what's happening at Clark Regional Wastewater District," said Bob Bandarra, District Manager. Topics can include processes for connection to sewer, District wide planning, current construction projects, District operations, budgeting—anything about the District.

To schedule a speaker for your association, contact Kim Thur at the District office at 993-8822 or by email at kthur@crwwd.com.

Documentation Needs for Senior Rates

February 1 the District began processing reduced rates for low-income senior citizens 65 and over. The drop is based on the federal poverty income guideline, \$16,037. District seniors with incomes at or below that level can qualify for a \$25 per month rate. The monthly payment of \$34 dropped to \$30 for seniors with incomes between \$16,037 and \$25,000.

Seniors seeking this decrease need to own and occupy their own residence, show their Social Security statement, an IRS 1040 form and a driver's license at the District office to qualify. "Anyone who's not filing taxes can call the IRS for a letter of non-filing as alternative documentation," said Fred Kowell, District Finance Director/Treasurer.

Seniors who are missing any of this documentation, have questions or need help applying for this rate can contact the District office at 750-5876.

Electronic System Serves Up GIS

"The District began moving its GIS (Geographic Information System) data into electronic form in 1992," said Chuck McDonald, District Assistant Manager and Engineer. Now every District employee has desktop availability to District GIS data.

This access speeds the District's response for customer requests that once took hours or days. Now homeowners can quickly get a drawing to locate the sewer lines that serve their homes. Or developers can see where sewer lines exist, locate manholes and other information for engineering planning. Any District employee can print out or email customers or developers mapping information in just a few minutes.

There's a caveat, however. "Our drawings are for information and planning and do not substitute for a site survey," McDonald explained.

Preparing for Ash Fall—Sort of

May 31, the Clark Regional Emergency Services Agency (CRESA) will stage an emergency preparedness exercise around the county. A regional public safety service agency, CRESA provides 911 public safety dispatching, emergency management and ambulance contracting. It serves Battle Ground, Camas, La Center, Ridgefield, Vancouver, Washougal, Yacolt and unincorporated areas of the county.

The exercise will simulate what happens when ash falls (on the county) from a Mt. St. Helens eruption. Local law enforcement, Clark County, Clark Public Utilities, Red Cross and local hospitals are among the other groups involved, including Clark Regional Wastewater District.

"We're working with CRESA from the wastewater services perspective," said Hugh Findlay, District Human Resources and Risk Management Administrator. "This is test of how we'd respond if St. Helens erupted, and the ash fall created wastewater-related problems for the District."

Of the nearly 50 pumping stations in the District, one-third has significant power outage concerns. The District's role is ensuring that emergency generators are available and get to the critical pumping stations, keeping them running and rotating generators to maintain overall operational capacity. Participation will provide the District with additional information about how to best respond in similar emergencies, like the heavy snowfall that occurred in the winter of 2004 and the past heavy windstorms.

Findlay noted that some customers within the District have private home grinder systems that are located at their residence. If their home power goes off, they need to know how to respond to their system going offline during the power outage. The District has listed information on their web site (www.crwwd.com) to help customers who have grinder or STEP systems with power outage concerns. This information can be found within the Frequently Asked Questions section.

"Despite the ash fall exercise, there will be no interruption of sewer services within the District," Findlay said.

Construction Material Costs Climb

Wastewater planning and construction for the Salmon Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant Phase IV projects continue to move along as planned. Currently eight of the 11 phase 4 projects are in construction or bid stage. But any projects in the design phase could be hit by the rising cost of construction materials.

Last year's Katrina and Rita hurricanes shut down many oil refineries for months. Most are coming back online, but orders are backlogged causing pricing pressures. This affects the District, because much of its piping is plastic which is made from oil. The varying cost of oil combined with the refinery order logjam may increase the plastic piping cost for the three open projects. Because of the continuing concrete shortage, shifting to concrete piping doesn't help. Steel piping too has seen a price rise recently.

John Peterson, Capital Program Director said "the District planned for an aggressive cost rise in construction materials when budgeting projects. But the three projects still in design might be impacted should material costs keep climbing."