

# The Pipeline



May/June 2010

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:

Norm Harker  
Neil Kimsey  
Denny Kiggins

#### General Manager:

John M. Peterson

#### CRWWD Stats... (Jan – Mar 2010)

- Processed 12,407 calls
- Connected approximately 1.2 homes to sewer per day
- 2 new subdivisions
- 1 new commercial project

#### REMEMBER...

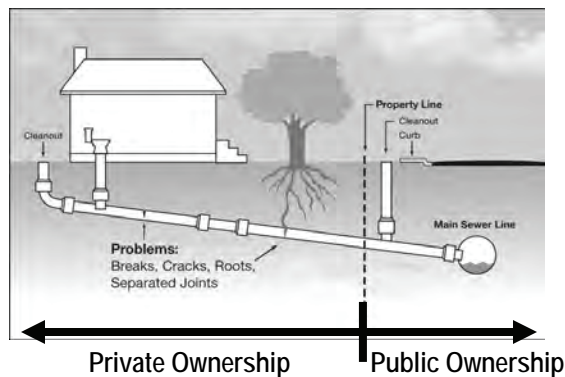


Your Toilet is NOT a trash can!

## Sewer Backups Can Cause Major Damage

*Who is responsible? Are you covered?*

**T**he District has a comprehensive sewer maintenance program. We perform routine maintenance (inspecting, cleaning and repairing) on our public system, which includes over 500 miles of pipe that serves more than 80,000 people. However, on rare occasions a sewer backup can occur. Sewer backups can be very damaging and property owners often think they have insurance coverage or they think the liability always falls on their sewer service provider. However, liability for damages often falls back to the property owner, so we thought you should know the facts.



#### Who is responsible?

Property owners are responsible for their private property sewer pipes that connect their homes to the public sewer system. Typically public sewers are the pipes in the public right-of-way. Under state law, when a sewage problem occurs on private property, the District cannot spend public money repairing or cleaning up the mess unless it is responsible for the backup.

#### Are you covered?

State law and court decisions have held that if a sewer district has an appropriate maintenance program, then it is not responsible for backups it cannot control

(such as heavy rainfall, vandalism, dumping inappropriate material into the system). The District has such a program and, therefore, will typically have limited or no liability for these kinds of sewer backups. So property owners should know what their coverage is and make an informed decision about purchasing extra coverage for sewage backups.

Unfortunately, most of us haven't asked the question "does my insurance policy cover sewer backups?" Often our insurance policies do not cover sewer backups. Those that do may provide very limited coverage. In some cases, an insurance company may offer inexpensive riders, which property owners may buy and add to their existing insurance.

#### How can I prevent backups?

What can you do to prevent your private property sewer pipes from backing up? Don't put fats, oils or grease down your drains. Don't flush paper or cloth cleaning products down your drains. If you are experiencing slow draining pipes, you may want to call a plumber and ask them to inspect and clean your private property sewer pipes.

Although every incident is a little different, as property owners, we should all be aware of our potential financial exposure in a sewer backup and how to avoid one. We encourage our customers to carry adequate insurance for sewer backups because the financial responsibility so often falls to the property owner. So check your insurance policy and know what is and isn't covered. And take the precautions that will significantly reduce the risk of a sewage backup.

## Low Income Senior Discount Rates: Do You Qualify?

**A**re you aware of the District's low-income, senior discount rate? Seniors living year round in their homes and age 62 or older may qualify. To be eligible, seniors must meet income levels for the 2009 Federal Poverty Guidelines.

For 2010-2011 (based on the recently updated income guidelines), a household of any size at 125 percent of the income guideline (up to \$18,213/year) qualifies for a 35 percent discount. Households between 126 to 200 percent of the income guideline (up to \$29,140/year) are eligible for a 20 percent discount.

Eligible seniors wishing to participate need to present these documents at the District office:

- ◆ A 2009 tax return or, if an income tax return was not filed, a letter of non-filing from the IRS (first time applicants or applicants that have not previously provided a letter of non-filing only)
- ◆ Valid picture ID with birth date (first time applicants only)
- ◆ Copy of 2009 social security income statement

Seniors currently receiving the discount or those who previously received the discount, but did not qualify for the 2009-2010 discount, will receive a letter and application packet by mail sometime in May. Others should call the District office to request an application packet or pick one up there.

Completed applications must be submitted by June 15, 2010. The new guidelines and discount rates begin July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011. Call Tammy Clark, Finance Specialist II, at (360) 993-8808 with questions about the program.

## Meet Neil Kimsey



**N**early four decades running a local car dealership made Neil Kimsey well known throughout Clark County. He was so highly visible his son once joked that his father knew everyone in the county. These days, Kimsey turns that joke around, because his son is the county auditor, Greg Kimsey. "The county auditor is much better known than a retired car dealer," he quips with a laugh.

The 77-year old Kimsey wasn't one to set back and ride a rocking chair through retirement. So after 38 years of business, he sold his dealership and looked for other things to keep him busy. After asking around about public service, he discovered his interest with sewers and ran for office in 1996. Today, after 15 years of service, he's still intrigued by sewers and wastewater.

During his years as a commissioner, Kimsey has seen much change, especially in the District's customer service. "Customer service was always the key to my own business," he said. "When you treat customers well, they treat you well." In nearly forty years at his dealership, he never had a customer give him a bad check. He brought that same customer commitment to the District and has watched its customer responsiveness improve under his oversight.

For Kimsey, whose term expires in 2013, the aspect he enjoys the most is being a District ambassador and providing truthful, accurate information about its services. For example, the myths about restaurant fees in Hazel Dell. "Traffic impact fees are typically a greater cost to local restaurants than sewer fees," he explained. District fees are in the low to mid range of all Clark County sewer providers.

In 2003, the Washington Association of Sewer and Water Districts named him "Commissioner of the Year" for his support of the District and also the time and effort he dedicated to the association.

"Any decision we make affects thousands of people within our District, especially during these hard economic times" he said.

## Sign Up for E-Bill and Go Green

Are you interested in receiving one less bill in your mailbox while helping the environment? Would you like to receive your Pipeline newsletter electronically? Then sign up for E-billing with the District. Once you have registered and verified your utility bill account online, you will be able to sign up for this service.

Go to [www.crwwd.com](http://www.crwwd.com). On our home page you will find the instructions for registering your account and enrolling in E-billing. If you need help with this process, please call the District at (360) 750-5876 and select option 1 or send an email to [finance@crwwd.com](mailto:finance@crwwd.com). One of our customer service representatives will gladly assist you.

The District is very pleased to offer this environmentally friendly option to our customers, and we encourage you to enroll.