

# Connections

September/October 2017



## Providing Reliable Service Every Day – Part III

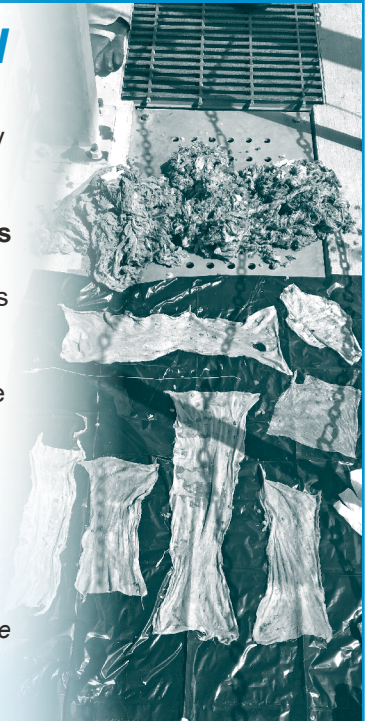
*This series explains how the District ensures that the sewer system continues to provide safe and reliable service to our community.*

### Caring for pressure sewers

Unlike sewers that rely on gravity to move wastewater, pressure sewer systems are more vulnerable to clogs and mechanical problems because they rely on pumps to carry wastewater through the pressure pipes (or “force mains”). While the District uses a variety of strategies and systems to keep our more than 60 pump stations and more than 75 miles of force mains operating reliably, one of the best ways to care for our pressure sewer system is to educate the public about what’s flushable and what’s not.

One of the biggest challenges facing many sewer providers around the country is the popularity of “flushable” wipes. Contrary to advertising, these **wipes typically do NOT break down in sewers** and they can cause huge clogs and mechanical failures. While the District has invested in specialized equipment and developed new maintenance procedures to help deal with wipes, the most effective treatment is prevention. Remember that you can help at home by putting wipes in the garbage!

*Despite what packaging might say, wipes typically don't break down in sewers: they cause clogs and mechanical failures that require costly repairs and maintenance. These rags and wipes were recently removed from the Ridgefield Treatment Plant. ►*



#### Hours of Operation

Monday-Friday  
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
Closed Weekends  
& Holidays

#### Emergency?

Call 24/7:  
360-750-5876

#### Commissioners

Norm Harker  
Denny Kiggins  
Neil Kimsey

#### General Manager

John M. Peterson

Visit us online at [www.CRWWD.com](http://www.CRWWD.com)

8000 NE 52nd Court, Vancouver, WA 98665 • Write: PO Box 8979, Vancouver, WA 98668 • Phone: (360) 750-5876 • Fax: (360) 750-7570



## Free Leaf Disposal COUPON

For Vancouver and Clark County residents only

Prevent street flooding — NEVER blow or place leaves in the street.  
Use this coupon for free leaf disposal from:

October 1 - December 31, 2017

### DISPOSAL DROP-OFF LOCATIONS:

#### City Bark

2419 NE Andresen  
Vancouver, WA  
360-253-8461

#### H & H Wood Recyclers

8401 NE 117th Ave  
Vancouver, WA  
360-892-2805

#### West Van Materials Recovery Center

6601 NW Old Lower River Rd  
Vancouver, WA 360-737-1727

#### Triangle Resources

612 SE Union  
Camas, WA  
360-834-7253



This coupon must be presented at the drop-off site and is for **LEAVES ONLY**, up to 5 cubic yards.

No trimmings, yard debris or mixed loads with this coupon; these items will be charged at the regular price.

Leaves must be emptied from plastic or kraft bags.

Sponsored by:



To redeem coupon, complete the following information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_



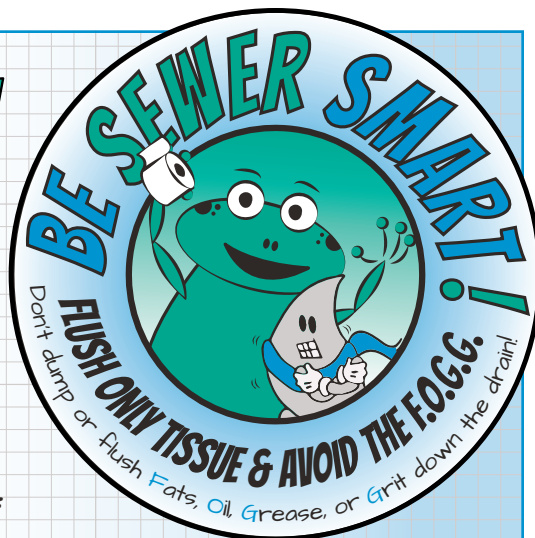
City of Vancouver residents: Funding for your participation in this program is provided through your garbage rates.  
Clark County residents: Funding for participation is provided by Clark County Public Works.

# IS IT REALLY "FLUSHABLE?"

## SEWER SCIENCE WITH FROG AND THE F.O.G.G.

YOU PROBABLY KNOW BY NOW THAT SOME "FLUSHABLE" PAPER PRODUCTS ARE BAD FOR THE SEWER BECAUSE THEY DON'T BREAK DOWN EASILY AND CAN CREATE CLOGS.

IF YOU'RE WONDERING IF THE PRODUCTS IN YOUR HOME ARE FLUSHABLE, YOU CAN FIND OUT WITH THIS EASY EXPERIMENT.



FIRST, YOU'LL NEED SOME

### TOOLS & PRODUCTS TO TEST

4 BIG GLASSES

COLANDER

PAPER TOWELS

TOILET PAPER

TISSUES

TIMER

SPOON

PAPER & PENCIL

WIPES

DOES YOUR MOM KNOW ABOUT THIS?

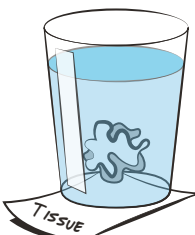
OH RIGHT... MAKE SURE A GROWNUP KNOWS WHAT YOU'RE DOING!

### STEP 1: FORM A HYPOTHESIS

WHAT DO YOU **THINK** WILL HAPPEN WHEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF PAPER PRODUCTS ARE SOAKED IN WATER?

### STEP 2: DO AN EXPERIMENT

1. PUT A SMALL WAD OF EACH TYPE OF PAPER IN THE GLASSES. TRY TO USE ABOUT THE SAME AMOUNT OF EACH AND LABEL EACH GLASS WITH WHAT'S IN IT.
2. FILL EACH GLASS WITH WATER.
3. STIR EACH GLASS WITH A SPOON LIKE IT'S GETTING FLUSHED. EVERY HOUR OR SO, GIVE EACH GLASS ANOTHER STIR.
4. LET THE GLASSES SIT OVERNIGHT. (IN REAL LIFE, IT ONLY TAKES 15-30 MINUTES FOR PAPER TO REACH A PUMP STATION AND START CAUSING PROBLEMS!)
5. IN THE MORNING, GIVE EACH GLASS ANOTHER STIR, THEN POUR THE CONTENTS THROUGH A COLANDER ONE AT A TIME. RUN WATER THROUGH THE COLANDER TO HELP BREAK UP THE PAPER.



### STEP 4: DRAW A CONCLUSION

IF YOU WERE ABLE TO WASH MOST OF THE PAPER THROUGH THE HOLES OF THE COLANDER, THEN THAT PAPER BREAKS DOWN AND IS PROBABLY FLUSHABLE. WHAT DO YOU THINK HAPPENS TO THE OTHER KINDS OF PAPER AFTER THEY GET FLUSHED?

I CONCLUDE THAT YOUR MOM IS GOING TO BE MAD ABOUT THIS MESS.



REMEMBER TO CLEAN UP WHEN YOU'RE DONE ... AND PUT NON-FLUSHABLE PAPER IN THE TRASH!

### STEP 3: MAKE OBSERVATIONS

WHAT HAPPENED? DOES SOME PAPER COME APART EASILY AFTER SOAKING IN WATER? WHICH TYPES OF PAPER WENT COMPLETELY THROUGH THE HOLES IN THE COLANDER? WHICH TYPES ARE STILL ONE PIECE?

### BONUS QUESTIONS

- \* WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU USE THICKER TYPES OF TOILET PAPER? DO THEY BREAK DOWN AS EASILY?
- \* HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE FOR TOUGHER TYPES OF PAPER TO BREAK DOWN IN WATER? DO THEY?