A Homeowner's Guide to Grinder Pump Systems

CLARK REGIONAL WASTEWATER DISTRICT

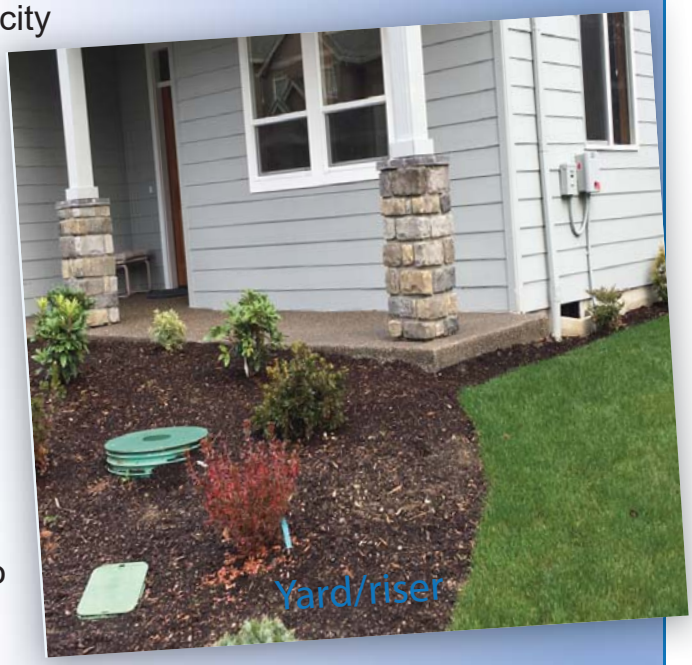
Clark Regional Wastewater District is providing this manual to help you become more familiar with your private Grinder Pump System.

How does a Grinder System work?

Grinder pump sewer systems are used in areas where gravity service is not available. Wastewater normally flows downhill by gravity from a homes internal plumbing to a side sewer lateral and into the main line public sewer. When a residence is at a lower elevation than the sewer main, it requires the use of a pump to force the wastewater up to the gravity sewer main. A grinder pump works like a garbage disposal – it grinds up wastewater from a home (i.e. toilet, shower, washing machine) and pumps it into the public sewer system.

A grinder pump is placed in a tank that is buried in a convenient outdoor location on your property. The tank provides wastewater holding storage capacity. When water is used in the house, wastewater flows into the tank. When the wastewater in the tank reaches a preset level, the grinder pump automatically turns on, grinds the waste, and pumps it out of the tank via a pressure discharge line into the public sewer system.

A grinder pump is a pumping system with many components - tank, pump assembly, level controls, piping and valves, and electrical. A grinder pump will normally run for one or two minutes and automatically turn off when the wastewater in the tank reaches the preset off level. The pump is powered by electricity and is connected to a control panel typically mounted on the side of your house or near the tank. The control panel is wired to a circuit breaker in the homes electrical panel.



Who is responsible for system maintenance?

Clark Regional Wastewater District Does not own Grinder Systems and is not responsible for their maintenance. Property owners are responsible for operation, maintenance, repair and replacement of the Grinder System. This handout provides general information on how to care for your system, what to do in the event of failure or power outage, and who to contact for service.

How to care for your Grinder Pump System

Use water efficiently

Average indoor water use in the typical single-family home is around 200 gallons per day. Dripping faucets can waste as much as 2,000 gallons of water each year and leaky toilets can waste as much as 200 gallons each day. The more water a household conserves, the less water enters the Grinder system.

Flush responsibly

Be careful with undesirable substances that could be flushed into the sewer. Never flush dental floss, fats, oils, grease or grit (FOGG), feminine hygiene products, condoms, diapers, wipes, cotton swabs, cigarette butts, coffee grounds, cat litter, or other items that can clog and potentially damage your Grinder system. These items should be disposed of in your garbage can.

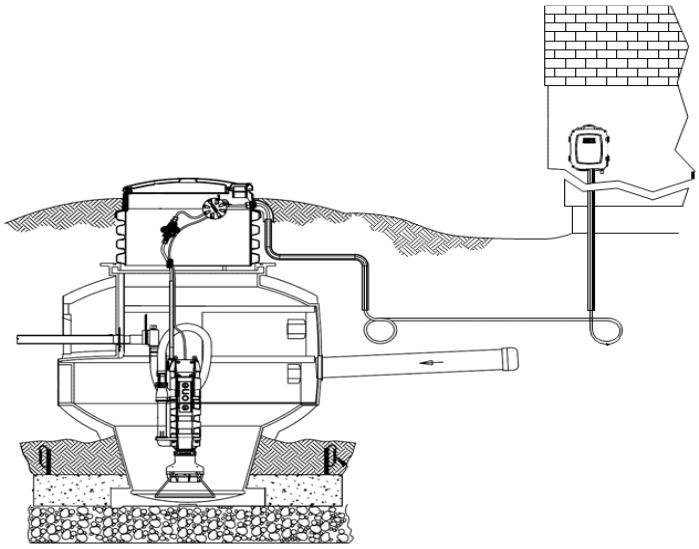
Flushing household chemicals, gasoline, oil, pesticides, antifreeze and paint can present a safety hazard in the system. These items should be taken to the appropriate local hazardous materials handling or recycling station and disposed of in a safe and legal manner.

Minimize use of garbage disposals

Using your garbage disposal increases the amount of solids entering the holding tank of the grinder system. The more food waste that is sent to the holding tank, the more often the grinder pump needs to be activated to grind the content of the tank. The increased use of the grinder and pump subsequently increases the frequency of required maintenance to the device. More maintenance means higher costs of operations.

Keep excess rainwater out of the system

Watch out for rain drains or storm drains that may flow in the direction of the Grinder system. Additional water increases pumping frequency and costs, depletes the available capacity for wastewater, adds needlessly to the daily volume of water that the treatment plant must process and increases costs for everyone.



Know your responsibilities

Routine Maintenance

It is your responsibility to schedule routine inspection and maintenance of the system to ensure operating efficiency and dependability. It is also your responsibility to maintain your home's plumbing.

Grinder pumps have been in operation for over 25 years. Typically there is an eight to ten year period before service or repair may be required. Annual inspections are recommended.

Label your circuit breakers

Know which circuit breaker in your house supplies power to your Grinder pump and label it so that you don't accidentally turn it off. It is your responsibility to provide electric power to the Grinder system.

Know the location of your service panel

Be aware of the location of the grey electrical service control panel outside of your building, but don't tamper with it! If a problem occurs, call a qualified contractor.

Know what to do in case of a power failure

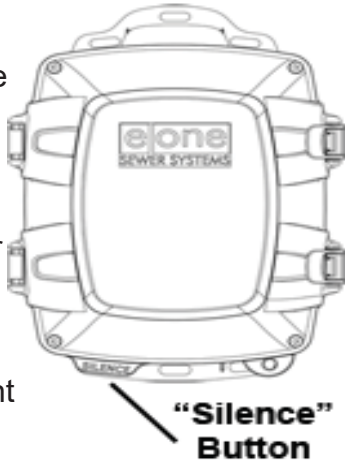
Water should be used sparingly if there is a power failure. Storage capacity in the pump tank is limited (from 30 gallons to several hundred gallons depending on tank size). Acts such as showering and washing clothes are not advised. It is suggested that you have an understanding of your specific pump system's capacity to avoid sewer spills or back-ups.

Know what to do in case of a Grinder System failure

In the event that a grinder system fails, an alarm on the control box sounds an audible alarm as well as a red light that will illuminate. During an alarm condition, please limit your water usage until repairs have been made. Schedule the repair immediately to avoid a sewer spill.

To silence a Grinder System alarm

Systems installed prior to 2010: The audible alarm, which is similar to the sound of a smoke alarm, can be silenced by opening the electric panel door and switching the alarm system toggle switch from AUTO to OFF. The alarm light will stay on signifying that the system is still in alarm condition. The light will go out when the water level drops. After the repair is made, the switch must be put back in the AUTO position to restore normal operations.



Systems installed on or after 2010: To silence the alarm, push the red light button on the control panel located outside.

E-One Systems: To silence the alarm, push the silence button on the bottom of the panel.

Be safe!

Call before you dig

The telephone number of the 'One Call' system is 811 or (800) 424-5555. Utility companies that have underground facilities in your area will come to surface mark their lines. This is the law! The public portion of the service lines are installed with toning wire and detector tape so they are able to be located.

Obtain a copy of your side sewer permit

Contact the District to receive a copy of your side sewer permit which will help you to know the location of the sewers on your property. Request a copy by calling the District at (360) 750-5816 or online at www.crwwd.com.

Do not tamper with your tank

Do not attempt to enter your tank or remove the green access lid. The septic environment creates gases that can cause illness. If your lid has been removed or damaged, contact a qualified contractor to repair it in a timely manner.

If your Grinder Pump system alarm goes off...
CALL A QUALIFIED CONTRACTOR

For more information...

Contact the District at:

8000 NE 52nd Court
Vancouver, WA 98665

PO Box 8979
Vancouver, WA 98668

Phone: (360) 750-5876
Fax: (360) 750-7570
Web: www.CRWWD.com

CLARK REGIONAL WASTEWATER DISTRICT

Contractor List

The following list contains the names of companies that have agreed to be included as a service provider for parts, repairs and maintenance of the items listed in the table.

Company	Contact	Supply	Repair	Maintain
AAA Septic Services LLC PO Box 1668 Brush Prairie WA 98606	Dale Waliezar dale@aaasepticpro.com (360) 798-7090 (360) 687-8960 Emergency	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves
Bloomquist Septic Inspection PO Box 3008 Battle Ground WA 98604	Pete Roberts Septic01@msn.com (360) 686-001 (360) 901-7225 Emergency	Pumps Floats Piping Valves	Pumps Floats Tanks Piping Valves	Pumps Floats Tanks Piping Valves
Caseday Services LLC PO Box 2127 Battle Ground WA 98604	Justin Caseday justin@casedayservices.com (360) 931-0859	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves
First Call Septic Service 2210 W Main St Ste 107, #316 Battle Ground WA 98604	Ronnie Tamez ronnie@firstcallseptic.com (360) 686-0505	Pumps Electrical Floats Piping Valves	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves
Hometown Septic 21606 NW 51st Ave Ridgefield WA 98642	Clay Barton hometownseptic@gmail.com (360) 947-5877	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves
PR Septic Service PO Box 391 Brush Prairie WA 98606	Nathan Eterno nate@prseptic.com (360) 901-8292	Pumps Electrical Floats Piping Valves	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves
Robb Construction Inc 7209 NE 159th St Vancouver WA 98662	Bret Robb robconstruction@gmail.com (360) 573-3030	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves
Speedy Septic PO Box 1260 Boring OR 97009	Hayden Buley hayden@speedysepticservice.com (360) 663-2807	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves	Pumps Electrical Floats Tanks Piping Valves
Affordable Septic Service PO Box 30087 Portland OR 97294	service@affordablesepticusa.com (360) 254-0853	Pumps Floats Tanks	Pumps Floats Tanks	Pumps Floats Tanks
Correct Equipment 300 S Redwood St Ste 135 Canby OR 97013	Travis Sheets traviss@correctequipment.com (360) 899-7307	Environment One Grinder Pump Representative - provides sales, installation and service contracts		