

Connections

Jan/Feb 2026



Biosolids 101

This article is last in the series that shows how the District collects, moves and treats wastewater (or sewage). Wastewater treatment is a complicated, regulated and often fascinating process that plays an important role in protecting public health and the environment.

Safe, responsible biosolids management

Biosolids are the solid organic matter that has been recovered from wastewater and further treated to meet federal and state standards. This important resource is rich in nutrients that improve soil, making it an ideal product for farmers to use as fertilizer. Reusing biosolids as a soil amendment (rather than sending them to an incinerator or landfill) is safe, responsible and sustainable.

The biosolids at the Salmon Creek Treatment Plant are treated with heat and microorganisms to reduce organic content and pathogens. The biosolids are tested regularly for heavy metals and other contaminants. These testing requirements are overseen by the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology). Because of the level of treatment provided, the biosolids can be applied to crops such as grass hay, silage corn and alfalfa, all used to feed livestock. Some wastewater treatment plants further treat their biosolids which allows for broader use, including in home gardens.



Biosolids application site in Klickitat County

The biosolids go to farms in Lewis County and Klickitat County (see photo). The farmers appreciate the biosolids because the nutrients help boost their crop yields.

To reduce costs, the District recently began self-hauling the biosolids to the farms. Using its own truck and staff for hauling, instead of a contractor, has reduced costs and increased efficiency, which supports the District's commitment to safe, responsible biosolids management.

Did you know?

The Salmon Creek Treatment Plant produces about 1,600 dry tons of biosolids each year. That's about 12,000 cubic yards or enough material to fill a football field 6 feet deep.

Hours of Operation

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

Emergency?

Call 24/7:
360-750-5876

Commissioners

Norm Harker
Denny Kiggins
Dan Clark

General Manager

John M. Peterson, P.E.

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District participates in statewide PFAS study

The District has been proactive in addressing PFAS, often called “forever chemicals” because they don’t break down. The District voluntarily participated in a statewide PFAS sampling study of biosolids conducted by Ecology last year. The study found that the levels of PFAS in biosolids in our state were low and consistent with household and commercial use of PFAS-containing products. The levels were comparable to other states that do not have PFAS manufacturers and where they generally would allow the biosolids to be used as fertilizer without any restrictions. The results of the study are helping Ecology develop new follow on testing guidance for wastewater treatment plants. The District will also be participating in that process.

PFAS are a group of manmade chemicals found in many industrial and household products. PFAS can accumulate in living things—including humans—with harmful effects. The most effective way to manage PFAS is to keep them out of the wastewater system in the first place as PFAS are not treated by the normal wastewater process.

Read more about PFAS and what you can do at home here: crwwd.com/pollution-prevention/pfas

Residential Rate Schedule			
	2025	2026	2027
Base Monthly*	\$46.50	\$48.00	est. \$50
\$ Change	\$1.50	\$1.50	est. \$2
% Change	3.30%	3.20%	–
Ridgefield	\$60.61	\$61.60	est. \$62–\$63

2026 rate increase: What you need to know

In order to continue to provide a high level of service, the District base rate will increase by \$1.50, to \$48.00 per month in January 2026. District rates remain competitive and are some of the lowest in Clark County. Small rate increases are necessary each year to address the rising costs of goods and services while continuing to provide reliable service.

**Rate for most customers. Please check the District website for rates in your area.*

Prepare your plumbing for winter weather

Winter weather can cause challenges to your home plumbing system. Follow these helpful tips to prepare and protect your system:

Protect indoor plumbing

- Keep your thermostat set at 55°F or above.
- Close garage doors.
- Seal any cracks or openings that could allow cold air inside and insulate crawl spaces.
- Insulate pipes located near outside walls or leave cabinet doors open to allow warm air to reach them.
- Drip cold water from faucets served by exposed pipes. A constant trickle can prevent ice from forming inside your pipes.
- If water is not running and you suspect the problem is at the meter, call your water service provider.

What to do if pipes break

- Turn off the water from the main shutoff valve, usually located at the water meter or where the line enters the building.
- Call a licensed plumber.

If your water pipes freeze

- Turn on the faucet and leave it on. This will help melt the ice in the pipe.
- If nothing comes out, call a licensed plumber.
- Do not try to thaw pipes using any device with an open flame, such as a propane torch or heater; high heat can damage pipes or start a fire.
- When the frozen pipe thaws and water pressure returns, check the other faucets in your home.

Local and regional resources

bit.ly/WA-FrozenWaterPipes

bit.ly/Winter-Plumbing

bit.ly/RegionalWaterWinterization