

WATER LINES

BIRCH BAY WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT

Serving the Greater Birch Bay Area Since 1968

Spring Newsletter 2008

Fats, Oils and Grease

Fats, oils, and grease (FOG) are an expensive problem for sewer systems. By doing your part at home, you can help to keep the District sewer system running efficiently.

Why FOG Matters

Improper disposal in toilets, sinks and household drains causes FOG to accumulate inside sewer pipes. As the FOG builds up, it restricts the flow in the pipe and can cause untreated wastewater to back up into households and businesses. FOG also reduces the capacity and operation of wastewater treatment facilities. It is very expensive to clean up wastewater spills, unplug or repair clogged pipes and repair pump stations. Therefore, excess FOG in the sewer system can cause your sewer rates to increase.



Sources of FOG

Common household sources of FOG are food scraps, meat fats, lard, oil (frying, salad, cooking), margarine, butter, baking goods, sauces and dairy products.

Take Action!

- ◇ Never pour fats, oils and grease down the sink or garbage disposal
- ◇ Pour oil and grease into a covered container after cooling
- ◇ Scrape food scraps into the trash
- ◇ Scrape and dry wipe pots, pans and dishes before washing
- ◇ Use sink strainers to catch food items, then empty the strainer into the trash
- ◇ For larger volumes of oil and grease please contact your local agency for recycling options.

Changing Faces

Blair Beebe Retires

After 34 years working at the District, Blair Beebe announced his retirement effective March 31, 2008. Blair joined the District in 1974 shortly after the District was formed. At that time, there were only four employees and the wastewater treatment plant had not yet been constructed. Blair started work as a Water Utility Operator, became Water Foreman in the 1980's and began serving as Water Manager in 1989. Blair comments that he will miss working at the District. "The time went by quickly and I definitely learned a lot over the years." After retirement, Blair plans to join the commercial purse seining fishing vessel "Destiny," which will depart from Blaine in May headed for Prince William Sound, Alaska. Blair will serve as the boat's engineer, piling leads and maintaining proper operation of the engine.

Good luck and we wish you all the best Blair!



New Faces at the District

Two new employees have recently joined the District staff: Emily Resch as Water Conservation Specialist and Mike Sowers as Operations Manager. Emily has an M.S. from Western Washington University with a background in water resources management and will be responsible for the sustainable management of our water supply. Mike comes from the City of Bellingham with 16 years experience in water and wastewater. He served as the Operations Maintenance Supervisor for Bellingham since 2001. Mike is responsible for managing both the Water and Sewer Departments of the District. **Welcome Emily and Mike!**



Water Conservation Tips: Preparing Your Landscape for Summer

1. Check Irrigation Systems – Look for broken or leaning sprinkler heads, clogged nozzles or drip emitters and rotors not rotating.



Replace and repair any damages. For sprinklers, place cups or cans throughout your lawn, turn your system on and check for uneven coverage to determine problem areas.

2. Mulch Plant Roots – Replenish organic mulches around your plants each year to improve soil, reduce moisture loss and keep roots cool during the summer months.

3. Weed Removal – Weeds can compete with landscape plants for water. Remove the weeds by hand or check with your local nursery for safe sprays.



4. Prune Sparingly – Prune plants only when necessary. Low tree limbs or branches keep plants shaded and cooler in the summer.

5. Replant Lost Plants – If plants have died or are not performing well, plant new ones before the summer heat sets in. Be sure to select native or well-adapted plants to ensure future success.

Check out the District's new webpage! District staff has been hard at work to update the current webpage design and content. Please visit us at www.bbwsd.com.

Water System Plan & Water Use Efficiency Program

On January 10th, the Board of Commissioners approved the District's updated Comprehensive Water System Plan (WSP) and new Water Use Efficiency (WUE) program and conservation goal. The WSP was last updated in 2003 and updates include new plans and policies for the District to best address growth and demand in the future.

The approval of the WUE program and conservation goal responds to new requirements in the state's Municipal Water Law designed to promote good stewardship and efficiency in the use and management of the state's water resources. The District is in compliance with all requirements of the WUE. A summary of the WUE Rule requirements and a copy of the District's WUE program are available on the District's website.

Fire Hydrants & Meter Boxes

It is very important to keep fire hydrants and water meter boxes unobstructed from view and easily accessible. This allows District staff to quickly access the location of the water meter and shut-off valve in case there is a leak or water emergency. Quick access to fire hydrants is necessary in the incident of a fire emergency.

Your efforts in this area are much appreciated by our water operations staff and local fire authorities.



THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Must be a **3 foot cleared radius** around hydrant
- **Do not cover** meter box with beauty bark or other landscaping
- **Do not fence** in your meter box
- **Do not park your car** over the meter box



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