PENNGROVE SANITATION ZONE

NEWS
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PROTECTING OUR WATER QUALITY STARTS AT HOME

As we enter the wet weather season, we encourage our sanitation customers to keep in mind that protecting water quality is everyone's responsibility and there are many things we can do in our homes to protect waterways and the environment from unnecessary harm.

The Sonoma County Water Agency manages and operates eight sanitation districts and zones throughout the county, providing wastewater collection (and in most cases treatment) for the equivalent of nearly 30,000 homes. Our goal is to protect the health and safety of our customers and the environment — and you can help.

Our crews maintain more than 230 miles of sewer pipelines throughout Sonoma County, pipelines that collect wastewater from your home or business and deliver it to a treatment plant. These workers perform routine sewer mainline cleaning, assess pipeline conditions using video equipment, and perform routine and emergency repairs to sewers and manholes. Last year they cleaned more than 100 miles of pipeline, dug up and repaired 45 damaged pipelines, and inspected 39 miles of sewer pipeline. A total of $16.1 million was spent on operations and maintenance last year for the eight sanitation districts and zones.

Some of the repairs that are performed are preventable. For instance, sewer lines sometimes back up from grease that gets poured down the drain, or from disposable wipes that are flushed down the toilet. Sewer overflows can have negative impacts on creeks and rivers. In addition, properly disposing of old medicines also protects water quality and aquatic life by making sure that traces of pharmaceuticals don't end up in our water system. See the articles in this newsletter for more details about what you can do to help protect our water quality and environment.

THE TOILET IS NOT A TRASH CAN

Our toilets are designed to dispose of just two things: human waste and toilet paper. All too often, however, people use toilets like a trash can. Using your toilet to dispose of household items, such as paper towels, dental floss, hair and pet waste bags can damage your plumbing and lead to sewer pipe backups.

One modern culprit is the so-called "flushable" wipe product. While they may be flushable in the sense that they will go down the toilet, they can accumulate in sewer pipes and cause blockages or cause damage to pumps. Tests have shown that "flushable" wipes do not degrade readily like toilet paper.

Aside from the misleading "flushable" culprits, many modern products like paper towels, dental floss, hair, and pet waste bags will often lead to the same damaging result. To prevent sewer system blockage and equipment damage, keep it simple and keep the trash in the trash.

HELP KEEP OUR SEWERS FAT-FREE

Fats, oils, and grease (FOG) can lead to unpleasant odors and blockages in sewer pipes. Grease can also build up in your pipes from food scraps, even if they are put down the garbage disposal.

Please take note of the following suggestions to keep sewer pipes "Fat-Free":

- Never pour fats, oils, or cooking grease down the sink or garbage disposal.
- Place food scraps in appropriate waste containers or compost piles rather than into the drain or garbage disposal.
- Pour excess grease into a container with a tight fitting lid and freeze for disposal with your household garbage; and wipe the remaining grease from the pan with a scraper or paper towel.

For more information on the recycling or proper disposal of fats, oils, and grease, contact the Eco-Desk at 707-565-3375 or go to www.recyclenow.org.

Penngrove Sanitation Zone
c/o Sonoma County Water Agency
404 Aviation Blvd.
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

REBATES:

Clothes washer: Receive up to $125 back on the purchase and installation of a new, qualifying high-efficiency clothes washer (HEW). Rebates are available for all Energy Star Most Efficient listed clothes washers except those containing silver ion technology. A $75 rebate may also be available from PG&E.

Toilet: Get up to $150 back on the purchase and installation of each new, qualifying high-efficiency toilet (HET) from the List of Qualifying Models. Download rebate application forms and learn more at www.sonomacountywater.org/rebates or call 707-547-1918.

High-efficiency fixture direct install: A limited number of high-efficiency fixture retrofits, including toilet, urinal, faucet aerator and showerhead replacements, are offered at no cost to eligible properties. For more information and to register, go to www.sonomacountywater.org/direct-install.

SAFEMEDICINE
DISPOSAL PROGRAM

SAFE MEDICINE DISPOSAL PROGRAM

Over the last decade there is growing evidence that pharmaceuticals, when flushed down the toilet, tend to persist in highly treated wastewater. Continual, multi-generational exposure of aquatic life to multiple pharmaceuticals has negative consequences on our environment.

The Sonoma County Water Agency is sponsoring the Safe Medicine Disposal program to allow for the safe disposal of unused and unwanted medications. Bring unwanted medications (in original containers with personal information marked out) to any participating location for safe disposal during business hours. To view Drop-Off Locations and see what medications are accepted, visit www.safemedicinedisposal.org.

Securing our Future by Investing in our Water Resources, Environment & Community

www.sonomacountywater.org/PSZ