

## **WHO CAN I CALL AT NIGHT, WEEKENDS OR HOLIDAYS IF I HAVE A SEWER PROBLEM OR SEE A SEWER PROBLEM?**

The same number is used 24 hours per day. Please call (207) 729-0148 and press 4 to report any problems with service.

## **WHEN I DRIVE BY THE DISTRICT'S PUMP STATION A FLASHING LIGHT IS ON OR A HORN IS SOUNDING. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?**

When you encounter a flashing light or horn alarm sounding at one of our pump stations please call (207) 729-0148 and press 4. Our pump stations are identified with a blue and white sign noting the station name, several emergency numbers and the owner (Brunswick Sewer District). Please do not assume someone else has called us already. With your cooperation and early involvement, we can lessen or even avoid an overflow or emergency situation.

## **WHAT CAUSES SEWER ODORS INSIDE THE HOUSE/BUILDING?**

Sewer has a natural tendency to produce odors; all sewers have odors. The plumbing system in your home is designed to prevent these odors from entering the house by using a vapor trap. If you are experiencing odors, you may have problems with the trap, a broken lateral or collapsed sewer main. If you are experiencing odors, please call the District at (207) 729-0148 or email us at [info@brunswicksewer.org](mailto:info@brunswicksewer.org) so we may assess the situation. Once we determine the problem, you will be notified if you need to call a plumber.

## **SEWAGE IS BACKING UP INTO MY HOUSE OVERFLOWING FROM MY DRAINS. WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT?**

If these problems occur and you are not using any water, there may be a problem with the District's main line. Call (207) 729-0148 and press 4 to request service. If you are using your household water, turn it off. If the overflowing wastewater stops after turning off the water, you likely have a problem with your private sewer lateral and you probably need to call a plumber. **Call the District before you call a plumber.**

## **I HAVE A SLOW DRAINAGE THROUGH MY TOILETS AND DRAINS. WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT?**

Check to see if your neighbors are having a similar problem. Call the District at (207) 729-0148 and press 4, and we will check the District's main lines. A member of the District staff will notify you on what the problem is. If the District has no problems with its lines, you will need to call a plumber to clean or fix your private sewer lateral line.

## **WHAT CAN I SAFELY POUR DOWN THE SINK OR INTO THE TOILET?**

Before you think about what you can throw away, think about what you are buying. Buy environmentally friendly products whenever possible and only buy the quantity that you need. Call us at (207) 729-0148 to ask if the product or material in question is dangerous to discharge to the sewer. Do not discharge flammable materials or toxic or poisonous solids, liquids or gasses to the sewers. These materials would include gasoline, benzene, naphtha, fuel oil, paint solvents, chemicals including prescription

and non-prescription drugs and solid or viscous substances that would obstruct the flow and interfere with the treatment process. See the District's Rules and Regulations for further clarification.

### **CAN I DISPOSE OF "WIPES" IN THE TOILET?**

No, while manufactures claim wipes are disposable, wipes do not fall apart or disintegrate like tissue paper. Wipes stay intact and will clog our wastewater pumps and cause them to fail. Only flush the 3p's; pee, poo, and (toilet) paper.

### **WHEN I DRIVE OVER A MANHOLE COVER IT RATTLES. WHO DO I CALL?**

Call the main office at (207) 729-0148 and we'll take care of it the next business day or immediately if it is an emergency.

### **WHAT ARE THE SEWER DISTRICT TRUCKS DOING IN MY STREET?**

The Brunswick Sewer District's Collection Division has implemented a preventative maintenance program of sewer cleaning and closed circuit television inspection of the entire sewer system. Periodic cleaning and televising of the sewer lines in your neighborhood greatly reduces the risk of any grease buildup and/or overflows.

### **WHERE DOES THE BRUNSWICK SEWER DISTRICT'S RESPONSIBILITY BEGIN AND END WITH RESPECT TO WASTEWATER UTILITIES?**

Generally, the District is responsible for all sewer main lines, pump stations and outfalls located within right of ways and easements. Maintenance of customer service lines (laterals) that are extended to the main lines are the responsibility of the owners/customers.

### **WHAT IS A SEWER SERVICE LATERAL?**

The service lateral is constructed by private owners for private use of their property. It is a privately owned and maintained sewer pipe that connects a building to the public sewer main line.

### **WHAT IS A SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM?**

A sanitary sewer system is designed to transport wastewater from sanitary fixtures, such as toilets, sinks, bathtubs, showers inside your house or place of business to the treatment plant. The sanitary sewer system consists of publicly owned pipes, force mains, gravity lines, maintenance holes, pump stations, and the treatment plant.

### **WHAT IS AN OUTFALL SEWER?**

An outfall sewer receives wastewater from a collection system or from a wastewater treatment plant and carries it to a point of ultimate or final discharge in the environment. The District's final discharge is to the Androscoggin River.

### **WHAT IS A STORM OR CATCH BASIN?**

A storm or catch basin is a pipe, conduit or open channel that carries runoff from storms, surface drainage, and street wash. Storm or catch basins do not convey domestic or commercial wastes. In the town of Brunswick, the Public Works Department (207-725-6654) is responsible for the storm or catch basins that are situated on public

roads or public property. With a few exceptions, catch basins are not connected to the sanitary sewer system.

### **WHAT HAPPENS DURING A RAIN EVENT WHEN THERE'S MORE WATER THAN NORMAL FLOWING TO THE TREATMENT PLANT?**

For the most part and by design, the wastewater collection system (sewer) is separated from the storm drainage system. The majority of the storm water does not flow through the wastewater treatment plant. Instead, it flows directly into creeks, streams and even into the Androscoggin River itself. However, due to unintended processes known as "Infiltration and Inflow (I & I)", excess water can enter the sewer system and ultimately the treatment plant. Infiltration occurs when groundwater enters the sewer system through crack, holes, faulty connections, or other openings. Inflow occurs when surface water, including storm water enters the sewer system through roof downspout connections, catch basins, holes in maintenance covers, illegal plumbing connections, or other defects. The sanitary sewer system and treatment plant have a maximum flow capacity of wastewater that can be contained and treated. I & I, which is essentially clean water, takes up the capacity and can result in sewer overflows and unnecessary costs for treatment of this water. It can even lead to unnecessary expansion of the treatment plant to handle the flow. These costs get passed on to the ratepayer.

### **I JUST MOVED INTO A HOME OR APARTMENT OR OPENED A BUSINESS IN A BUILDING THAT IS CONNECTED TO THE SEWER. WHAT DO I DO?**

To open a new sewer account where sewer services already exist and the property is connected to public water, please call the Brunswick-Topsham Water District at (207) 729-9956 to set up an account. The water district will forward all the information to us so we can establish an account in your name. To open a new sewer account where sewer services already exist and the property derives its portable water from an un-metered source (private well), please call us at (207) 729-0148 to set up an account.

### **I'M BUILDING A NEW RESIDENTIAL HOME OR NEW COMMERCIAL BUILDING. HOW DO I CONNECT TO THE SEWER?**

You or your general contractor will need to obtain a permit. Once an Entrance Charge application is completed and the necessary fee paid, a permit will be issued. See the Entrance Charge Program Policy for more details. Click the link for our online permit application. <http://goo.gl/forms/SoRtu9V9q3xbarCt1>.

### **DOES THE SEWER DISTRICT HAVE A RECREATIONAL VEHICLE (RV) WASTE DISPOSAL SITE?**

The District's Treatment Plant, located at 8 Pine Tree Road, has a receiving area where owners of RVs and campers can empty their tanks. A fee, payable at the Administration Office which is located next door to the plant or left in the nearby dropbox, is charged for this service. The facility is open from 7:00 am until 4:00 pm, Monday through Thursday. The facility is not open on holidays, but may be open at other times depending on staff availability and workloads.

### **CAN I GET AN ADJUSTMENT FOR OUTSIDE WATERING?**

The District has a Sewer Use Adjustment Policy to provide a means by which an adjustment to the amount billed for wastewater disposal services may be made when the use of water is not returned to the public sewer. Please see that policy for further information. To request an adjustment, please call (207) 729-0148 or email [info@brunswicksewer.org](mailto:info@brunswicksewer.org) prior to the end of the current billing period for which the adjustment is being requested.

### **WHERE CAN I PAY MY SEWER BILL?**

The District sends bills four times a year to its residential account holders and most of the commercial account holders. Payment is due thirty days after the bill is issued. The payment can be mailed to or presented in person at 10 Pine Tree Road, Brunswick, ME 04011. The District office is open from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Thursday. For your convenience, the District has an after-hours drop box located at the District office. Please do not put cash into the after-hours drop box. Additionally, you can also sign up for the District's Direct Payment Plan and have your payment deducted automatically from your checking or savings account or payments may be made online.

### **WHAT CAN I DO WHEN I CAN'T PAY MY SEWER BILL?**

If you have trouble paying your bill, a payment plan can be arranged by calling (207) 729-0148.

### **I HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED THAT THERE IS A LIEN ON MY PROPERTY. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN AND HOW DO I HAVE IT REMOVED?**

This means your sewer account is at least 6 months delinquent. It's important to contact the District so we can assist you in getting your account current which will allow us to release the lien. If lien notices are ignored and payments continue to be delinquent then foreclosure proceedings could begin. We encourage you to contact us by calling (207) 729-0148 as soon as possible so we may provide some assistance.