

DISTRICT DIGEST

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BRUNSWICK SEWER DISTRICT *Protecting Maine's Environment*

PREVENTION VS. TREATMENT

The best way to keep wastewater treatment processes working efficiently is to keep things that don't belong in the sewer system out of it. A goal of the District is to educate the public on what should and should not be discharged to the sanitary sewer system. A short list of the items NOT to be disposed down your drain or toilet includes: Fats, oils, and grease (FOG) from cooking; motor oils and paints; pesticides and herbicides; unused medicine - in either pill or liquid form; and wipes of any kind - irrespective of manufacturers' claims.



Photo credit: WEF Collection Committee (WEF.org)

Wastewater treatment plants are not designed to remove many of the compounds found in these products so the compounds end up in the environment and impact the aquatic life. BSD uses a biological secondary treatment process. We use "friendly" bacteria to break down and consume typical human waste. The compounds found in many of the listed products cannot be treated biologically. They require filtration for removal. Construction and operation of filtration systems can be very expensive.

Nutrient removal may be the next treatment process that BSD will be required to implement to reduce phosphorus and nitrogen levels. On-going environmental research is also dealing with what is referred to as 'Compounds of Emerging Concerns'. These include: Pharmaceuticals – whether ingested and then eliminated through bodily functions or dumped in the sink or toilet; microbeads from personal care products; pesticides and flame retardants. This research is looking to develop reliable and cost effective removal or reduction processes for wastewater treatment facilities. There is no solution yet, but you can help in the meantime.

The best solution is to keep these compounds out of the wastewater stream.



Photo credit: WEF Collection Committee (WEF.org)

Please properly dispose of items listed above. The Town of Brunswick has periodic collection of the more hazardous products and the rest may be placed with your regular garbage. The only items going down your toilet should be human waste and toilet tissue – NO paper towels, wipes, feminine hygiene products, baby or adult diapers. Place these items in your regular garbage. With your help in keeping these items out of the wastewater stream, BSD will continue to run an efficient and cost effective treatment facility.

F.O.G. – FATS, OIL AND GREASE – NEVER DOWN YOUR SINK!

Fats, oils, and grease, (FOG) should never be poured down your drain. It is a nuisance for the pumping stations and the treatment plant, but it can be a big problem for a home owner. FOG can plug your sewer service causing a costly repair. For the proper disposal of FOG, the Water Environment Federation recommends that you, “pour it into a container, seal, and place in the trash (or recycle where available).”



Picture of a 4" line reduced to 1.5" due to grease.

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A “FLUSHABLE” WIPE – REALLY!

Most people wouldn't flush a shirt down the toilet yet they don't think twice about “Flushable wipes”. Flushable wipes are made from the same cellulose fibers as your cotton, rayon or polyester clothing. Although these products may be labeled as “flushable”, that doesn't mean they are safe for the sewer system. In fact, the meaning of “flushable” is the ability to wash out (a sewer, toilet, etc.) by a sudden rush of water. The truth is these products are designed NOT to break down. Once they are flushed they cling to each other and create masses that block sewage lines. The repairs and fees to home owners and the District to clean these masses can be costly. Disposal of ALL wipes in the trash.

Recognition

The following employees are celebrating anniversaries in the second quarter 2016:

Jason Prout	<i>Treatment Plant Operator</i>	19 years
Darcy Dutton	<i>Customer Service and Billing Clerk</i>	13 years

We thank you for your service to the District!

REMINDERS

OUTSIDE WATERING ADJUSTMENTS/CREDITS

When you are using water for your lawn, gardens, pools, or ice rinks you may be eligible for an outside watering credit. The following is excerpted from the District's Sewer Use Billing Adjustment Policy adopted December 2005:

An account holder desiring to receive an adjustment must contact the District with a request prior to the end of the current billing period for which the adjustment is being requested.

YOU MUST CONTACT US PRIOR TO THE BILLING PERIOD—

Don't know your billing period? Call 729-0148 ext 110 or email ddutton@brunswicksewer.org for more information. **PLEASE NOTE. Credits will no longer be given after the bill has been produced.** You will also need to contact us each quarter in order to qualify for this outside watering credit. You may view the policy on our website or request a copy be mailed to you.

Thinking of doing some yard work? Before your contractor digs, call DIG SAFE (1-888-344-7233). It's free and it's the law.

When experiencing a sewer system problem, please contact the District **FIRST**. The 24-hour emergency pager is 580-3175.

At the touch of a button you can skip the checks and stamps by paying your sewer bills online. This free service can be found at: www.brunswicksewer.org/odp.html.

Don't forget to like us on Facebook.

