

LAKE PEWAUKEE SANITARY DISTRICT



APRIL 2020

Visit us on the web at www.lakepewaukee.org

CORONA (COVID-19) VIRUS ISSUE: With the onset of the Coronavirus please protect your SEWER LATERALS AND OUR PUMPS – they do not like cleaning rags or “FLUSHABLE TOWELETTES”! The only paper that can go down the toilet is toilet paper!

It is imperative that you do not flush paper towel. Do not flush wipes even if they are labeled “flushable wipes”. Do not flush Clorox wipes. Do not flush baby wipes. Do not flush rags, socks or cloth of any kind!!!

The District is cleaning our wet wells and flushing our pumps right now in anticipation of people being home more and using more water cleaning their homes, working on projects and more toilet use so more flushing is expected.

At this critical time with a health pandemic going on, the last thing you need is your toilets and drains backing up. If this happens it's everybody else's sewage backing up your pipe leaving you potentially exposed to the virus. The District doesn't want our mainline or pumps getting clogged either. If we have to unclog a pump due to someone flushing what some manufacturers call “flushable wipes” down the toilet, we are being exposed to the virus removing that wipe that is wrapped on the pump's impeller. When you remove a pump to unclog it, sewage, toilet paper and everything else drains onto the floor. While you try to have rubber gloves and masks to deal with the mess, we are being exposed. We have limited masks, just like the hospitals. The District has 52 miles of sewer pipe and 14 pump stations and 30+ pumps operating daily at these stations. We already have limited maintenance staff to control our sewer user fees. If someone gets sick that will be less staff. **If pumps start to clog due to paper towel, wipes and cleaning rags we are all going to have another source of exposure to deal with. YOU THE SEWER USER can control what you flush down the toilet.** As with any epidemic the first thing you do is stop and think, assess the situation, then use your common sense and follow details and recommendations of the scientist or experts in the field. How you behave affects everyone else in the District.

I have seen many people stocking up on toilet paper, please use it in small wads if you are going to flush it. **Excessive use (large wads) can cause problems in your own private lateral and if you need a plumber to come over, they just may not be available.** The District maintains the main line, not your private lateral and we are already going to be very busy. Utilities have to continuously function, we can't just stop and go home. We and you are at high risk if we get any clogs.

During this epidemic you need to understand how important it is not to flush wipes down the toilet. Do not flush anything other than toilet paper down the toilet. Please spread the word to your neighbors, friends, and relatives no matter what municipality they live in. This holds true even if you have a septic system, simply put, wipes and rags are problematic. This is true every day, people just think the toilet paper and everything that goes down the toilet just disappears. It has to go through miles of pipes and pumps and make its way to a Waste Water Treatment Plant. The District's sewage goes around Pewaukee Lake, through the Village of Pewaukee, through the City of Pewaukee to the Fox River Pollution Control Center in Brookfield where it is treated. Soooo add another 10 miles of pipes and how many more pumps??! This is a critical topic at this time for all municipalities in the County, State and entire Country.

We repeat this in every newsletter – Help us, help you keep the District fee down, if you have cleaners tell them to dispose of the rags/wipes properly - **into a garbage can**. Help us avoid responding to emergency pump problems which requires staff to show up at 2 a.m. and then we have to pay them overtime. This costs the District and the user's unnecessary expenses. Think about it, you pay to have a cleaning service come in to clean your home, if they throw their used rags down the toilet and they clog a pump, you are then going to be paying the District staff overtime to clean the pump. In reality you are paying twice for the use of those rags. Pass the word tell them to take the cleaning rags with them or you'll find another service.

The other big item is illegal sump pump connections. This is the time of year when we look for sump pumps discharging to our sewer system during the day and sometimes in the middle of the night. If your pump is going into your sewer drain you risk getting a large fine. I'd rather see those funds go toward correcting the problem.

At a time where there is an epidemic and Cities are asking people to stay quarantined at home, we expect the water use to rise which will in turn increase the flow to the sanitary sewer system and the treatment plant. If illegal sump pumps are adding clear water to the system, then we are using extra pipe capacity that should be available for sewage. These pumps must be disconnected, or you could be causing the back up of the sewer pipe that serves your house and your neighbors. It is critical to have that sewer capacity for all the sewer users. Are you are using up the capacity of our sewer for your personal sump pump so your lawn doesn't get wet? If so, you are in effect making your neighbors pay for the unnecessary treatment of clear water and using up capacity of the system...it's not fair to everyone around you. It's not ethical, and it is simply morally wrong.

This year's fee is \$118.00 per quarter. Help us, help you, keep the cost of our sewer services down. Remove illegal sump pump connections and disconnect illegal roof drain connections. The District repairs any leaks in our main line system immediately upon finding one. We need to work together so we can reduce the costs of wastewater treatment and maintain capacity for critical times, such as now!!

Remember – wash your hands frequently, use coughing and sneezing etiquette, stay home especially if you are sick and try to maintain that 6-foot social distance's doctors and scientist are recommending.

LAKE OPERATIONS

The ice is out, the lake should be slowly rising with the recent rains and we plan to be putting our transports and shore units in the lake by the 3rd week in April. If the weather permits, we will start our Monday and Friday pile pickup with two part time employees. This has become a very well used service with the number of residents stacking weeds increasing every year. We would like to thank all those that participate in making piles since this makes our regular shore cleanup more efficient.

NATIVE PLANT SALE

The 12th annual native plant sale, sponsored by the District and the Pewaukee River Partnership, will take place May 9th, 2020. The deadline for the Pre-sale orders is April 17, 2020.

These native plants are deep rooted plants that help reduce pollutants and heavy metal loadings to the lake. They are nature's way of cleaning the water before it gets into the lake. They also remove nutrients which help minimize algae blooms and help minimize aquatic plant growth. A complete plant list and early order forms and contacts are on the District web site at www.lakepewaukee.org. All proceeds will be used to promote education and restoration projects within the watershed.

Please return the enclosed form with your email address and phone number so we can update you on critical items with a quick email blast. LPSD respects your privacy and will not share your information with anyone. If you have any questions on sewer operations, sump pumps, or summer lake crew opportunities and operations contact the Lake Pewaukee Sanitary District at 262-691-4485, email us at LPSD@lakepewaukee.org or go to our website at www.lakepewaukee.org.