

Ronald Wastewater Review

A quarterly publication of news and information for customers of Ronald Wastewater District

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December 2010

Volume 7 Issue 4

King County Treatment Charge Increase

The Ronald Wastewater District Board of Commissioners, your elected sewer district commissioners, establishes the District charge. The Board has made a decision not to increase next year the current monthly District charge of \$11.15. You can still expect the same high level of service that we've always provided.

The King County Council establishes the sewer Treatment charge and has decided to increase next year the monthly treatment charge from the current \$31.90 each month to \$36.10 each month. This is approximately a 13% increase in the monthly sewage Treatment charge.

Please use the information below to contact King County if you have concerns or questions about the 2011 increase in King County's Treatment charge.

Your Monthly Sewer Bill Where the Money Goes



Ronald Wastewater District has a Low Income Senior Citizen or Disabled Citizen Discount for qualified homeowners. Please call our office at (206) 546-2494 for more information or visit our website at www.ronaldwastewater.org to download the application.

As a convenience to our ratepayers, Ronald Wastewater District is now providing a drop-box in our office for Shoreline Water District payments. There is also a drop-box for Ronald Wastewater District payments at the Shoreline Water District office. If you have any questions about payment options please call our office at (206) 546-2494.

Did you know that when a city in Washington State owns a utility, such as a sewer or water system, the city can impose a utility tax on the utility charge collected from the ratepayers to support their general fund activities? The cities can tax their own utilities!



For example, the City of Kent adds a 6% utility tax to the water/sewer rates, and Bremerton and Longview add a 9.5% utility tax. The residents of the City of Richland pay a utility tax of 10.5% and the City of Seattle imposes a 12% utility tax on their wastewater utility. Spokane taxes their own utilities 20%!

Ronald Wastewater District is an independent Special Purpose District governed by three Commissioners elected by you, the ratepayers of the District. There is an Interlocal Operating Agreement between the District and the City of Shoreline, but the District is not subject to a utility tax by the City. However, the District does pay an interlocal operating fee that is approximately 6% of the District's gross revenues.

Sources:
www.ci.kent.wa.us
www.ci.bremerton.wa.us
www.ci.longview.wa.us
www.ci.richland.wa.us
www.seattle.gov
www.spokanecity.org

King County Executive e-mail:	kcexec@kingcounty.gov
King County Executive phone:	(206) 296-4040
King County Wastewater Treatment Division phone:	(206) 684-1280
King County Council member Ferguson e-mail:	bob.ferguson@kingcounty.gov
King County Council member Ferguson phone:	(206) 296-1001
King County Information phone:	(206) 296-0100

Why is the sewer bill a flat rate rather than a consumption based bill?

The simplest answer is that most of our costs are fixed. For example, the lights are on here at the District office for eight hours a day regardless of how much water people send down the sewer pipe. True, there may be some variations in costs, but overall the operation of a sewage collection system (or a treatment plant) is based on fixed costs.

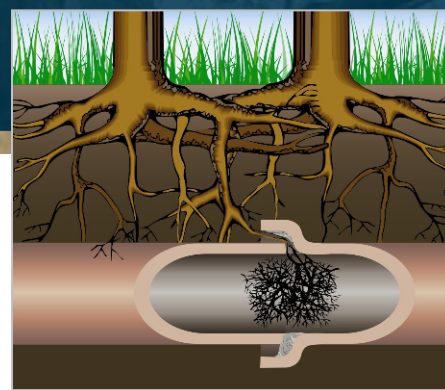
Also, we don't sell a product, such as water or electricity. Rather we provide a service: sewage collection. A comparable example is garbage collection. The cost of providing garbage collection is based on fixed costs such as payroll, heat, and vehicle maintenance, and these costs must be paid whether a full can or half a can of garbage is picked up. Likewise, sewage collection and treatment costs are the same whether toilets, sinks, or drains are used once, twice, three times, or more each day.

King County bills the District \$36.10 (2011 rate) each month for each home we serve. King County does not bill Ronald Wastewater based on water usage for homes. We pass this bill on to our customers without adding to it; we then send the money to King County.

Ronald Wastewater District is very sensitive to the circumstances of people on fixed incomes. It is important to keep in mind that Ronald Wastewater District is not part of the City of Shoreline. We are an independent Special Purpose District that performs sewage collection services. The \$11.15 you pay us each month is used for the sewer system only. You can be confident that your rate money is used to maintain and repair the sewer system.

Feel free to stop by our office and see for yourself how your payments are being used.

The **ROOT** of the Problem



If you are experiencing a sewer problem, please contact us at Ronald Wastewater District. We can help you decide what steps to take to solve the problem and get things flowing again.

Often the cause of sewer backups can be traced to tree roots that have invaded a sewer line. The tree roots find sewer lines as they constantly and randomly search for food and water resources. The roots enter very small cracks in the pipe joints and when they find the water and nutrients in sewage, they can grow very fast. Here are some solutions that may help resolve this problem:

- Foaming root killers added into your plumbing system can help control root problems, but the tree will continue to grow and eventually re-establish root growth in the pipe.
- Clean the line using a flexible shaft with a blade on the end to cut the roots out. Cutting out the roots or adding root killers can be effective in the short term, but they are only temporary, can be expensive over time, and must be performed on a regular basis in order to prevent sewer clogs and back-ups.
- If you know which tree(s) or bush(es) is causing the problem and it is on your property, then removing the tree may be a long-lasting solution. Check with the City first before removing any trees. Choosing to landscape with your sewer line in mind can help discourage root related sewer problems.
- Hire a plumber to put a camera down your side sewer, find where the problem is, and repair it. Cured-in-place sewer lining or pipe-bursting are other pipe repair options that can be good solutions in certain situations. In the short term though, repairing or replacing the side sewer can be expensive.



Again, if you are experiencing a sewer problem, please contact us at Ronald Wastewater District. Call us before you pay for expensive repairs. Our experienced staff can help explain all of your options.

We're your Sewer District. Call us at (206) 546-2494.