



Down the Drain

An Informational Newsletter from the
Hull Sewer Department
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Welcome to 2015, How did 2014 Turn Out?

Although the recovery and renovation efforts from the plant failure in 2013 consumed most of the calendar year, we still conducted business as usual at the plant. Regardless of the drawbacks or obstacles in our way, the treatment plant operates 24-hours a day, 365 days a year. There is no downtime for the plant or its crew if the Town continues to desire the best possible treatment process available from it. In 2014, we treated over 650 million gallons of wastewater at the plant itself and responded to almost 150 customer calls with sewer-related problems or concerns as well as numerous call-outs to our seven satellite pumping stations.

Some Changes at the Plant

After working for the Town in different capacities including over 12-years at the plant, Pam Colley has retired to be with family in California. She left an indelible mark on the Town and her knowledge and history within this department will be missed. We wish Pam well in her new endeavors.

Terri Berardinelli has filled the position at the plant, opting to leave her previous position at the Town Hall working in the Board of Health.

What are the big vacuum trucks that I see working in the street sometimes?

From time to time, you will see a big vacuum truck in town called a vactor. This is a highly specialized vehicle for cleaning and clearing underground structures and piping networks. On the top is a large diameter flexible hose that extends out in front of the vehicle. Pipe extensions are attached to the end of this hose to reach down below the street to the bottom of the structure to vacuum debris, build-up or solids that have settled in place. The suction created by this industrial machine is capable of removing objects too large to move by hand.

There is also a large reel on the front bumper of the vehicle that holds a high-pressure water jetter. This is used to clear blockages in the street between manholes. There is on-board storage for both clean water and for any contaminated water or debris that is removed from the work areas. Having access to this type of equipment is beneficial for us because it allows us to clear mainline obstructions from a stationary location. Capable of creating water pressure up to 3,000psi, there is very little that can prevent this equipment from completing its job.



Disposable Wipes

As stated in previous newsletter issues as well as in sewer bills and in newspaper articles, “disposable” wipes continue to be a major problem in municipal sewer systems everywhere. Even though they are labeled as “disposable” and some even use the term “flushable”, we ask that you please dispose of these wipes in your trash barrel after using them and do not flush them down the toilet. Most of these wipes do not break down as quickly as they need to in order to keep flowing through the system. Aside from human waste, toilet paper is the only acceptable item that should ever be flushed in order to maintain an efficient sanitary waste line.

Sump Pumps

Town By-Laws prohibit the discharge of sump pumps directly into the sewer system. This includes hard piping to the actual pipe as well as a hose going into basement sinks, etc. All non-sewer disposed water that enters the sewer system adds to the overall wear and tear on the system and treatment process. Please check your sump pit and follow the route that the discharge piping takes to insure that it discharges the flow into your yard or a pit of some sort. If the pipe leads directly to the sewer line leaving your house, we ask that you have it redirected immediately. If you need help verifying where your sump pump discharges, please call this office.

Sewer Blockages or Slow Drains?

If you are experiencing any type of a sewer back-up or even unusually slow drains, please contact this office immediately. **Do not call** a private plumber first, let us know what is going on and we will dispatch a crew to check the sewer line that runs in front of your house to make sure that the street is flowing properly.

If there is a problem in the street, the call to a plumber that you made may cost you money that you didn't need to spend. Once the street is inspected, someone will contact you to tell you the status of their findings and then advise you of what your next steps should be.

QUESTION?

Sewer Connections: Does everyone in town have to be connected to the municipal sewer system?

(answer) Yes, according to the Town By-Laws, every property in Hull should be connected.

Home Renovations: Is there a fee from the Sewer Department for renovating my home?

(answer) In some cases a fee would be assessed depending on the magnitude of the project. For answers pertaining to your specific extent of renovation, please contact our office.

What's the Odor: Aside from naturally occurring odors, should I call the plant if I smell sewer odors?

(answer) Yes you should. Although odors are constantly being generated due to the nature of the plant activities, some odors are stronger and more offensive than others. Most times the odors are a result of the process used to clean and treat the flows we receive but if we are not aware of particular odors, we cannot confirm that they are part of the process. We investigate every sewer odor complaint received.

Financial question: Where does my money go when I pay my sewer bill?

(answer) The operations, maintenance and upkeep of the entire sewer collection system, treatment plant and seven sewer pump stations is funded by the sewer use bills generated for our customers. As an Enterprise Account, we are self sufficient in that we use the money generated through our services to maintain the system.

Proper Notifications: Who do I call if I see something that doesn't seem right in the street or in my house?

(answer) For overflowing street structures, contact either the Sewer Department or Public Works. For problems with a catch basin (usually a square cover on the side of roads with checkerboard square openings), contact the DPW. For sewer manhole issues (round covers in the middle of the road), contact the Sewer Dept. If you are having a sewer-related back-up or slow drains, contact the Sewer Department BEFORE calling a plumber so that we can verify that the problem is not in the street before you incur any personal expenses. If the street is fine, you will be advised of your next steps. If you have issues with your incoming water, call Aquarion Water at (800) 732-9678