

# the SOOS CREEK

## CON NECTION

www.sooscreek.com

January/February 2013

### What NOT To Flush Down The Toilet

The only things you should flush down the toilet are human waste and toilet paper. Toilet paper is made to break down in water and, therefore, rarely causes a blockage. Other paper products such as sanitary products, facial tissues, paper towels, and baby wipes should not be flushed because they are made of materials that don't break down and can cause pipes to clog.

One of the leading causes of sewage backups into homes is when "disposable wipes" are flushed down the toilet. This includes disposable items that are labeled "flushable" or "bio-degradable". While they may go down the toilet and out of sight, they could cause pipes to clog and can end up causing a toilet blockage or damage to your household plumbing as well as the District's sewer system. These problems are expensive to repair and they can cause sewer backups in your home, business, and the environment.

Minimize potential sewage backups by simply disposing rags, wipes and other materials in the garbage rather than the toilet. To view a video of tests performed on various paper products, visit the following website: [www.spokanewastewater.org/WillItFlushVidDL.html](http://www.spokanewastewater.org/WillItFlushVidDL.html).

#### Don't flush these items:

- |   |                         |   |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| *Disposable diapers, nursing pads, baby wipes | *Unused medications     | *Cotton balls, swabs, pads, facial tissue |
| *Cleaning wipes of any kind                   | *Sanitary pads, tampons | *Bandages and bandage wrappings           |
| *Dental floss                                 | *Kitty litter           | And the list goes on . . .                |

### Cold Weather Burst Your Pipes?



Below-freezing temperatures can burst water pipes around your home, potentially causing serious property damage and wasting large amounts of water. While burst pipes are usually easy to spot, smaller breaks often go unnoticed, so regularly check these areas for leaks:

- Make sure outdoor faucets aren't dripping and if you can access the pipe that feeds the faucet, inspect it for any leaks.
- Check sprinkler heads for leaks, and look for unusually damp sections in your garden, which may point to an underground leak.
- Pipes in your basement, crawl space or garage are often subjected to freezing temperatures so look for wet spots or puddles on the ground.
- Inspect tankless water heater pipes that run along the exterior of your house for leaks.
- Check any indoor sink pipes that are against exterior walls.

For more information on preparing water pipes for winter weather, visit [www.takewinterbystorm.org](http://www.takewinterbystorm.org).

### INSULATE YOUR WATER METER!

The cold weather at this time of year has us making sure we close doors and windows, insulate our hose bibs, check the tires on our cars and bring out the ice scrapers. One thing we don't always think about is our water meters. They are in the ground and easily forgotten; therefore, it is very important to make sure they are insulated. Dirt is actually the best insulation - a scoop or two (leaving the register visible) from a garden area is an easy way to ensure that the meter doesn't freeze and stop the water flow to your house. When the temperature is below freezing for days at a time or when the wind comes with the freezing temperature, there is a greater chance the meter will freeze especially during times of non-use. Anything can be used as insulation—dirt, cedar chips, a cloth wrapped around the meter, or anything to break the free flow of freezing temperature around the meter. A few minutes of preparation will save not only time but clean up and repair. While you're at it, don't forget any pipes in your garage that run against an outside wall. Styrofoam wrap for pipes is available at most hardware stores for a minimal cost, however cloth will work as well.

**2013 WATER AND SEWER RATES**

The Board of Commissioners establishes utility rates on an annual basis. The decision is made after District staff proposes, and the Board approves, an expenditure budget for the upcoming year. The District held a public hearing to obtain comments on the proposed 2013 water and sewer rates. On November 7, 2012 the Soos Creek Board of Commissioners approved a 2% increase in the monthly base charges and volume charges for water (except irrigation rates will remain at the 2012 level) and a 2% increase in Soos Creek's portion of the sewer rates. King County increased their sewage treatment rate 10.2%, which is shown as a separate charge on your bill. The increases will be effective with the February 28, 2013 billing cycle.

Water

The District will increase water rates for 2013 to fund higher operating costs. Below is an outline of the current rates and the 2013 rates.

<u>CURRENT RATES (BIMONTHLY)</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>Commercial</u>	<u>Irrigation</u>
Base Rate for 3/4" Meter	\$ 26.00	\$ 26.00	\$ 26.00
Volume Charge per 100 Cubic Feet			
Winter Rates:			
0—1,000 cubic feet	1.65	1.65	5.70
1,001—2,000 cubic feet	3.35	3.35	5.70
2,001—3000 cubic feet	4.20	4.20	5.70
> 3,000 cubic feet	4.75	4.75	5.70
 <u>2013 RATES (BIMONTHLY)</u>	 <u>Residential</u>	 <u>Commercial</u>	 <u>Irrigation</u>
Base Rate for 3/4" Meter	\$ 26.50	\$ 26.50	\$ 26.50
Volume Charge per 100 Cubic Feet			
Winter Rates:			
0—1,000 cubic feet	1.70	1.70	5.70
1,001—2,000 cubic feet	3.40	3.40	5.70
2,001—3000 cubic feet	4.30	4.30	5.70
> 3,000 cubic feet	4.85	4.85	5.70

Notes:  
 100 cubic feet of water = 748 gallons  
 Summer Conservation Rates (June—September) include a 20% surcharge (the first 1000 cubic feet are exempt)

Sewer

The sewer bills sent to Soos Creek customers itemize the charges for Soos Creek's sewer rate and King County's Sewage Treatment charges. The District's portion of the bill is for the maintenance of our system that collects the sewage from your existing structure (house, business, or school) and conveys it to King County's system and ultimately to the Renton Treatment Plant. Effective with the February 28, 2013 billing cycle, Soos Creek's base rate will be \$34.40 (bimonthly) and the Volume Charge for commercial customers will be \$2.30 per 100 cubic feet of water in excess of the first 1,500 cubic feet (bimonthly).

The King County Sewage Treatment charge shown on the Soos Creek sewer customer's bill reflects King County's capital and operating costs for treatment and disposal of sewage. King County's sewer rate will be \$79.58 (bimonthly) and King County's Volume Charge for commercial customers will be \$5.30 per 100 cubic feet of water in excess of the first 1,500 cubic feet. If you have questions or comments regarding the King County Sewage Treatment charge, contact the King County Council at (206) 296-1000; for sewage treatment information, call (206) 684-1280.

UTILITY RATE REDUCTION PROGRAM

The District offers a utility rate reduction program to eligible low-income senior citizens and low-income disabled persons. The current program provides a 30% rate reduction of SCWSD's base rate for water and/or sewer.

This discount does not apply to the King County Sewage Treatment charge, actual water consumption, street lighting, surcharges, and miscellaneous fees or late charges. If you would like an application for the District's Utility Rate Reduction Program, please contact us at: (253) 630-9900.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Soos Creek, a public agency, is to provide reliable, high quality water and sewer services in an efficient, cost effective manner.

**SOOS CREEK WATER & SEWER DISTRICT**

14616 SE 192nd Street  
 P. O. Box 58039  
 Renton, WA 98058-1039  
 customer\_service@sooscreek.com  
 Phone: (253) 630-9900  
 Fax: (253) 630-5289  
 www.sooscreek.com

**COMMISSIONERS**

Karen Webster  
 Gary Cline  
 Alice Marshall  
 Darold Stroud  
 Steve Pfaff

**DISTRICT MANAGER**

Ron Speer

Meetings are held the first, third & fourth Wednesdays of the month @ 4:30 p.m.