

SOUTHWEST SUBURBAN SEWER DISTRICT

APRIL 2012



"Dedicated to Preserve the Purity of Your Environment"

Ratepayer News

2012 SEWER RATES

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District Office:

431 SW Ambaum Boulevard
Burien, Washington 98166
Phone: 206-244-9575
Fax: 206-433-8546

Forms can be downloaded from the District website to apply for the low income rate discount or to set up electronic bill-payer service. You may also pay your bill via the website: www.swssd.com.

You are invited to attend the monthly Board of Commissioners meetings at the District Office on the first Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. and the third Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.

Board of Commissioners:

William Tracy, President
Scott Hilsen, Vice-President
Susan Genzale, Secretary

Effective March 1st, 2012, Southwest Suburban Sewer District (SWSSD) raised the cost of providing sewer service by \$2.00 per month. Here at SWSSD, the Board of Commissioners and staff strive to provide quality sewer service at the lowest possible cost to the District's customers. Unfortunately, the cost of operating two aging wastewater treatment plants treating approximately 5.5 million gallons per day, maintaining 280 miles of sewer lines, eleven pump stations and providing service to approximately 60,000 residents of the Burien, White Center & Normandy Park area has increased.

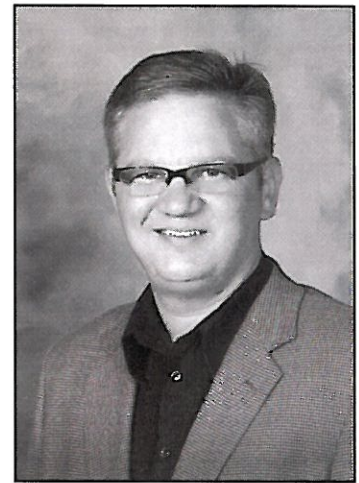
The average sewer service rate within King County is **\$54.13 per month**. With the \$2.00 increase, **your sewer rate will be \$27.50 per month** and will still be the second lowest rate in all of King County. We are proud to offer the same quality service for approximately **half** the cost.

SWSSD has made a commitment to invest in repairing and/or replacing aging treatment equipment and old 1950's concrete sewer lines. Over the past six years, SWSSD has spent more than \$24 million on rehabilitation projects such as Chelsea Park, Regal Heights, Marian Park, Greenbridge, Evergreen Heights and Seahurst Beach; this is in addition to numerous pump station and wastewater treatment improvement projects. SWSSD has still been able to keep sewer service rates very low, while staying financially strong with exceptionally clean State Audits and a Moody's credit rating of Aa2.

In a statewide survey conducted recently comparing the amount of customers per employee for Wastewater Districts that also have treatment plants, SWSSD has the highest amount of customers served per employee. The statewide average is 517 customers per employee while SWSSD serves 848 customers per employee. Furthermore, SWSSD is one of only two Districts in the state operating and maintaining two wastewater treatment plants. This requires two separate treatment plant staffs. Even with the low staffing levels, SWSSD consistently receives Department of Ecology awards for being 100% compliant.

It has been SWSSD's practice to evaluate sewer rates every two years. In the future, SWSSD will evaluate the monthly sewer rates annually. This does not mean there will be an increase every year, but if an increase is necessary, it will be less of an increase.

As General Manager of SWSSD, and more importantly, a person who grew up in White Center and Burien, I, along with the Board of Commissioners, have a clear understanding of the current economical times and how an increase of any type affects you. For those who qualify, SWSSD offers a Rate Reduction Program at the same monthly sewer rate it has been for the last four years. We are committed to keeping the sewer rates as low as possible while still providing quality sewer service to the District's customers. This commitment is not only for today, but also for the future.



General Manager Ron Hall

Sincerely,

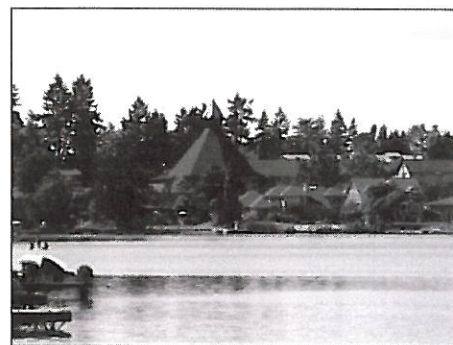
Ron Hall, General Manager

How to Help Preserve Local Streams, Ponds, Lakes and Puget Sound

The District's Mission Statement is "*Dedicated to Preserving the Purity of Your Environment*". It's important to remember that anything you send down the drain or flush down the toilet ends up at one of the District's two wastewater treatment plants. After secondary treatment, the effluent from the treatment plants goes directly to Puget Sound. All wastewater solids are broken down in anaerobic digesters and eventually added as a soil amendment to Eastern Washington farms.

There are other ways in which all of us can do our part in keeping local streams, ponds, lakes and Puget Sound (receiving waters) clean. We can minimize surface water runoff into receiving waters by keeping the following in mind:

- Preserve plantings next to receiving waters.
- Maintain your vehicle regularly. Leaking substances from vehicles contain toxic metals and are a major source of pollution to receiving waters.
- Wash your vehicle over your lawn, over dirt, or at a commercial car wash. Keep harmful soaps from ending up in receiving waters.
- Do not dump motor oil, antifreeze and other harmful fluids into a storm drain or the sanitary sewer. Many gas stations will recycle these fluids.
- Reduce the use of chemicals, pesticides and fertilizers. If you fertilize your lawn, use a fertilizer with the lowest numbers available. Try to use a fertilizer with a zero as the middle number. (Example: 3-0-3) The middle number is the amount of phosphorous in the fertilizer and it is this element that causes toxic algae problems in receiving waters; toxic algae consumes dissolved oxygen. Low dissolved oxygen levels endanger aquatic fish life.
- For those not hooked into the District's sewer system, keeping septic tanks maintained is very important.



Lake Burien

Your everyday activities can help preserve the health and well being of local receiving waters and shorelines.

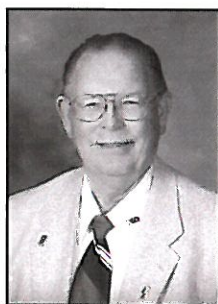
COMMISSIONER ELECTION RESULTS



Susan Genzale



Scott Hilsen



Bill Tracy

Last November Commissioner Susan Genzale was elected to serve a four year term on your Board of Commissioners. In the same election, Commissioner Scott Hilsen was reelected to a six year term. They join long time Commissioner Bill Tracy, who was reelected to a six year term in 2007.

Commissioner Hilsen takes pride in the Board's record of balancing rates and a forward thinking agenda that includes rehabilitation and replacement of aging infrastructures. "Not addressing needed upgrades and planning for unforeseen repairs would be detrimental to the future of the District; it's the Board's duty to maintain the health of the District's systems and finances. I think we

have been able to do that, and I commend my fellow commissioners and staff, as well as our ratepayers."

"In the past year I have met many ratepayers that had positive things to say about our District, and I am really proud of that, as I know Tony would be", stated Commissioner Genzale. She has now been elected to fulfill the balance of the term of her late husband Tony Genzale. "The education I have received in the past year from staff and other people in the industry has been tremendous. I look at everything from the perspective of a ratepayer; what decision do I think is best for myself and my neighbors. . .and for the community as a whole. It is an honor to serve in this position, and I take it very seriously."

The Board has approved a number of projects for 2012. The Seahurst beachline project is wrapping up, and a large project involving rebuilding the primary clarifier and chlorine contact basins at the Salmon Creek Treatment Plant in the Shorewood area will be starting; there will also be new odor control covers installed. The current clarifier is around 50 years old. "This is an example of the type of projects that we need to do each year to keep our District in good operating condition", said Commissioner Tracy. "The clarifiers at the Miller Creek Treatment Plant in Normandy Park will be rebuilt next year."