

# SOUTHWEST SUBURBAN SEWER DISTRICT

DECEMBER 2007



## Ratepayer News

### BILL TRACY RE-ELECTED COMMISSIONER

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Commissioner Bill Tracy

On November 6, 2007, Southwest Suburban Sewer ratepayers voted to retain Bill Tracy as a Sewer Commissioner. Mr. Tracy has been on the Board of Commissioners since 1992.

Mr. Tracy is retired, having worked as a teacher in the Highline School District for 31 years. He has been involved in local, regional and national politics since 1964.

In addition to serving as a Commissioner, he is a past

President of Highline Kiwanis and also served as Lt. Governor of Kiwanis. He served on the Metro Council where he was on the Finance, Transit and Water Quality Committees. He was on the King County Regional Water Quality Committee, and represents the District on the Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee.

His primary focus is to maintain low rates while pursuing an aggressive line rehabilitation effort.

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING ELECTRONIC BILL PAYER SERVICES

If you currently utilize the bill payer services offered through your bank or a bill payer company, you need to be aware of the following facts.

The account number on your sewer bill always stays with that property; if you move you need to make sure that you change the account number you have on file with the bill payer service for your sewer bill. If the payment comes in with the old account number, it will be posted to the old address which corresponds with that number. Make sure that you contact the bill payer service whenever a change has been made in order to make sure that your payment is going to your proper address.

While it may seem that electronic payments

are instantaneous, in fact in most cases the bill payer service cuts a check made out to the District and mails it to us. You need to make note of due dates to insure that you do not have payments coming in to the District after the due date and incurring penalties on your account. Check with your bill payer company or bank to verify when exactly the payment will be mailed, and to determine if there is any "lead-time" between when you post the payment and when it is mailed.

SWSSD offers an electronic bill payment option at no charge. Payment is automatically withdrawn from either a checking or savings account. Forms are available at the District office or online at [www.swssd.com](http://www.swssd.com). If you have any questions, please call 206-244-9575.

#### 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:  
[www.swssd.com](http://www.swssd.com)

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

**Board of Commissioners:**  
William Tracy, President  
Scott Hilsen, Vice-President  
Tony Genzale, Secretary

## YOUR SEWER DOLLARS AT WORK



Photos courtesy of Brett Fish

Portions reprinted courtesy of The Highline Times



## HELICOPTER USED IN MILLER CREEK REPAIR

Citizens in Normandy Park and Burien were looking to the skies in September, when a Sikorsky helicopter was called in to aid with repairs to our main trunk line along Miller Creek near Sixth Avenue Southwest.

An annual inspection of the line found that parts of the 30" main sewer line in the Miller Creek Basin that connects to the Miller Creek Treatment Plant were completely exposed. Miller Creek was flowing directly over the top of the line in some locations, which could have caused a catastrophic failure by drying up Miller Creek during low flows in the summer. In addition, the upper five feet of one manhole was fully exposed to high stream flows. Besides this potential damage, the situation could also have overwhelmed the Miller Creek Treatment Plant, resulting in the discharge of millions of gallons a day of raw sewage into the stream and ultimately Puget Sound during winter high flows.

When the trunk line was constructed in the mid-1960's, it was four to six feet below the stream and crossed back and forth underneath the stream bed. Over time, erosion of the Miller Creek channel left sections of the sewer pipe exposed. The erosion is generally caused by higher peak storm flows from neighboring urban development. As more of the adjacent areas were developed, the resulting increased storm flows eroded the channel. Flows may also be impacted by increased runoff associated with the construction of the Port of Seattle's third runway.

Local agencies have attempted to reduce the severity of the problem by passing storm water regulations. New detention ponds built by the Port, as well as recent major changes by the City of Burien are expected to ease the vulnerability of the stream.

Raising and stabilizing the stream channel provides the protection necessary to prevent winter storms from damaging the sewer line, and also replaces washed out fish habitat.

The biggest concern in planning the repair project, according to Ken Nilson, an engineer with PACE, the engineering company in charge, was how to gain access to the environmentally sensitive project area to do the work. The determination was that the use of a helicopter to transport machinery and materials to the otherwise inaccessible sites would cause the least environmental disturbance, as well as allow the project to be completed in the shortest time possible since they would be working directly on repair and restoration instead of road building.

The second part of the equation was the use of a Spyder Hoe, which minimized the area of disturbance. It is similar to a backhoe, but with legs and wheels that can cross streams and climb steep hills with minimum impact. It appears to walk, and minimizes damage to plants.

Rock and gravel was placed in a way that protects the sewer line and creates a fish-friendly stream channel. Adult salmon are expected to return this fall. These repairs should ensure their unimpeded access upstream to their native spawning grounds.

Commented Brett Fish, Chairman of Citizens Against Sea-Tac Expansion and unofficial "steward" of Miller Creek, "Consider the alternatives . . . this project helps restore Miller Creek, protects it from raw sewage, and keeps Miller Creek a historically fish-friendly stream we can continue to enjoy for generations to come."