

El Toro Water District

WaterViews

Pollution Prevention

El Toro Water District takes pride in providing customers of the District with a wastewater collection system that operates smoothly. In order to do this, the District invests significant manpower and assets regularly to improve and replace facilities and to perform video inspections and maintenance of its 140 miles of below ground pipelines, 11 pumping stations and 3,500 manholes.

Highly trained inspection crews utilize sophisticated cleaning and video inspection equipment to visually assess and document the condition of the below ground pipelines and to identify evidence of grease, roots, debris and structural deterioration.

Problems such as grease, roots, debris and structural deterioration if left unabated in the public sewer system or your private sewer lateral, can ultimately result in a pipe blockage and an unwanted sewage spill.

In the unlikely event of a sewage spill from the public sewer system, the District's staff is trained to immediately respond with appropriate emergency equipment to contain the spill and minimize any consequences to the public and the environment.

How a Sewer System Works

A typical sanitary sewer system is constructed of a network of below ground pipes connected to each building or residence that transports sewage to a wastewater treatment plant.

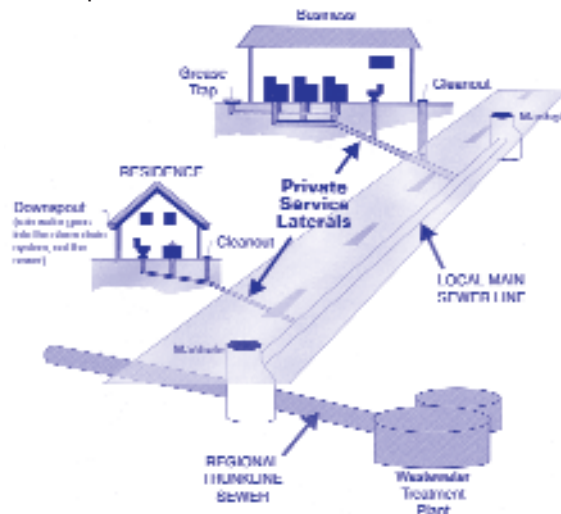
A property owner's sewer pipes are called private service laterals and connect to the public sewer lateral, local mainline and regional trunk lines. Operation and maintenance of the public lateral, mainlines and regional trunk lines are the responsibility of the District.

What is a Sewage Spill?

Sewage spills occur when the wastewater being transported via underground pipes overflows through a manhole, cleanout, or broken pipe. Sewage spills can cause health hazards, damage to homes and businesses, and threaten the environment, local water ways and beaches.

Common Causes

Grease builds up inside and eventually blocks sewer pipes. Grease gets into the sewer from food establishments, household drains, as well as from poorly maintained commercial grease traps and interceptors.



Graphic reprinted with permission of Orange County Sanitation District

Structure problems caused by tree roots in the lines, broken/cracked pipes, missing or broken cleanout caps, or undersized sewers can cause blockages. Grease and root intrusion are the most common causes of pipe blockages.

What to Look For

Sewage spills can be a very noticeable gushing of water from a manhole or a slow water leak that may take time to be noticed.

Look for:

- Drain backups inside the building.
- Wet ground and water leaking around manhole lids on to your street.
- Leaking water from cleanouts or outside drains.
- Unusual odorous wet areas: sidewalks, external walls, ground/landscape around a building.

How You Can Prevent Sewage Spills

1. **Never put grease down garbage disposals, drains or toilets.**
2. **Perform periodic cleaning to eliminate grease, debris and roots in your service laterals.**
3. **Repair any structural problems with your sewer system.**

CAUTION!

Keep people and pets away from the affected area. Untreated sewage has high levels of disease-causing viruses and bacteria.

We can assist you in determining whether the origin of the blockage or spill is in the public or private system and work with you to expeditiously correct the problem and minimize negative impacts to the public health and the environment.

If You See a Sewage Spill Occurring, Notify ETWD IMMEDIATELY. If you require further information, please call our 24-Hour Customer Service number at (949) 837-0660.♦

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In celebrating "May is Water Awareness Month", ETWD continued its public outreach program by participating in local events throughout the cities that the District serves.



On April 27, 2003, the District participated in "Tierra Nativa 2003 - Celebration of the Native Land" in Mission Viejo. On May 3, 2003, the District hosted it's annual Open House at the District headquarters in Lake Forest. On May 6 & 7, 2003, ETWD sponsored and held an activity booth in the "2003 Children's Water Education Festival" at Hidden Valley Park in Irvine. On May 17, 2003, the ETWD sponsored and participated in the "Celebrate Lake Forest Community Faire" in Foothill Ranch. **ETWD's booths at each of these events promoted efficient water use and education about the water industry, water quality and water conservation.♦**

**El Toro Water District
2003/04 Budget**



Revenue = Cost of Service

**Important Information
Regarding Your Water
and Wastewater Rates**

The ETWD Board of Directors and staff have been working on preparation of next year's budget. The budget process utilizes historical operating experience and long-range capital facility planning to determine the Cost of Service, which relates directly to our fees and charges. Cost of Service is a term used to describe all costs associated with your water and wastewater service.

Efficiencies gained by partnering with neighboring water agencies, keeping our internal operating expenses lean and investing in technology, all helped the El Toro Water Board to actually reduce the water rate by 21% in the year 2000.

In fact, your water rates have not increased since 1994 despite rising water costs, inflation and a decline in income from investments.

Factors beyond the District's control that affect water and wastewater resources and operations continue to affect our Cost for Services. These factors include: rising import water costs, increasing regional wastewater treatment and disposal costs, projected infrastructure maintenance and replacement costs, water safety and security issues and more stringent regulatory and environmental requirements.

We have embarked on a rate study that will consider these factors and identify any offsetting reductions to help minimize our Cost of Service.

Our goal is to provide our customers with the best possible service at reasonable costs; however, adjustments to your water bill appear to be inevitable in the coming months.

It is our priority to keep you informed of the results of our study and how they will affect your water bill. We anticipate that an initial adjustment to rates will occur during the fall of this year.

Please contact our Customer Service Representatives at (949) 837-0660 if you have any questions regarding our current rates or the budget under consideration.♦



**♦ LOOK FOR ETWD AT THE
CITY OF MISSION VIEJO'S
4TH OF JULY STREET FAIR ♦**

WATER CONSERVATION CORNER

SUMMER IRRIGATION TIPS

Consider native and drought-tolerant plants and grasses when making landscape choices.



Water your lawn only when it needs it. Check by stepping on the grass. If it springs back up when you move, it doesn't need water. If it stays flat, it's time to use the sprinkler. Most homes will need to water their lawns three days per week, approximately five minutes per day. Shrubs generally require half (some even less) of what the lawn needs. Mature trees generally need watering which allows for deep infiltration on an infrequent basis (about twice a month). If you're watering every day or every other day, you're providing more than most plants need. Check the moisture of the soil three to six inches below the surface.

Water your lawn during the cool times of the day and preferably on less windy days. Early morning is better than dusk. Less watering means less prolific growth, therefore less mowing and fertilizer is needed.

Check your sprinkler system. Clean clogged heads. Replace broken sprinklers or risers. Adjust the angle so that spray doesn't wet the pavement.

Watch for run-off. If sprinkler controllers are set too high, you may have run-off. Run-off will carry fertilizers into the storm drain and contribute to pollution in our waterways and beaches.◆

WATER QUALITY REPORT

Annual Water Quality Report to be Distributed During the Month of June

Since 1991, California water utilities have been providing an annual Water Quality Report to their customers. This year's report covers calendar year 2002 water quality testing.



The ETWD vigilantly safeguards its water supply and, as in years past, the water delivered to your home meets the standards required by the state and federal regulatory agencies. To ensure your tap water continually meets state & federal water quality standards, our operators collect and analyze approximately 6,500 water samples each year. Please take a few minutes to review the contents of the report and if you need more information about the report or your water quality in general, please contact Mike King, Water Services Manager, at (949) 837-7050, Ext. 203 or any of our Customer Service Representatives.◆

REBATE AND CO-PAY PROGRAMS

El Toro Water District, in cooperation with the Municipal Water District of Orange County and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, is promoting Home Water Use Efficiency Programs.

Toilet and Washing Machine Rebate Programs

O.C. residents can apply for a:

\$50 rebate for qualifying water saving state of the art toilet installations. An ultra low-flush toilet can save you 2 - 3.5 gallons per-flush or more.

\$100 rebate for qualifying high-efficiency washing machines. High-efficiency washers can save you 18 - 25 gallons per load.

For more information on the rebate programs, please call (800) 954-4344.

Toilet Co-Pay Program

O.C. residents can exchange their pre-1992 toilets for water saving toilets at the Orange County Toilet Exchange Program office located in Orange or special event sites.

A **\$30 co-pay** is available to purchase a new water saving toilet on selected models.

To receive more information about the co-pay program, special event sites, or the toilet brands being offered, please call (866) 373-3928.

For more water use efficiency information, please call our Customer Service Representatives.◆

Employee Award

On behalf of the ETWD Board of Directors, the District's General Manager, Bob Hill, acknowledged Ron Hightower for achieving a Grade 5 Water Distribution Operators Certificate. Operator Certifications are part of a stringent technically based program administered by the State of California Office of Drinking Water. The certification acknowledges Ron's technical and administrative competency in all aspects of drinking water distribution system operation and maintenance. Ron, a dedicated employee for the past



From left, Bob Hill and Ron Hightower

24 years, now holds the highest level of water distribution certification required by the State for the ETWD system. CONGRATULATIONS RON!◆

Water Education Corner



Saving Water Makes "Cents"

Always shut the water off while brushing your teeth.



Use water only when you need it. You will save money and save water for the future!



Wash only full loads of dishes.

Have your parents check for leaking toilets.



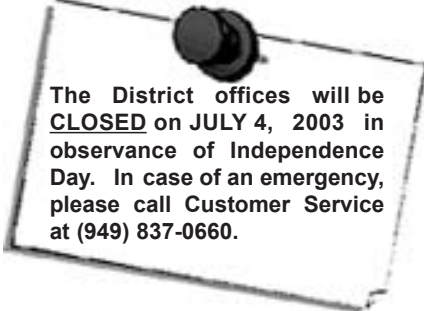
Take 5-minute showers.



Don't let the water run while washing your hands.

VACATION BILLING

To avoid disconnection and reconnection fees while you are away on extended vacation, we suggest you contact the Customer Service Department prior to leaving. We will assist in making payment arrangements to ensure that your water service is not interrupted. Advance payment will also avoid any late payment charges upon your return. If you need special assistance or have any questions about your service, call our Customer Service Department.



The District offices will be **CLOSED** on **JULY 4, 2003** in observance of Independence Day. In case of an emergency, please call Customer Service at (949) 837-0660.

EL TORO WATER DISTRICT

24251 Los Alisos Boulevard
Lake Forest, CA 92630
(949) 837-0660

The Mission of the El Toro Water District is to provide its customers a safe, adequate and reliable supply of water and wastewater service in an environmentally and economically responsible way.

Water Views is published quarterly to keep water users in the El Toro Water District informed about water and sewer related issues and events. It is prepared by District staff. [Your comments and suggestions are welcomed.](#) Please call Customer Service at (949) 837-0660 or visit our website at www.etwd.com.

The El Toro Water District is a California Water District governed by an elected Board of Directors.

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