

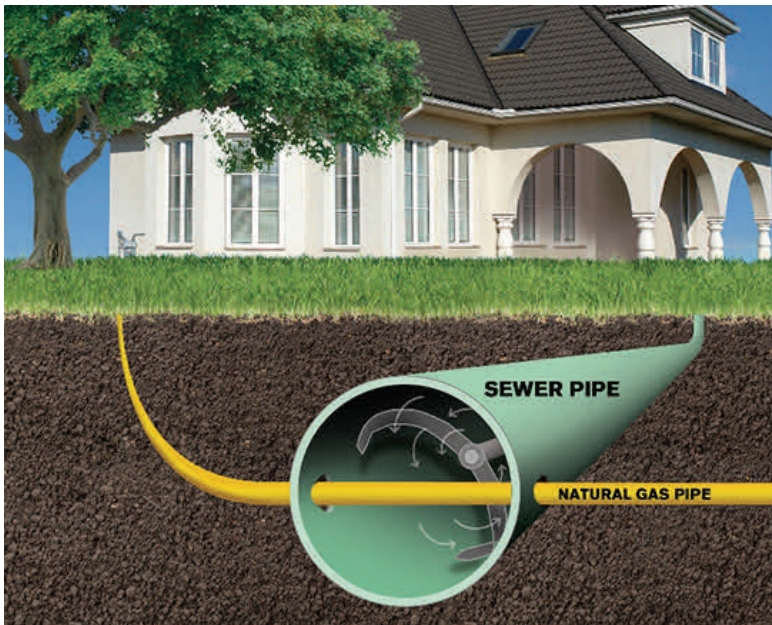
# The Drain Report

## Blocked Sewers & Safety By: Ken Kase

When you have an obstructed sewer you probably contact a plumber, or you may tackle the problem yourself. Either way the Midway Sewer District would prefer if you contact us first. If contacted, the District will ask questions about the problem you are experiencing. Based on what you tell us we could send a representative to your location to check our main sewers to ensure that we are not causing your problem, and we may even inspect your sewer stub. Our representative should be able to provide you with some valuable information concerning your sewer such as where it is located, where cleanouts are, and what material the sewer pipe is made of. The District does not charge for this service.

Before you or your plumber use a sewer clearing machine such as a roter to remove an obstruction you should contact PSE first. Their number is 1-888-225-5773. Why would you contact the gas company before you attempt to clear your sewer?

The reason is due to a rare but potentially dangerous scenario where a gas line has been inadvertently installed through a sewer. Often times gas lines are installed using trenchless methods that do not disturb surface improvements. Sometimes a gas line can be installed through a sewer without anyone knowing about it. The intersecting gas pipe can allow material flowing through the sewer to accumulate, eventually blocking the sewer. A



**This Scenario could lead to a dangerous situation!**

sewer clearing machine could rupture the gas line inside the sewer pipe. This would immediately create a safety concern! Learn more by visiting PSE's website at: <https://pse.com/safety/NaturalGasSafety/Pages/Blocked-Sewer.aspx>.

Even if you are not planning on excavating your sewer prior to using a sewer cleaning machine, call PSE at 1-888-225-5773 and tell them you will be using a sewer cleaning machine (roter) on your sewer. If there are gas lines in your area they will send a response person to your property who will locate their gas piping and they may perform a pipeline video inspection to insure there is no "cross-bore". PSE does not charge for this service and they claim they usually respond within an hour. It is also a good idea to use an outside cleanout instead of removing a toilet or inside cleanout to introduce your sewer clearing equipment into the sewer. Outside cleanouts are typically more effective at clearing blockages and you probably already have an outside cleanout installed on your sewer.

PO Box 3487, 3030 S. 240th St., Kent, WA 98089, (206) 824-4960  
<http://www.midwaysewer.org/>

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### Special points of interest:

- Midway Sewer District has one of the lowest monthly rates in the state.
- The Board meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month. Please contact the office for the meeting time.
- Midway serves the Cities of Des Moines, SeaTac, Kent, Federal Way, Normandy park, Burien, and the Port of Seattle's SeaTac Airport.
- We have been part of this community since 1946.
- You can expect fast personal service when you need it.
- Our employees care about their customers.
- We have a single focus of providing quality sanitary sewer service.

# OUR DISTRICT HAS A RATE TO BE PROUD OF!

By: Jack Hendrickson



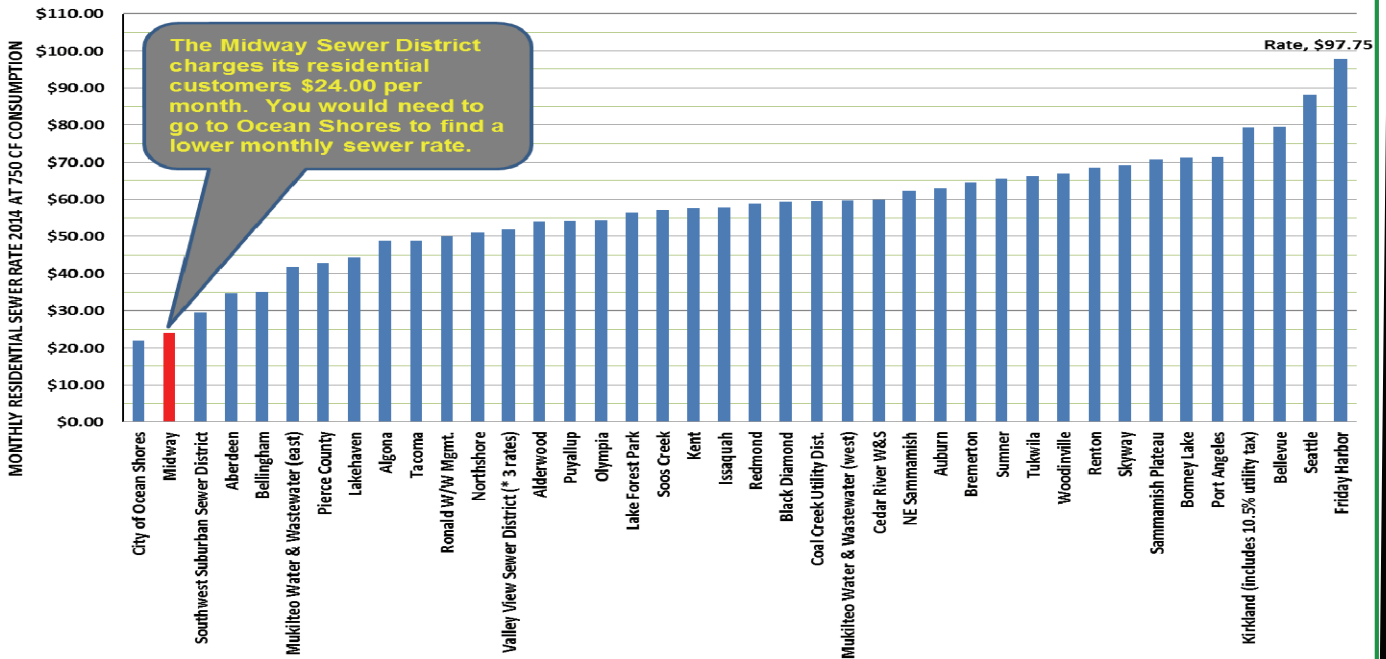
Since 2008, the District Manager has been a proponent of a series of sewer service rate increases over several years. That same year the District's accountant recommended a rate increase to keep revenues ahead of expenses. The District raised rates in 2009 to prevent a revenue shortfall. In November of 2011, the District's accountant estimated that the District would run out of money sometime in 2017 if no rate increases occur. He also suggested a series of rate increases.

I understand that we cannot let our sewer system deteriorate due to lack of maintenance or replacement as the system ages. I don't believe that has occurred. But I have been reluctant to increase the sewer rates at a time when everybody is feeling the pinch of the "Great Recession". The District needs to share the financial pain with its customers, and we have. While the Board of Commissioners have approved rate increases as necessary to ensure that the system is maintained, these increases have been less aggressive than suggested.

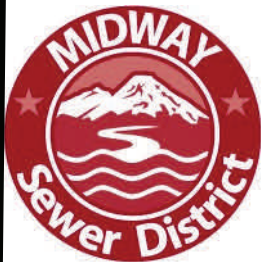
We went to several sewer service provider websites to see what other sewer utilities charge their residential customers. The results are graphically depicted below. We checked 40 western Washington publically owned sewer service providers, many of which are located near this District. Only the City of Ocean Shores had a lower monthly residential rate than the Midway Sewer District. Of the 40 service providers included in the survey, 32 had rates at least twice as much as Midway's while only eight were under that threshold. The highest priced utility in this survey charges over four times the Midway rate.

I expect that there will be sewer rate increases in the future. It can't be avoided. The customers of this District enjoy one of the most favorable sewer service rates in the State. In my opinion Midway's customers are fortunate to receive quality customer service with cost effective, reliable, environmentally responsible wastewater collection and treatment service!

## 2014 MONTHLY RESIDENTIAL SEWER RATE SURVEY RESULTS



## Board of Commissioners



George Landon Jack Hendrickson Vince Koester Jim Bailey Scot Sanborn

### Midway Sewer District

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