

The Drain Report

Nutrient Removal Will Impact Treatment Plants and Their Customers

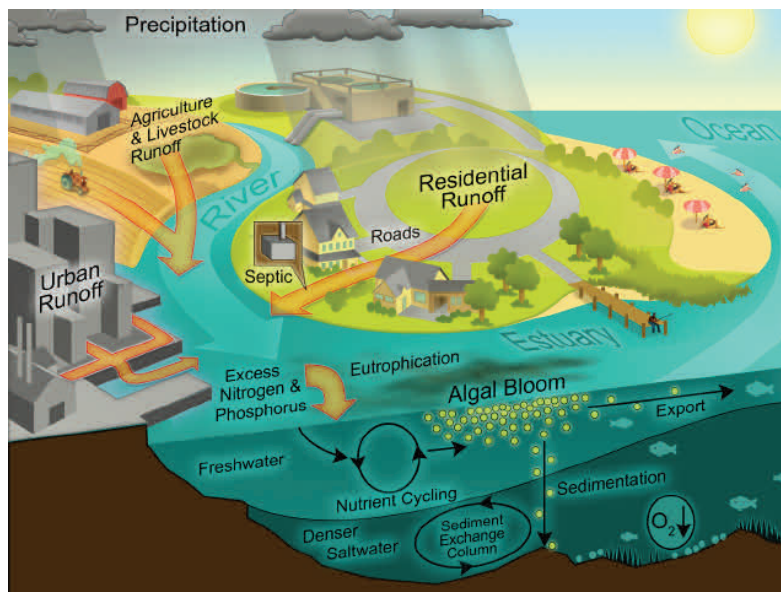
By: Ken Kase

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) sets and enforces limits on the discharges to the waters of the State. Ecology, in response to problems linked to excessive nutrients in the Puget Sound, is working on additional treatment standards on sewage treatment plants that discharge to the Puget Sound. Nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus feed algae. The algae thrive but eventually die and their decomposition uses up dissolved oxygen in the water. This creates a hypoxic or low oxygen condition which is harmful or fatal to fish and other organisms. Ecology has created a story map of nitrogen in Puget Sound to help explain the problem, which can be found at:

(<https://waecy.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=907dd54271f44aa0b1f08efd7efc4e30>).

Nutrients in the Puget Sound come from many sources. The biggest source of nitrogen in the Puget Sound is the Pacific Ocean. It has been estimated that 68% of the nitrogen in the Puget Sound comes from the Pacific Ocean. The remaining 32% comes from wastewater treatment plants, septic systems, rivers, agriculture, storm-water, groundwater, natural sources, urban sources, and the atmosphere. Wastewater from treatment plants and rivers rank second and third, as compared to the ocean, for contributing nutrients to the Sound. We can't control the ocean but we can influence other nutrient sources.

It is not known what the new treatment requirements will be at this time. Ecology is currently engaged in an extensive process to determine the new treatment standards. We expect that we will need to add additional treatment processes or may even make extensive changes to the current treatment method. It will most certainly be costly and present permitting, construction, and operational challenges for the wastewater professionals that serve you. We will do our best to ensure that the wastewater we collect and treat will meet or exceed expectations and requirements.



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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.



Burien Is The Next City Looking For An Income Stream From Their Sewer And Water Providers.

By: Jack Hendrickson

The City of Burien has initiated talks with the special purpose districts that operate within the City's boundaries. These talks concern payment from the utilities to the City. The City Council is considering either a utility tax or a franchise agreement. The City has indicated that they are looking for 6% of the revenue generated by the utility within the City. The City has predicted an income/expense imbalance in the near future unless they make some changes.

This District prefers a franchise agreement to a utility tax. The franchise agreement could provide some benefits to the District and would have limits on the amount of any fee. There are no benefits to a tax and there are no limits. Burien would be the fourth City in our service area to take action to receive an income stream from water and sewer utility providers.

Des Moines was the first City to take this action. In September of 2016, Midway Sewer District customers within Des Moines began paying 6% of their service charge to Des Moines. March, 2018, Federal Way imposed a 7.75% tax on all revenues the District collects from its Federal Way customers. The money collected from Federal Way customers is going into a separate account pending the outcome of litigation concerning this tax. On April 1, 2019, Kent customers started paying 6% of their service charge to Kent. Burien expects to begin collecting their fees or taxes in January of 2020.

Retirements Spur Staff Changes By: Ken Kase



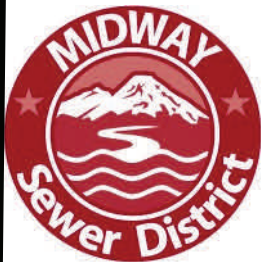
Three long time employees will be retiring from the District this Spring. Monte Lingbloom, a Treatment Plant Operator, Gail Small, the Water Quality Analyst, and Ken Kase, the District's Manager all have announced their intentions to retire this Spring. In an organization of our size this amounts to an 11% staff turnover. These three retirees will take with them a combined 75 years of District experience and knowledge. All three of these retirees are looking forward to the next chapter in their lives!

This Spring, the District welcomed Ryan Phelan, the Engineering and Construction Manager, Deena Taylor, Accounts Receivable/Payable Clerk, and Jack Schoen, the Water Quality Analyst. Marc Montieth, will be stepping into the role as the District's Manager. Marc has 27 years experience with the District and is very familiar with the District's facilities, staff, customers, and the local cities, and districts.



These changes in staffing are an opportunity for these talented and energetic employees to meet the challenges the future will present. This change is a win-win both for those leaving the District and those just beginning their careers with the District. I know that from my perspective, this community, Board of Commissioners, and especially the dedicated employees of the District, have been great to work with! Each of us retiring from the District, Gail, Monte, and Ken, thank you the public, for the opportunity to serve you! We think you have a great sewer district!

Board of Commissioners



George Landon Jack Hendrickson Vince Koester Jim Bailey Scot Sanborn

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