

# **City of Eastport Sanitary Waste System Public Awareness of Pesticides and Non-Industrial Pollutants**

The City of Eastport owns and operates the sanitary waste system and is responsible for the licensing requirements and preservation of the natural environments impacted by its operations under a permit from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection.

Eastport's sanitary waste system is made up of three components known as a primary system. The system includes the primary treatment facility located on County Road, a shared septic system located on Redoubt Hill, and a village septic processing system in Quoddy Village. In addition there are a small number of individual septic systems located outside of any of the municipally owned and operated systems previously mentioned.

Everything dumped into your system, (flush, sink, washing machine, dishwasher, or otherwise), eventually flows into the system. It is critical to the health of our environment and to the effective operation of our system that we all do what we can to help keep the system functional and healthy.

## **What do the charges on my quarterly bill mean?**

- **Minimum charge** - This is the charge for general service and ongoing maintenance of the system as well as for up to the first 8,976 gallons (1200 cubic feet) of water you put into the system.
- **Overage charge** - This is the charge for any water you put into the system that exceeds the first 8,976 gallons (1200 cubic feet).
- **Debt** - Included in the bill is money due on the construction loan taken out when the system was originally installed.

## **DO'S and DONT'S for keeping your sanitary sewer working properly!**

Following the suggestions listed below may save residents money and avoid significant inconvenience, as well as cost to the community for clearing and repairing blockages. In some instances, depending on where the blockage is located, the property owner or resident may have to bear the cost of clearing the line. Also, when an overflow occurs, due to a blockage, there may be environmental impacts.

Remember most sanitary sewer blockages occur between the house and the City's sewer main or septic system.

### **DO NOT'S:**

**Do not** pour fats, oils and grease from cooking down the sink drain. **Why?** If your pots and pans are just oily or greasy, don't rinse them; wipe them out with a paper towel.

**Do not** pour sour milk down the sink. **Why?** One liter of full cream milk has enough fat in it to cover the surface of an Olympic-sized swimming pool. Simply dispose through your garbage.

**Do not** use the toilet as a wastebasket / garbage can.

**Do not** use the sewer as a means to dispose of food scraps.

**Do not** wash food scraps, tealeaves, coffee grounds and eggshells down the sink.

**Do not** flush razor blades, condoms, pharmaceutical products, cigarette butts, nail polish remover, toilet deodorant dispensers or other non-biodegradable products down the toilet. Also, toys can find their way into the system and cause problems. The proper way to dispose of these items is in your garbage.

Do not place jewelry and valuables on the edge of the basin or the sink.

Once flushed down the toilet, valuable and valued items are very difficult to recover. Take care not to drop dentures and wallets into the toilet.

Do not flush diapers, sanitary napkins, tampons, convenience pads, surgical bandages, syringes, and cotton tipped stems or pantyhose down the toilet.

Do not dispose of plastics and plastic film from personal hygiene items, including disposable diapers, are one cause of private sewer blockages.

For soiled diapers, the best solution is to empty the contents into the toilet and then put the diaper in a plastic bag and into the garbage.

Do not use excess detergent for washing up in the kitchen or laundry then what the manufacturer recommends. The average household uses three times more detergent than manufacturers recommended for washing dishes and clothes.

When these detergents enter the sewerage system, they hold large amounts of oil, grease and fats in suspension making cleaning and treating the wastewater difficult and more costly. By cutting down on the amount of detergent used, there'll also be less phosphate in the environment to cause the growth of algae in water. And to top it off, you'll save money on buying the detergents!

Do not pour paint, engine oil, pesticides or chemicals down the sink, and don't try to burn them. Some hazardous materials can corrode the sewer, while others complicate the treatment process. In fact, dumping them in the sewer is illegal and you could be heavily fined. This isn't only because of the threat of these hazards getting into the environment; but also because these chemicals pose a health threat to maintenance and repair crews working in the sewers. Similarly, by throwing hazardous materials in the garbage, you are creating a risk for garbage collectors. Also, don't ever try to burn these chemicals on your barbecue, in your fireplace or in the incinerator - they could produce toxic fumes that could seriously damage your health.

Do not flush a commercial grease interceptor with hot water to clear or clean the interceptor in lieu of cleaning and pumping out the interceptor.

## DO's:

Do let liquid fat, oil or grease cool and dispose of it in your garbage. It is not recommended to place fats/greases on your compost heap, this can attract rodents and it will also slow the composting process.

If your pots and pans are just oily or greasy, wipe them clean with a paper towel and put the soiled paper towel in the garbage. Do scrape excess grease in a container and dispose of it in the garbage.

Do place food scraps in waste containers or garbage bags for disposal with solid wastes, or start compost pile; promote use of scraping of dishware prior to washing.

Place a wastebasket in the bathroom to dispose of solids wastes. Disposable diapers, condoms, and personal hygiene products do not belong in the sewer system.

Do use a strainer over the plughole in your sink, tub and shower. Then, empty the collected material into the garbage.

Do use the manufacturer's recommended amount of detergent for washing up in the kitchen or laundry. The average household uses three times more detergent than manufacturers recommended for washing dishes and clothes. When these detergents enter the sewerage system, they hold large amounts of oil, grease and fats in suspension making cleaning and treating the wastewater difficult and more costly. By cutting down on the amount of detergent used, there'll also be less phosphate in the environment to cause the growth of algae in water. Also, you'll save money on buying the detergents.