TIVERTON WASTEWATER DISTRICT

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Our mission is to safeguard public health and protect and improve ground and surface water resources by implementing efficient and effective wastewater management and disposal within the Tiverton Wastewater District.

Grinder Pump

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is a grinder pump?

The grinder pump is a self-contained appliance that consists of a collection tank, a small pump, on-off controls and a high water alarm. The pump collects all of the wastewater from a home, grinds it into a slurry and pumps it to the main sewer line in the street.

Q. Why does my lot need a grinder pump?

Whenever possible, sewers are designed to use gravity to move the flow of wastewater from the home or business through the sewer system. Certain difficult terrain types (flat, wet, rocky or hilly) make gravity sewers cost prohibitive or unfeasible. Using a grinder pump becomes more practical and cost effective for moving wastewater through a low pressure sewer system.

Q. What is the average yearly cost of electricity to operate a grinder pump?

A typical single family home will use 250 gallons of water per day. At that usage level, a grinder pump will consume about 200 KWh of electricity per year. At the standard $.011 KWh, electricity costs would be approximately $22.00 per year.

Q. How noisy is the pump?

With an outdoor unit buried in the ground, you will not hear it at all if you're 10 or 15 feet away. If you're standing on top of it, it sounds like your washing machine when it's running – just a hum. In addition, the pump only runs when it is required to move wastewater. It turns on for a few seconds and then turns off.

Q. What will this look like in my yard?

The system will be below ground level and is designed to blend into your yard as much as possible.

Q. Does the grinder pump emit any unpleasant odors?

Odors can be a problem from time to time in all types of wastewater systems. The closed network of small-diameter pipelines of a pressure sewer system is much less susceptible to odor problems.

Q. What prevents backflow into my home from my unit or the whole system?

Check valves on the grinder pump and at the street prevent the street main sewage from entering your pump and home.

Q. What materials or objects will clog the pump?

The pump is capable of accepting and pumping all materials commonly found in household wastewater. As with conventional systems, do not allow plastic, glass, diapers, sanitary napkins or seafood shells to enter the pump or pressure sewer system.

Q. Can I use a garbage disposal?

Yes. The grinder pump is not affected by material passing through a garbage disposal.

Q. What is the maintenance schedule?

There is no required maintenance schedule. All pump components used are designed to be self-cleaning and provide years of service without maintenance.

Q. How long will my pump last before I need to repair or replace it?

The average time between service calls has proven to be 8 to 10 years. The need for a major pump rebuild has proven to be 15 to 20 years. Service providers and the grinder pump producers have kept excellent service records.

Q. What is the cost for a repair or rebuild when needed?

The unit will be maintained and serviced by the TWWD.

Q. If I get an alarm what should I do?

An alarm panel, located outside your home or inside your garage, has an audible and visual alarm that indicates high water levels in your grinder pump's tank. If the alarm sounds, use the silence switch to silence the alarm and call the 24-hour service department immediately.

Occupants of the home should keep water use to a minimum until a technician arrives. Most repairs are completed on site. Should the service technician decide that the pump must be repaired at the service shop, they will place a replacement core (at no cost to you) in your wet well. This insures that your sewer system will work while the pump core is being repaired.

Q. What happens if there is a power outage?

The pump does require electricity to operate. When the electricity is out the pump will not run. There is adequate storage in the wet well to continue using water for necessities for a period of several days. The pump will automatically come on when power is restored.