Keep Sewage Where it Belongs: Wipes Clog Pipes

El Dorado Irrigation District (EID) wants to remind customers not to flush anything down the toilet except bodily waste and toilet paper.

Your toilet is part of a very important network—the sanitary sewage system—which is a series of pipes and pumps that send the sewage that you flush or wash down the drain to EID’s treatment plants for safe treatment and disposal.

In light of recent shortages of toilet paper, sewer providers around the state and country are finding products other than toilet paper being flushed into sewer systems. These products are causing expensive and damaging impacts to sewer systems and impacting customers.

“If it’s not toilet paper, don’t flush it,” said EID Director of Operations Dan Corcoran. “Paper towels, tissues, clothes, rags, washcloths, diapers, and especially wipes advertised as ‘flushable’ are anything but and do significant harm to the sanitary sewer system. While they may flush, they do not break down and will inevitably clog the sewer system. Please designate a sanitary container for any of these products and place them where they belong—in the trash.”

Toilet paper is designed to almost immediately begin to break down as soon as it touches water. Other products are not and quickly clog sewer pipes and damage essential pumps that move sewage to the treatment plant. In many cases, clogged pipes can cause damage to customer property and require expensive plumbing repairs.

Not only are sewage overflows concerning for public health and safety, they can impact our community’s drinking water supplies and potentially damage the environment and health of our local waterways.

“We’re calling on our customers to help us—especially during this critical time—because this is a potential public health and safety issue,” said Corcoran. “Keeping paper towels, wipes and other products out of the system will help prevent costly sewer overflows and protect our community. If you need to use a product other than toilet paper, be sure to put it in the trash.”

Visit EID’s “Don’t Trash your Drain” webpage. We have a printable list of items that should never be flushed, or be put down the drain.

Wipes Clog Pipes

Legal Challenge to Main Ditch Project Denied

Last year, a Pollock Pines-based group filed a lawsuit seeking to prevent El Dorado Irrigation District (EID) from piping a section of its vital raw water conveyance system under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). On March 27, the lawsuit was denied by the El Dorado County Superior Court. “The District is pleased that this case has been resolved,” said EID General Manager Jim Abercrombie. “This piping project will provide a benefit to all our customers and we look forward to completing it.”

The open and unlined Upper Main Ditch conveys raw water approximately three miles from Forebay Reservoir in Pollock Pines to EID’s Reservoir 1 Water Treatment Plant. The water that travels through the Upper Main Ditch is used to serve a significant portion of EID’s more than 41,000 water service accounts (representing more than 125,000 people) from Pollock Pines all the way to Cameron Park and El Dorado Hills. Water sold to the City of Placerville also travels through the open ditch.

One of the project’s primary goals is to increase the health and safety of EID’s raw water supplies. Piping the water that is currently conveyed through this section of the open ditch system will reduce levels of coliform bacteria (including E. coli) and greatly reduce turbidity (suspended particulates) in the raw water before treatment.

The piping project will also conserve an average of 1,800 acre-feet (more than 500 million gallons) of usable water each year that would otherwise be lost to seepage and evapotranspiration from the open and unlined ditch. Instead, this water would be available to offset the costs of the project by generating clean hydropower and provide additional non-rate revenue for the District or be available for the consumptive needs of customers.

2020 REGULAR BOARD MEETINGS

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Board meetings generally occur on the second and fourth Mondays of each month. Dates marked (T) are scheduled on Tuesdays.

Wipes Clog Pipes

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, EID is committed to the principle of providing programs and services to all eligible individuals in an accessible manner. To ensure equal access to all public meetings, EID accommodates individuals with disabilities. If you are a person with a disability and require information or materials in an appropriate alternative format, or if you require any other reasonable accommodation, please contact the District ADA Coordinator at the number or address below at least 72 hours prior to the meeting or event at which you wish to receive services. Advance notification within these guidelines will enable the District to make reasonable adjustments to ensure accessibility. The District ADA Coordinator can be reached by phone at (530) 642-4013 or email at adaordinator@eid.org.
We are prepared to deal with this and other emergencies and will maintain a laser focus on our community that EID’s water treatment facilities are designed to eliminate pathogens, exceed stringent state and federal drinking water requirements. I want to reassure our water. Highly trained and licensed District personnel treat drinking water to meet or exceed stringent state and federal drinking water requirements. EID’s water treatment facilities are designed to eliminate pathogens, including viruses and bacteria. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has noted that the “COVID-19 is a type of virus that is particularly susceptible to disinfection and standard treatment and disinfectant processes are expected to be effective.”

During treatment, all water is disinfected with chlorine before entering the distribution system—which instantly kills all viruses—and chlorine levels are monitored throughout the system to ensure that the water stays safe on its way to your home.

EID water quality personnel continuously monitor our water supplies and treated water, conducting approximately 2,600 bacteriological laboratory tests each year from more than 25 sampling locations. You can view a summary of the most recent tests results in EID’s annual Water Quality Report at www.eid.org/waterquality. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued information on “Water and COVID-19 FAQs” for drinking water, wastewater and recreational water. This resource is located at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/water.html.

**Recycled Water and Treated Wastewater**

According to a fact sheet issued by the California Water Boards, sanitation experts have determined that existing treatment plant disinfection processes successfully disinfect wastewater containing the COVID-19 virus. To read “California’s Recycled Water and Treated Wastewater Is Safe from the COVID-19 Virus” go to www.waterboards.ca.gov/publications_forms/publications/factsheets/docs/covid-19/recycled_and_treated_ww_safe_from_covid19_factsheet.pdf.

Recycled water used for irrigation is disinfected with methods to deactivate pathogens, including COVID-19. Following pretreatment, primary, and secondary treatment, cleaned wastewater is then disinfected with ultraviolet light. Disinfection kills or inactivates any pathogens that might remain in the water following secondary treatment. Following disinfection, chlorine is added to recycled water to ensure it remains pathogen-free until its use for irrigation.

All discharges from EID’s wastewater treatment plants are routinely monitored for bacteria and other indicator organisms. Viruses are inactivated throughout the different stages of the wastewater treatment processes and again in the biosolids treatment process itself from heat exposure during anaerobic digestion. Viruses do not end up in left-over biosolids or sludge.

On April 27, the EID board of directors voted to approve the five-year rate schedule outlined in the Proposition 218 notice that was sent to all customers in February. The EID board has authorized this important and needed funding and they have also asked us to redouble our efforts to discover cost savings and pursue grants to potentially offset future rate adjustments. We will continue to seek out every option at our disposal. And due to the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 crisis, the board has asked to review the need for the proposed 2021 rates during the December 2020 budget review process.

These rate adjustments will not take effect until 2021 and they are authorized to go through 2025. In 2021, the average water customer would see an increase of $8.63 per bimonthly water bill (a little over $4.30 per month). These additional dollars do not mean maintaining status quo—they will actively help fund vital infrastructure repairs like the Folsom Lake Intake project that refurbishes a facility that provides EID’s only access to one-third of its water supply. The funds will also help pay for flume replacement projects in the high mountainous terrain in the eastern portion of our service area that will benefit all customers and the communities in which they live.

For the average water and wastewater customer, 2021 will see an increase of $1.84 per bill—that’s 92 cents per month. This adjustment is lower because the wastewater rate for average users will go down by nearly five percent in 2021. Over the years, the needs of our complex infrastructure have continued to grow. With line breaks becoming an increasingly regular occurrence, we have been making a concerted effort to expand our water line replacement program. The rates will provide necessary funds to speed up some much needed repairs in our water distribution system.

The measures we are investing in now and over the next five to 10 years will pay off with a more resilient system that will serve our community for generations to come. I want our customers and community to know that these important rate adjustments will provide funding that will be carefully stowed to benefit the entirety of EID’s service area. We are committed to investigating every avenue to lower costs for projects, obtain grants, and ensure that our customers’ hard-earned rate dollars are invested conservatively, diligently, and with maximum benefit.

**Continuous Dedication to Service**

I am acutely aware of the anxiety facing many in our community as we deal with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. I am proud of the response seen within our El Dorado County community. As essential workers providing vital services, EID personnel have been deployed to continue to serve our customers and our community throughout this situation.

EID remains committed, as always, to providing its customers with safe and reliable water. Highly trained and licensed District personnel treat drinking water to meet or exceed stringent state and federal drinking water requirements. I want to reassure our community that EID’s water treatment facilities are designed to eliminate pathogens, including viruses and bacteria—our water remains safe and secure.

We are prepared to deal with this and other emergencies and will maintain a laser focus on ensuring our community has access to the vital services it relies on.

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EID maintains a COVID-19 information page on its website. Go to www.eid.org and look at the red bar at the top of the page called “EID Response to COVID-19.” Keep an eye on this page for information updates. Also, follow EID’s Facebook page at www.eid.org/EIDDoradoIrrigationDistrict to share information from that platform.
EID Tap Water is Safe and Reliable

In light of concerns surrounding Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), El Dorado Irrigation District wants to reassure the community we serve that this virus has no impact on EID’s drinking water supply—your tap water is safe and reliable.

“Given the critical public health and safety role we serve in the community, EID has instituted workplace management actions to help protect the women and men who work hard to ensure our water and wastewater services remain safe and reliable during these challenging times,” said General Manager Jim Abercrombie.

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**WIPES CLOG PIPES**

It is important that EID works in close coordination with our regional partners to balance recreation opportunities across our region and ensure activities are conducted in a safe manner.

**2019 Water Quality Reports Available**

Each year, EID provides its customers with an annual water quality report (sometimes referred to as a consumer confidence report) to let you know how our water quality stacks up against established federal and state drinking water standards.

We encourage you to review this report as it provides details about the source and quality of the drinking water delivered to your community in 2019.

**Where Your Water Comes From**

EID maintains three water systems and has rights to approximately 75,000 acre-feet of water from various sources in the Sierra Nevada foothills (an acre-foot equals one acre of land covered by a foot of water; there are 325,851 gallons in an acre-foot). Jenkinson Lake, at the center of Sly Park Recreation Area in Pollock Pines, provides nearly one half of our main system’s water supply.

The main water system runs from El Dorado Hills to Pollock Pines and encompasses the majority of EID’s service area, providing water to nearly 128,000 people. The Outingdale system provides water from the Middle Fork of the Cosumnes River to approximately 540 people in the small community of Outingdale, about 15 miles southeast of Placerville. The Strawberry system provides water from the upper South Fork American River to approximately 400 people in the community of Strawberry located about 40 miles east of Placerville along Highway 50.

For more information about the sources of your water, read the 2019 water quality report for your community by going to the EID website and using the following web addresses.

- Main System: www.eid.org/main
- Outingdale: www.eid.org/outingdale
- Strawberry: www.eid.org/strawberry

Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua beber. Tradúzcalo o hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.