

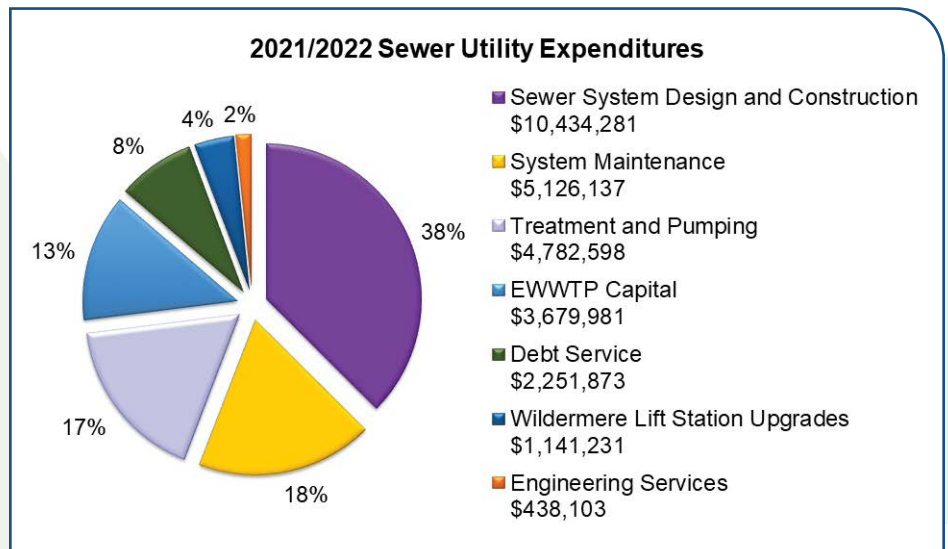
Operating and Maintaining our Sewer System

Last year the city updated its sewer rates and will be making a number of infrastructure investments in the coming years. By law utility funds can only pay for their systems and cannot be used for other purposes. In other words, your sewer, stormwater, and water utility bills are not funding parks, police, or roads.

Utility rates are set to recover the cost of providing the service. Utilities incur two primary types of costs: operating costs (employee salaries and benefits, routine inspections, utilities/power/treatment, and asset repair and maintenance) and capital costs (infrastructure replacement and facility expansions and upgrades). The accompanying graph shows a breakdown of the 2021-2022 Sewer Utility Expenditures so you can see where your dollars are going in our next budget cycle.

It is an ongoing challenge to maintain all of those pipes, most of which were installed in the 1950s and 60s and are in need of replacement, as well as the facilities that support our utilities. Local governments must also keep up with new regulatory standards. The city is working hard to maintain our utility systems that are often not visible or top of mind but definitely noticed if not working properly. Let's face it, no one wants a sewer back up caused by aging pipes that break.

If investments to replace aging infrastructure are not made, there are dire consequences including more frequent and costly emergency repairs, service disruptions and backups, sewer claims, and insurance expenses. Key rate drivers



for the 2020 sewer rate increases were replacement of aging infrastructure, design and construction of capital projects, capital to support the Edmonds Wastewater Treatment Plant (EDWWTP), and a vector truck dedicated to sewer maintenance.

As mentioned in the wastewater treatment article below, our cities are working together to provide quality utility services while always keeping an eye on efficiency. Earlier this year, "Utility of the Future Today" presented the Edmonds Wastewater Treatment Plant with a "2020 Energy Efficiency Award" for cutting energy costs by 45 percent! In 2019, the EDWWTP received an "Outstanding Performance Award" from Washington State Department of Ecology.

The Public Works Department asks that you help do your part to keep our sewer system working properly too. Any product other than toilet paper that says it is flushable does not have your best interest in mind, and it is costing you more money. Flushed wipes get caught up in the pipes and cause sewer backups. Wipes do not just cause blockages, they also get bound up in equipment at the wastewater treatment plant, which can lead to costly repairs.

Help prevent sewer backups at your house and keep your sewer bill as low as possible. Together, we can protect our sewer system.

Where Does Your Wastewater Go? How Your Wastewater is Treated



Edmonds Wastewater Treatment Plant

Did you know your sewer bill pays for the cost of maintaining three lift stations, 69 miles of sewer main lines, and 5,500 sewer connection laterals? Your bill also covers the cost of sewage treatment and disposal at the treatment plants that deal with everything that is dumped down the drain or flushed down the toilet. With over 21,000 residents and plenty of visitors each day, there's a lot of...shall we say..."waste" to manage.

What happens to the wastewater once it leaves your house? It travels through the sewer pipes and lift station pumps to the treatment plant where solids are removed and burned in a high temperature furnace (incinerator). The incinerator is not only expensive to operate in

terms of electrical use and maintenance costs, but the residual ash must also be transported to the landfill for disposal.

The City of Mountlake Terrace partners with other local jurisdictions to operate the Edmonds Wastewater Treatment Plant (EDWWTP). Approximately 80% of the sewage from Mountlake Terrace is collected and pumped to Edmonds for primary and secondary treatment. The remaining 20% flows through Brier and Lake Forest Park and is treated by King County Metro at the West Point Treatment Plant near Discovery Park in Seattle.

The original 1957 Edmonds Treatment Plant has been upgraded to handle increased flows and our city has

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Who to Call for Public Safety Patrol or Code Enforcement?

Often times our residents are not sure who to call for public safety issues. There are different scenarios in which you would request Police Patrol versus Code Enforcement.

Police patrol should be requested for any criminal activity (in progress or not), suspicious circumstances, traffic related issues, domestic related issues, assaults, harassment, illegal dumping, noise complaints, or public assists. Generally, calling 911 would be appropriate for these types of matters.

Code enforcement covers nuisance properties such as trash on the property, tall vegetation, junk vehicles, debris, and parking issues. Most requests for code enforcement can be made through the non-emergency telephone number at (425) 407-3999 or via email at codeenforcement@mltwa.gov. The city has two Code Enforcement officers and each covers a zone within the city. Since the non-emergency number is not easy to remember, try saving it in your phone contacts. When you see something you would like to report but it is not an emergency, you will have the number available to you. The non-emergency number is still dispatched by SNO-911 but the calls go into a non-emergency queue so the dispatcher can take higher priority calls first.

Here are two scenarios to help you learn which number to call. In Scenario 1, a resident contacts a neighbor concerning a fence which is over the property line. A serious argument ensues and threats are made. 911 should be called for a police officer due to the argument and heated situation. In Scenario 2, a home owner would like to report junk vehicles and tall vegetation at a neighbor's property. The non-emergency number would be used to report this situation and code enforcement will respond.



Officer Mike Padgett

Don't Forget To Renew Your Business License

Last January, the City of Mountlake Terrace began a partnership with the State Department of Revenue's Business Licensing Service (BLS). This partnership makes it easy to maintain most of your state and city licenses in one stop.

The State Department of Revenue will send your renewal notice in the mail approximately six weeks before your endorsements expire. Your renewal form will list the City of Mountlake Terrace license fee and the state BLS renewal processing fee. Once your renewal has been processed, a new license will be mailed to the address on your account. You can check your account status or print a copy of your license from their website at dor.wa.gov/manage-business/run-business.

If you have questions, please contact BLS at (800) 451-7985 or visit dor.wa.gov.



Officers David Nguyen and Kyle O'Hagan

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purchased sufficient capacity in the Edmonds Treatment Facility to accommodate growth as outlined in our city's Comprehensive Plan.

In 2018, the EWWTP staff conducted an evaluation of alternative technologies and a cost/benefit comparison to replace the inefficient and aging incinerator with alternative biosolids disposal methods that are energy neutral or energy positive. After a thorough evaluation of modern technologies, pyrolysis was identified as the best method to use because it will reduce operation and maintenance costs and also reduce the plant's energy costs and

its environmental impact. With this innovative approach, rather than sending truckloads of ash to the landfill, the pyrolysis system will generate biochar, a charcoal produced from organics and stored in the soil as a means of removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

A \$27 million renovation of the Edmonds Wastewater Treatment Plant that includes these improvements is underway with our city's cost at \$6.25 million. Part of this renovation includes the carbon recovery project which will replace the sanitary sewage incinerator (SSI) and associated equipment. The SSI is 30 years

old and must meet stringent Environmental Protection Act and Puget Sound Clean Air Act regulations. The cost of regulatory compliance alone is estimated to be in excess of \$100,000 per year. Project goals include operations and maintenance savings, carbon recovery, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, electricity, and diesel fuel usage.

These partnerships and practices will add value in providing improved wastewater treatment services for our communities while being better stewards of the environment.