

# Amston Lake Low-Pressure Sewers

To provide you with wastewater disposal, your home or building is served by a low-pressure sewer system. The key element in this system is the Environment One Grinder Pump housed inside the grinder pump chamber installed in your yard. The grinder pump chamber collects all solid and liquid wastewater from your house or building and provides a small amount of wastewater storage capacity. When the wastewater in the chamber reaches a preset level, the grinder pump automatically turns on and grinds the solid materials to a small size suitable for pumping as slurry with the wastewater. The grinder pump generates enough pressure to pump this slurry from your grinder pump through the street lateral (pipe from grinder pump to the street) to the low-pressure line which then transports the wastewater to the North Main Street Pump Station. For a typical household, the Grinder pump will operate approximately twenty (20) minutes per day.

## **HOMEOWNER GRINDER PUMP MAINTENANCE**

To properly maintain your grinder pump, the following procedures should be followed:

- Keep the vent on the side of the pump access cover free of dirt, grass, leaves, snow, or anything that would prevent air flow to the grinder pump.
- Keep the ground around the pump chamber cover sloped away from the pump chamber.
- When installing landscaping please do not plant trees and bushes around or near the grinder pump chamber.

**Back Flow Problems:** There are two (2) check valves, one at the grinder pump to prevent backflow to your house or building, and the other at the street to prevent back flow from the main sewer line to your grinder pump chamber. If you experience any back flow into your interior drains stop using water immediately and check your alarm panel and the circuit breaker that serves your grinder pump. If the Alarm is not on call your plumber to check your interior plumbing lines. If the back-up problem persists, call the WPCA for inspection and services at (860) 642-6543. Please leave your name, address, contact number, and a description of the problem.

**CAUTION - Never attempt to open the pump chamber cover or the electrical control box as electrical shock or damage to the system may occur.** If any digging, excavation, or landscaping is planned near the grinder pump or the Control Box, the Owner should call the WPCA for the location of underground utilities.

## **PERIODS OF NON-USE**

If your home or building is to be left unoccupied for longer than seven (7) days, use the following procedures prior to leaving (please see Winterization Guidelines below if you will be away during cold weather):

- Run clean water into the grinder pump until the pump activates.
- Immediately turn off the water and allow the grinder pump to run until it shuts off automatically. This process will clean the pump and leave it filled with a minimum of clean water.

Upon your return repeat the procedure to assure the grinder pump is operating properly.

Note that duplex grinder pump units need special attention to ensure that both pumps turn on when clean water is added to the tank.

**Do not disconnect or shut-off the electrical supply to the grinder pump as such actions can cause condensation and/or freezing to take place that can damage the grinder pump wiring.**

## **WINTERIZATION GUIDELINES**

All homeowners are encouraged to maintain a year-round electric power supply to the grinder pump. However, should temporary (seasonal) shut-off of electrical service to a residence be desired, the following procedures shall be followed.

- Winterize all plumbing fixtures in the usual manner, except for a single sink/faucet.
- Turn on the water in the sink/faucet long enough to cause the grinder pump to start.
- Turn water off once the grinder pump starts.
- Allow grinder pump to shut off automatically. This purges the system of solids.
- Add 7 gallons of pre-diluted RV type biodegradable antifreeze to the sink so it drains into the grinder pump.
- Turn on the water in the sink until the grinder pump starts. Immediately shut off the water as soon the pump starts.
- Winterize the sink/faucet.

Upon returning to the residence be sure that the power to the alarm panel and pump is turned on and proceed with normal use.

Please note: Should a resident wish to terminate power to the grinder pump, any adverse impact may result in a claim from the WPCA for the grinder pump repair or replacement if the above procedures are not followed.

## **POWER FAILURE**

Your grinder pump cannot dispose of wastewater without electrical power. If electrical service is interrupted keep water usage to a minimum until power is restored. At that time, your grinder pump should function normally. The alarm may activate if there is a large volume of effluent in the grinder pump chamber when power is first restored, however, it should only last 15 minutes or so until the pump chamber is cleared. If a power failure continues for several days, the WPCA will have your grinder pump chamber pumped every third day for as long as the outage continues.

## **PUMP FAILURE ALARM**

Your grinder pump will produce an alarm signal of a flashing red light and an audio alarm will sound off from the alarm box located outside your house or building in the event of a high-water level in the grinder pump chamber. If the red light goes on proceed as follows:

- Stop using water immediately (turn off washing machine, dishwasher, etc.) to prevent overflows and back-ups.
- Wait fifteen (15) minutes. A high level of water usage such as running the clothes and dishwasher at the same time will sometimes cause the alarm to activate. This situation is self-correcting. If the grinder pump is operating correctly, it will pump the level down and the Alarm Light will turn off.

**If the Alarm Light is still on after fifteen (15) minutes immediately call 1 (508) 765- 0051. Please leave your name, address, contact number, and a description of the problem. If after fifteen (15) minutes the alarm does not shut off, you can turn off the alarm by pushing the buttons on the bottom of the Control Box.**

**WPCA Sewer Emergency Line is available twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week. Please report grinder pump alarms immediately; you do not have to wait for regular business hours.**

**\*\*Note that if the electrical power to the grinder pump is shut-off the alarm will not function.**

## **DAMAGE CAUSED TO SEWER EQUIPMENT**

When the WPCA does repairs or services on the grinder pump if all preventive maintenance instructions have been adhered to by the Owner the WPCA will absorb the cost for the work. If repairs or services are required because of banned items being introduced into the system by someone in the home, if there has been a shut-off of the electrical power breakers, or the Owner caused damage to the public sewer system, the Owner shall be responsible for full and prompt reimbursement to the WPCA for all WPCA staff time, contractor time, labor and/or materials. A ten (10%) percent administrative fee may be applied.

By following these guidelines, you can ensure that your grinder pump will provide many years of service. If you have any questions, please call the WPCA at 860-642-6543.

## **GRINDER PUMP BANNED ITEMS**

To avoid blockages in your connection to the sewer system and damage to your grinder pump, the following items SHALL NOT be placed into the system or run through your disposal unit:

**GLASS  
METAL  
GRAVEL, SAND (including aquarium stone)  
COFFEE GROUNDS  
SEAFOOD SHELLS  
SOCKS, RAGS OR CLOTHS  
PLASTIC OF ANY KIND  
SANITARY NAPKINS OR TAMPONS  
DISPOSAL DIAPERS  
KITTY LITTER  
EXPLOSIVES AND FIREWORKS  
FLAMMABLE MATERIALS  
ANTIFREEZE  
LUBRICATING OIL, GREASE, COOKING OIL AND PAINT  
STRONG CHEMICALS OR TURPENTINE  
GASOLINE, KEROSENE, OR DIESEL FUEL  
STORMWATER RUNOFF  
DISPOSABLE TOILET BOWL SCRUBBERS  
BONES  
EGGSHELLS  
CONDOMS/PROPHYLACTICS  
CANDLE WAX  
FIREPLACE ASHES  
GLOVES-LATEX OR RUBBER  
CIGARETTE BUTTS  
HAIR CLIPPINGS/PET CLIPPINGS  
SYRINGES/NEEDLES & TIP GUARDS  
WIPES: BABY, CLEANING OR SANITARY  
DENTAL FLOSS  
NON-DISSOLVING TISSUE OR TOILET PAPER  
PAPER TOWELS  
WASTE FOOD PRODUCTS  
MEDICINES  
CORROSIVE/ACIDIC MATERIAL  
SOLVENTS CLEANING/DEGREASING**

It is unlawful to have sump pumps, footing drains, curtain drains, French drains, yard drains, downspouts and water treatment backwash connected to the public sewer system.

**NOTICE: Any of these items that cause blockages and/or damages to your property or to the sewer system, including the grinder pump, may be your responsibility and you may be charged for repair or replacement.**