

## GOVERNOR BROWN DECLARES STATEWIDE DROUGHT EMERGENCY.

The District has implemented its Water Shortage Contingency Plan. Phase 1 of this plan requires all customers to implement voluntary measures to reduce demands. Visit the District's website for information on how to do your part in reducing demand on this valuable natural resource.

## FUNDING REMAINS FOR THE DISTRICT'S LOW FLOW TOILET REBATE CREDIT PROGRAM

The North Tahoe Public Utility District low flow toilet rebate credit program has been very well received. If you haven't taken advantage of the District's low flow toilet rebate credit program with a grant through Proposition 84, now is the time, especially with the recent drought declaration. Details below on how to obtain a rebate credit on your water bill for replacing old, high water use toilets with a low flow toilet.

- \* Residential and Commercial properties can submit rebate credit applications.
- \* One application must be submitted for each toilet being replaced.
- \* Application must include all original receipts.
- \* Toilets must have been purchased after August 16, 2011.
- \* ONLY NTPUD WATER customers are eligible for rebate credit. You must receive a bill from the District for water, not just sewer.
- \* Rebate credit will be applied to the customer's water bill.
- \* Toilets must be installed within NTPUD's

boundaries. NTPUD staff shall perform inspections of all installations prior to applying rebate credit.

- \* Customers will receive a 50% rebate credit up to a total of \$100 per toilet installed.. The rebate credit may be a combination of the cost of the toilet and the cost of installation if the toilets are installed by a California Licensed Contractor, up to the maximum rebate credit amount of \$100 per toilet.

- \* Rebate credit will only apply to replacing existing toilets that use more than 2 gallons per flush with a new 1.6 gallon or less toilet per flush.
- \* New construction, tear-down rebuild construction, and bathroom additions are not eligible to receive rebate credit. Bathroom remodels on existing bathrooms with toilets are eligible.



Replace old, large tank toilets like this one and receive a credit on your bill!

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The North Tahoe Public Utility District Quarterly Newsletter is published to keep our customers informed about Sewer, Water and Park related issues and upcoming events. If you have any suggestions, please submit them to the Office of the General Manager. We send press releases and other information out when we have information to share. If you would like to be added to the list to receive this information as it is available, please e-mail Pam Emmerich at [pemmerich@ntpud.org](mailto:pemmerich@ntpud.org) or sign up on the website.

For more information on any of the articles contained in this newsletter, please call 530-546-4212 or visit [www.ntnud.org](http://www.ntnud.org)

## PLEASE MAKE SURE THE DISTRICT HAS CURRENT CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS FOR YOUR PROPERTY!

The extremely cold temperatures earlier this winter left many homes with frozen and broken water pipes. If the District finds high water use when reading meters, we will attempt to contact the property owner to notify you about the problem. Without current phone contact information, we will knock on the door before we turn off the water, and then leave a door hanger. This helps to avoid a large bill for high water usage, the property damage that could result from the broken pipes, or showing up at your house to find that the water to your house has been shut of.

Newsletter contributors: Kelli Twomey, Tahoe City Public Utility District, Michael Thornton, Tracey Towner, Paul Schultz, Suzi Gibbons, Will Stelter.



# North Tahoe Public Utility District Quarterly Newsletter—Winter

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En Español Llamar, (530) 546-4212

## SEWER SYSTEMS AMONG WORLD'S BEST

Effort to protect Lake requires a highly sophisticated infrastructure

Although scientists have been studying and documenting how Lake Tahoe is affected by shoreline activities — from the construction of homes to the exhaust of cars — for years, one thing that became obvious long ago was the impact of sewage.

No one really likes to talk about sewage, but in the 1950s, the growing communities at Lake Tahoe talked about it a lot. As more and more homes were built in the 1950s and 1960s, and more and more homeowners installed septic tanks to treat their waste, planners and scientists became alarmed that Lake Tahoe would quickly become murky with algae if something wasn't done.

The result is that the Tahoe Basin today has some of the most sophisticated and technologically advanced wastewater treatment systems in the country. Public utility districts and general improvement districts in the Basin must comply with the Federal Clean Water Act and the 1968 Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, which prohibit septic tanks, sewage outfall, and the in-Basin reuse of recycled water, regardless of the level of treatment.



The Tahoe Truckee Sanitation Agency provides the Regional Sewage Treatment Plant for the North Shore (California) and Truckee.

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- Wipes Clog Pipes— Nothing but TP down the toilet.
- Do you need an expansion tank for your hot water heater?
- What's New in the Park and Facilities Department?
- Low Flow Toilet Credit Rebate Program

Districts collect wastewater that drains into underground networks of pipes, wet wells, and pump stations. Extra safeguards are in place, including redundant pumps, redundant force mains, and redundant power sources, to transport the waste and ensure it does not escape into Lake Tahoe or the Truckee River.

Districts not only treat at a higher standard, but every drop of treated sewage must be transported and disposed of out of the Basin. This requirement results in a very complex and expensive process.

This wasn't always the case. The Tahoe City Public Utility District became the first utility at Tahoe to collectively treat sewage when it built a small treatment facility in 1954, and that plant was followed by others on the South Shore and Incline Village. But many property owners still weren't hooked up to a sewer system.

So in the late 1960s, the California Legislature banned cesspools and septic tanks and mandated that all effluent be pumped completely out of the Basin. Nevada followed suit a few years later.



In 1968 the largest pre-manufactured sewage lift station constructed at the time was installed by the NTPUD at the base of Dollar Hill.

Today, the Basin's waste is transported to wastewater treatment plants where cutting-edge technology, such as biological nitrogen removal, and nitrification and denitrification, are used to treat the wastewater. Visitors and residents can still play a role in protecting the Lake by protecting the sewer system and being careful about what is disposed of in the sink, drain, and the toilet.

Fats, oils, and greases, for example, are bad for sewers. Grease-clogged sewer pipes are an increasingly common cause of overflows, and sewer overflows and backups can cause health hazards, damage homes, and threaten the environment. Grease gets into the sewer from household drains and from poorly maintained grease traps in restaurants and other businesses. Once in the sewers, grease hardens into a solid, clinging to pipes and building up similar to how cholesterol forms plaque and clogs arteries.

The results can be not only raw sewage overflowing in your home or your neighbor's home, but raw sewage overflowing into streets and potentially the Lake; potential contact with disease-causing organisms; and an increase in operation and maintenance costs, which causes higher sewer bills for customers. Contact the North Tahoe Public Utility District for "Sewer Smart" disposal options.

Kelli Twomey, Tahoe City Public Utility District. Reprinted from "Tahoe In Depth" a publication of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

PO Box 139 \* 875 National Avenue \* Tahoe Vista, CA 96148 \* 530.546.4212 \* Fax 530.546.2652 \* [ntpud@ntpud.org](mailto:ntpud@ntpud.org) \* [www.ntnud.org](http://www.ntnud.org)

### WIPES CLOG PIPES! PLEASE, ONLY TOILET PAPER DOWN THE SEWER

The District is experiencing problems due to the cleaning products marketed as “flushable”. Although it may indeed be possible to “flush” these products, they do not breakdown and subsequently clog our sewer system’s pipes and pumps which significantly increases the risk of spilling sewage in Lake Tahoe or the surrounding environment.

Although the District has seen an increasing issue with these cleansing wipes, all products which do not have the inherent ability to breakdown or disintegrate can damage or clog our pumps and pipes. Other “sewer-stoppers” known to cause these same clogging issues are:



Container on the left is toilet paper, the container on the right holds a “flushable” wipe. They have both been soaking in water for 4 hours and the wipe hasn’t changed at all. If an item doesn’t disintegrate like TP, it shouldn’t go in the sewer

“Swiffer” mop refills, paper towels, cotton balls/swabs, facial tissues, dental floss, socks and other items that don’t disintegrate.

If what you are looking to throw into the toilet or drain does not disintegrate like toilet paper, it should be thrown into your garbage can and not the toilet!



A plug that our Technicians removed in November that was caused by non-flushable items being put down the sewer.

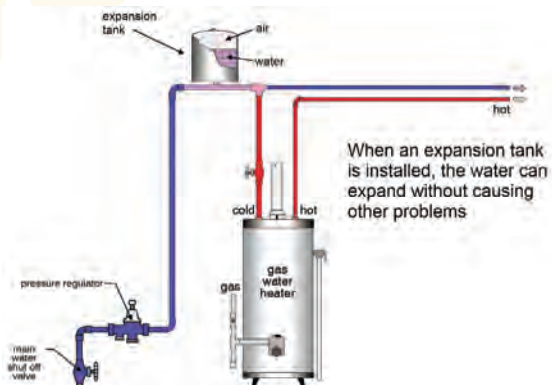
Please share this information with everyone in your family and if you use a cleaning service, please make sure they are aware of this as well. In addition to the main sewer system, these items can also cause a backup in your home and yard.

### DO I NEED AN EXPANSION TANK FOR MY HOT WATER HEATER?



An expansion tank installed on a hot water heater.

This question comes up from time-to-time. Many District customers have water heaters that leak a little bit from their PT (pressure/temperature) valve when the unit reheats after filling. This phenomenon occurs due to the air in the tank headspace becoming compressed thereby increasing pressure in the tank. The water itself compresses a little too, but most of the compression and resultant increase in pressure is due to the heated air in the headspace. Since the PT valve on the side of your water heater typically does not activate until internal pressures exceed 150 psi (pounds per square inch), your water heater, as well as the piping within your home, may experience damage and, as a consequence, a reduced lifespan. Each use/refill/reheat cycle further stresses the water heater tank and household piping. In addition, if the PT valve is sticky or faulty and unable to relieve the increased pressure then the water heater itself may eventually rupture. This problem can usually be eliminated by installation of an expansion tank on the cold water feed side of the water heater (see the figures below). Expansion tanks themselves are relatively inexpensive (typically under \$75) and installation usually takes less than an hour. That’s pretty cheap insurance to preserve that \$500 water heater installation. Call one of the area’s licensed plumbers for further advise or to schedule a retrofit.



### WHAT’S NEW IN THE PARK AND FACILITIES DEPARTMENT?

What’s new in the Parks and Facilities Department? Stephanie Dees!!! She is our Park and Facilities Coordinator, who hails from the deep south, and is looking forward to getting the community out to the parks and more involved in recreation activities.



Stepahnie Dees the new Park and Facilities Coordinator.

Kings Beach History Buffs! We have a terrific idea about local history nooks in the event center, and need art and articles to make it work! Anyone have any pictures of before the new parking lot at Kings Beach was finished? Bring them in? Let’s talk about them and the good ole days! Kings Beach History Committee- Please give me a call!

Speaking of ART. Are you an artist interested in displaying your work in the North Tahoe Event Center? Are you an art enthusiast who would like to sit on a jury to help select the art that goes on display? Do you operated a gallery where you ship art to your client? Well if you answered “yes” to any of the above questions, please give me a call! (530) 553-5485! Let’s talk about Art and the Event Center, and how we can make each compliment the other better!

Speaking of committees... Look for the formulation of a special events committee coming your way soon. Are you a promoter? Do you own a recreation/special events business? Are you an interested party? Do you have a bit of time? Call me! Let’s talk Special Events Committee!!!

We have installed a webcam at the event center! Check out this link! <http://www.tahoetopia.com/webcam/north-tahoe-event-center-kings-beach>



A still shot from the new web came at the North Tahoe Event Center.

The Dog Park- “Tahoe Unleashed”- is beginning to take shape and is the focus of a variety of fundraising efforts. Grant writing, special events and fundraisers are being implemented even now. The dog park is morphing into a very nice asset at the North Tahoe Regional Park, and will boast separate little and big dog runs, a few ADA parking spots and a year round restroom. All we need now is money to build it. There is a committee for this already...They are always looking for new members!

As the park and facilities staff continues to tackle off season chores, it has become abundantly clear that the NTPUD team is of excellent quality and enjoys folks who care a great deal about the job they do and

how it affects the public. We are fortunate to have folks with this kind of work ethic bringing us well-maintained-clean and tidy facilities day in and day out! Thank you to Steve, Tripp, Josh, Doug, Michael, and Bryan!!! Way to go TEAM! Keep up the great work!

Question of the week: “Is it worth having a parking attendant at Kings Beach State Recreation Area and at North Tahoe Regional Park?” The answer is an overwhelming YES! Not only are our revenues up at both of these parks, but public interface has increased as well. Positive public input has been received about how personable and approachable our parking attendants are! It is nice having a person greet you at the park entrance to answer questions. Most of our paid patrons are from outside the area and have questions about other things to do in and around North Tahoe. The parking attendants are the first locals the out-of-towners meet, and are a wealth of local information. Way to go Ken, Stacey and Meera! Let’s keep our visitors happy and informed!

Tracey Towner, Park and Facilities Manager