



Northwest Lakewood Sanitation District

Serving 4,400 Sewer
Connections in
Jefferson County

January 2009 Newsletter

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p1 Your
Sanitary
Sewer System
Financing
Repairs &
Rehabilitation

Website

Visit our fabulous
new web site,
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information about
your Northwest
Lakewood
Sanitation District.

YOUR SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM FINANCING REPAIRS AND REHABILITATION

As you will recall, the District received an unfavorable reaction to its original proposal to impose a Facilities Renovation Fee (FRF) on its customers. In response, a survey was circulated in February 2008 to all customers in the District soliciting their input on the desired method for raising the funds needed to renovate the District's aging infrastructure. By a two-to-one margin, respondents favored conducting an election to ask voters for authorization to increase the mill levy. Seeing the results of this survey, the Board agreed to go to the voters. At the same time, the Board organized a citizen's advisory committee consisting of six individuals living within the District who have considerable knowledge about the services provided. In addition, other activities such as public presentations, newsletters and a web site were implemented to better inform the District customers about the problems facing us all.

At the subsequent General Election, the results were as follows

- 1) Ballot Issue 5A – Mill Levy Increase - **FAILED**
YES VOTES = 3,015 NO VOTES = 3,796
- 2) Ballot Issue 5B - Debt Authorization - **PASSED**
YES VOTES = 3,825 NO VOTES = 2,969



The results show that although Ballot Issue 5A failed to pass, forty-four percent of the voters approved of the mill levy increase issue, while, interestingly, they passed the debt authorization issue by a comfortable fifty-six percent margin. Unfortunately, with the failure of Ballot Issue 5A, there is no additional tax revenue to allow for Ballot Issue 5B to be implemented.

The Board is of course disappointed that Ballot Issue 5A failed. However, upon reflection, the narrow defeat of one issue and the passage of the other does seem to indicate that District customers are now much more aware of the issues. With a little more time to share information, and a more normal national economy, Ballot Issue 5A may well have passed. However, the election is over and the vote failed. Now, the District and its customers must face the realities noted below.

Over the next several years, another source of revenue will be necessary for the District to systematically repair or replace aging pipes before their condition deteriorates to the point of failure. Failure puts customers at risk of sewage-flooded basements, the environment at risk of pollution from sewage overflows and spills and the District at risk of liability for damages and fines. The District's current revenues are not sufficient to cover the cost of this project, which could extend over a 20-year period.



Facts About the District!

- The NWLS District was formed in the 1950's. The District has never had a mill levy increase, no bonded indebtedness and no loans ever.
- Inflation and 50 year old sewer lines has impacted our budget these past few years.
- NWLS videos and/or cleans one third of all our sewer lines each year in the district.

As a result of the failure of Ballot Issue 5A, on December 17, 2008 the Board of Directors found it necessary to approve a Facilities Renovation Fee (FRF) for 2009. Therefore, in order to fund the 2009 capital improvements and begin to replenish emergency reserve funds, the FRF will be assessed at \$150.00 per year per single family residential equivalent. You will notice that the fee has been raised from the original \$100 to \$150. The reason for this is to fund the 2009 capital improvement needs and to begin to replenish depleted emergency reserves. The fee will be reviewed by the Board of Directors annually and assessed based on current and future needs. Customers will receive an invoice in February 2009 and the fee will be due on May 1, 2009.

The issue of a mill levy increase as an alternative to the FRF can again be considered in November 2009. In order to place the item on the ballot, the Board will have to consider input from voters and the likelihood of passage.

The Board realizes that this fee notice comes during difficult economic times. However, the Board must insure that the lives of its customers are not made even more difficult by the consequences of a failing sanitary sewer system.

For additional information regarding the rehabilitation plan, please visit the District's website at www.nlsd.us or you may go to the Lakewood Library, located at 10200 W 20th Avenue in Lakewood or the Golden Library, located at 1019 10th Street in Golden after January 15, 2009 and review the documents there, please ask at the Information Desk for the Northwest Lakewood Sanitation District notebook. You may also contact Lisa A. Johnson, District Manager at 303-987-0835 or ljohnson@sdmsi.com with any questions, suggestions or comments.

Visit us at:
www.nlsd.us

Northwest Lakewood
Sanitation District
141 Union Blvd.
Lakewood, CO 80228