

PINERY PIPELINE JANUARY 2025

Please join us at our District Office for our monthly Board Meetings typically held at 6:00pm on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Our Upcoming Board Meetings will be held at 6:00pm on Wednesday, January 15th and Wednesday, February 19th.



From your Board of Directors

WASTE NOT

OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND...until the drain gets plugged.

I want to revisit a subject I wrote about a few years ago. Since our wastewater plant is undergoing much needed upgrades, good time to mention **what should and should not go down the drain**. Some examples.

Your "garbage disposal" is **NOT** for disposal of ANY GARBAGE. If there was ever a misnomer, it is this. In fact, don't use your disposal. It serves as an excellent way to plug up your plumbing. If you are washing dishes, and pull the plug to drain, that is about the only time you should turn on the disposal. Better yet, remove the disposal all together. You will save hundreds, maybe thousands of \$\$ on roto rooting services. I have a lidded container on the counter to save all compostable materials that then go into a compost bin in backyard.

DO NOT POUR GREASE OR FAT down the drain. This will cause a buildup not only in your home pipes, but also causes issues with our wastewater infrastructure. In addition, flushing "**disposable wipes.**" Over at our Pinery wastewater treatment facility, our staff is busy cleaning screens, removing crud, and lots of stuff that should not be going down the drain.

I mentioned in my years past article that I recently read a news brief in High Country News about this subject. To paraphrase from the article, "The Word Disposable is an Overused Word". 'That is the conclusion of Dave Barkey, who sells sophisticated grinders to wastewater treatment facilities that have become clogged by allegedly disposable "wipes." The throwaway wipes industry is booming, Barkey told the gathering of 900 wastewater managers at a meeting in 2019 in Keystone, Colorado. The business is growing at more than 5% a year, with sales expected to climb to more than \$20 billion in 2021.'! I have not recently checked the latest stats on this, but my guess is it hasn't improved, base upon what we are seeing.

'The "wipes frenzy", reported by the Colorado Sun, is happening at the same time as something environmentally good – low-flush, water saving toilets – but unfortunately they act together to strain wastewater treatment plants until they are downright plugged. Barkey's mechanical solutions include "chopper pumps with cutters, and screens and augers. His dour sewer talk was enlivened by stories of cities with "whale-sized fatbergs of wipes" blocking the smooth passage of wastewater.'

I have heard other professionals talk about how only the "obvious" should be flushed down toilets and poured down our drains (i.e. no grease down the drain).

Let's give our treatment plant a break and be responsible flushers.



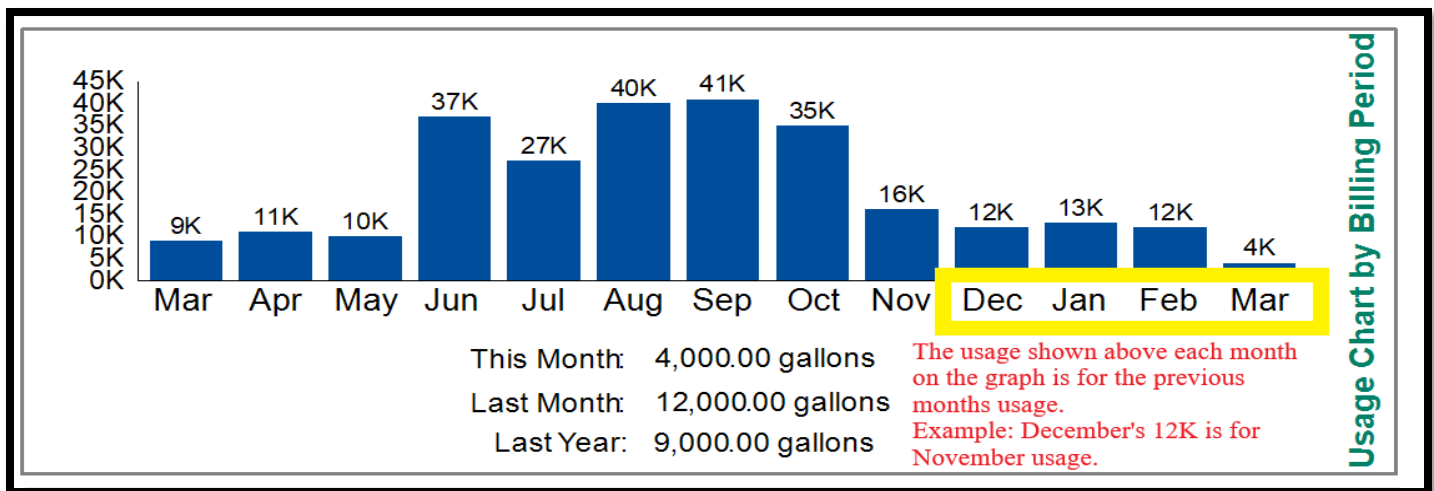
Jim McGannon, Director, Pinery Water and Wastewater District

Conserving Water

Water conservation is not just meant for the summer months. Conserving water in the winter months helps you as well to save money monthly but also could put you in the lower sewer tier for the next year. In December of 2020 the Board passed a two-tier rate structure for monthly wastewater charges that took effect in 2021. What does that mean for you? Customers who use more water/wastewater services through the winter months will pay a higher rate than those who use less. The process to determine what tier you fall into is explained below.

We will add your November, December, January, and February water usage together and divide that total by 4 to get your average. That average number then determines which tier you fall into. If your average monthly water consumption (AMWC) is 0-5,000 gallons you will be billed \$38.43 each month for wastewater service in 2025. If your AMWC is over 5,001 gallons you will be charged \$56.44 each month for wastewater service in 2025. These rates will be recalculated each year.

If you are looking at the graph on your bill to see where you are at for usage, you will need to look at December-March. The graph shows the billing period, meaning the usage shown above the month is for the previous month. The picture below highlights the months to look at on your bill.



How to Thaw Frozen Pipes

- If you turn on a faucet and only a trickle comes out, suspect a frozen pipe. Likely places for frozen pipes include against exterior walls or where your water service enters your home through the foundation.
- Keep the faucet open. As you treat the frozen pipe and the frozen area begins to melt, water will begin to flow through the frozen area. Running water through the pipe will help melt ice in the pipe.
- Apply heat to the section of pipe using an electric heating pad wrapped around the pipe, an electric hair dryer, a portable space heater (kept away from flammable materials), or by wrapping pipes with towels soaked in hot water. Do not use a blowtorch, kerosene or propane heater, charcoal stove, or other open flame device.
- Apply heat until full water pressure is restored. If you are unable to locate the frozen area, if the frozen area is not accessible, or if you cannot thaw the pipe, call a licensed plumber.
- Check all other faucets in your home to find out if you have additional frozen pipes. If one pipe freezes, others may freeze, too.

If you would like more information, please visit [Red Cross-Prepare for Emergencies](#).

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