

Brightwater: sewer hookups, septic systems and who pays

The new Brightwater system was built to serve population growth in the central Puget Sound region over the next several decades.

Who pays for Brightwater?

Brightwater will be funded largely by a capacity charge and monthly sewer rates from new connections to the system throughout King County's wastewater service area. This area stretches from north Pierce County to Mill Creek in south Snohomish County; it's not just the areas that will be directly served by Brightwater.

If I am not on sewers but live in the Brightwater service area, will I have to pay for Brightwater?

No. Residences and businesses that are not connected to sewers in King County's wastewater service area are not charged fees for King County's wastewater treatment service.

With the building of Brightwater, will I be forced to remove my septic system and hook up to the sewer system?

Property owners do not connect directly to King County's regional wastewater system. Local sewer agencies collect wastewater and contract with King County to convey and treat it at one of our regional treatment plants. Local sewer agencies decide where and when to build or extend service lines.

With a few exceptions, wastewater treatment service is provided only within designated urban growth areas. These areas are designated as part of the state's Growth Management Act and local comprehensive plans. Because of those plans, it is likely that most homes and businesses within the urban growth boundary will have sewer service within the next two decades. However, the exact timing is up to local jurisdictions and sewer agencies.

Local agencies may not require a home to hook up to the sewer system if the septic system is working properly. Depending on individual circumstances, hooking up to the sewer can be less expensive than building a new septic system or replacing a failed system. Contact your local government or sewer district to find out more about what is planned for your area.

You can get more information on King County's capacity charge and sewer rate at <http://www.kingcounty.gov/environment/wtd/About/Finances/Rate.aspx>

This information is available in alternative formats on request by calling 206-263-9453 or Relay Service 711