



NORTH MERCER ISLAND/ENATAI Sewer Upgrade Project

Mercer Island Farmers Market tabling event

Date: Sunday, August 11, 2019

Time: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Location: Mercerdale Park (77th Avenue S.E., Mercer Island, WA 98040)

Attendance

The project team engaged with more than 170 booth visitors.

Purpose for event participation

The Mercer Island Farmers Market provided a unique opportunity to reach many Mercer Island residents at a fun event. King County Wastewater Treatment Division community relations team hosted a booth at the event to share information about the North Mercer/Enatai sewer upgrade, answer questions about the project, and educate booth visitors about wastewater use best practices.

Booth Format

Project staff set up a tent and table displaying plush microbe toys, water samples showing the breakdown of flushable and non-flushable items, and boards showing the project alignment and county-wide wastewater pipeline layout. The project team handed out informational materials about sewer odor control, North Mercer Pump Station upgrades, Enatai Beach Park and I-90 Trail construction and restoration, GroCo/Loop compost information, and “What not to flush” stickers. Staff encouraged booth visitors to sign-up for the email listserv.



Booth format for the 2019 Mercer Island Farmers Market.

Advance notification

Notification of the event was emailed to the project listserv on August 2, 2019, and posted on the project website under the “Project Update” section.



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Summary of feedback

The community outreach staff shared an overview of the project purpose and sewer alignment, a project timeline, and a map showing the wastewater network within King County.

Overall, booth visitors responded positively to the project and understood the need for the sewer update. Many noted general awareness due to project outreach efforts and some people said that they had been receiving project mailings. Most questions were in regards to project construction, restoration plans, impacts to I-90 Trail and private property, and what would happen to the existing pipeline.

Questions received during the event included:

When will construction begin and when will it end?

Construction is expected to begin in late 2020 and take approximately four years to complete. One visitor requested a postcard be mailed out to Mercer Island residents to announce start of construction and detour route information.

How will this affect the I-90 bike trail?

There will be closures of the I-90 Trail in Mercer Island. Trail users will be detoured onto local streets. King County is working closely with the City of Mercer Island and Bellevue, Neighbors in Motion, Cascade Bicycle Club, and other I-90 Trail users to determine the best detour routes during construction.

Where does Mercer Island's wastewater flow get treated?

Mercer Island's wastewater gets treated at the King County South Treatment Plant located in Renton, Washington.

Where does treated sewage from King County South Treatment Plant go?

Typically, wastewater treatment begins with primary treatment where solids are separated from liquids. This happens in sedimentation tanks.

The next phase is called secondary treatment. It is also called biological treatment because oxygen is added to activate the living microorganisms (such as bacteria) that eat the dissolved organic material still in the wastewater. We use an 'activated sludge' treatment process where the organisms are maintained at a very high level to accelerate the consumption process.

After secondary treatment, some of the water treated at the South Treatment Plant is reclaimed. Reclaimed water is treated beyond secondary treatment to meet Washington State Departments of Health and Ecology Class A standards.



Community relations staff showing Mercer Island residents a map of the sewer.



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This advanced treatment involves an additional level of filtration to remove any remaining solids, and a disinfection process. The water can now be reused on golf courses, soccer fields and parks, instead of using valuable drinking water for irrigation. The rest of the water treated here is disinfected with a small amount of bleach (sodium hypochlorite) before being piped to Puget Sound. The water will naturally dechlorinate by the time it enters Puget Sound.

How is this project funded?

The project is funded by monthly sewer bill revenue and borrowed funds (bonds). Because King County operates a regional sewer system, ratepayers throughout the entire service area will help cover the cost of the project through their monthly sewer bill.

What is the construction project seen on the I-90 Trail?

A few visitors mentioned that they saw construction on the I-90 Trail and asked if the work was related to the North Mercer/Enatai sewer upgrade project. Community relations staff told them that construction of the North Mercer/Enatai sewer upgrade project is expected to begin in late 2020 and that they weren't sure what construction project was currently happening on the trail.

How will you restore the I-90 Trail?

On Mercer Island, the portions of the trail impacted by the project will be restored. The restored trail will be widened to 12 feet with 2 feet of gravel on either side where feasible, trail surfaces will be repaved, access points will be improved with ADA requirements and signage will be upgraded at trails intersections with roadways.

In Bellevue, restoration will be limited to trail sections that may be damaged by construction equipment access. In these sections the trails will be restored to the conditions they were in before construction.

Will part of the pipe be located underwater?

Yes, in the portion of the alignment where the pipe runs under I-90, the pipe will be installed at the bottom of Lake Washington across the East Channel.

Why is the new pipe not following the same alignment as the existing pipe?

The existing sewer pipe was installed nearly 50 years ago. The area looked a lot different from today, with lower population, less traffic and different values and rules related to the environment. The new pipe will stay out of the water as much as possible to limit the impact to sensitive environmental areas in and around Lake Washington.

What will happen to the existing pipeline? Will it be removed?

It would be more damaging to the ecosystem of Lake Washington to remove the existing pipeline. It will be decommissioned and remain in the lake for the time being.

Will this pipe overflow when it storms?

No. Areas of King County outside the City of Seattle have a separated sewer system. This means that stormwater and wastewater flow through separate pipes.



King County

Department of Natural Resources and Parks
Wastewater Treatment Division

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What is a lift station?

Lift stations are used for pumping wastewater from a lower to higher elevation when a gravity system is not possible.

When will my road be impacted?

Construction is anticipated to begin in late 2020. We will know more about the construction schedule once we hire a contractor in 2020. We will keep the community informed throughout all stages of the project by hosting meetings, attending events, sending updates and talking with you.

ALTERNATIVE FORMATS AVAILABLE

206-477-5371/ 711 (TTY Relay)