

Rainier Valley Wet Weather Storage Project

Background: King County is building the Rainier Valley Wet Weather Storage facility to keep more of Rainier Valley's sewage and stormwater out of the Duwamish River. The County is committed to being a good neighbor and has been working to ensure the facility fits in with its surroundings. From July 2014 through June 2015, over 200 neighbors, business owners, and interested community members answered a survey and shared their views on the design and how to make the facility a good neighbor. The survey was translated into four languages: English, Spanish, Vietnamese and Amharic, and was made available online and at public meetings, events, grocery stores, and community centers. Thank you to everyone who shared their ideas.

[Review the survey data](#)

Questions from the community

Below are answers to the questions people asked us during our outreach efforts. If you have any additional questions, please let us know:

- 24-hour project information line: 206-205-9178
- Submit comments online: www.kingcounty.gov/rainiertank
- Email: carynsengupta@kingcounty.gov
- [Sign up to receive project updates](#)

Will the facility make noise?

The facility is designed to keep noise to a minimum while in operation. The pumps that will return stored water to the regional sewer system are underground and the standby generator is in a room covered in sound muffling material. In addition, the facility will be used to store stormwater in times of heavy rain, which historically has happened about 10 times a year. Under normal conditions, the facility's pumps and generators will not be running.

Will any odor be detectable either when the facility is dormant or when it is in full operation?

King County takes odor issues very seriously. Odor complaints are tracked and documented at all County facilities. The S. Hanford St. pipe that the storage facility will support does not have a history of odor problems, making it less likely that the new facility will have odor issues. As a safeguard, the new facility will have underground odor control equipment to clean any air before it leaves the facility.

When is it [the project] finished?

The project will be finished in 2017.

What is our legal recourse if power, water, telecom and/or internet services are damaged or severed at any time during construction? We run a call center from our building, so any interruption of services would require compensation for lost sales. I would like to meet with the appropriate city attorneys to discuss.

Preventing unintended service loss and avoiding damage to utilities is a top priority for King County. One of the first steps King County takes in designing a new facility is to locate the nearby utilities and make a plan to prevent damaging them. Utility location began on this project in 2013 and will continue into construction. The project team uses this information during design and construction to ensure little or no disruption to utility services.

If you experience utility service disruptions or other construction impacts during construction, please contact the 24-hour project hotline to speak with someone about the issue: 206-205-9178.

Should such an interruption occur, who at King County do we contact to implement the fastest resolution possible?

The quickest way to have your concerns about the project addressed is to call the project hotline: 206-205-9185. This hotline is available to the community 24 hours a day until construction is complete.

What heavy equipment will be used during construction? Any cranes, steam shovels, compactors, etc.

We will use cranes, bulldozers, excavators, dump trucks and concrete trucks at different times during the project.

I would like to know more about what exactly will be happening with these storage tanks? Will regular soil samples be taken to ensure sewage is not leaking? What is the very long term vision of these tanks 25 - 50 years? Thanks!

The underground storage tank at S. Hanford St. is designed to last at least 50 years. The tank will be monitored to track the amount of water in it at all times and the County will perform regular inspections to make sure the tank and safety equipment are working properly.

Does it [the facility] have to have chain link fence all the way around it?

Near neighbors expressed strong support for keeping the site secure, in part to increase safety. There is currently a chain link fence around the site. We installed this to make sure the construction site remains secure. After the facility is built, we will replace the chain link fence with a black metal fence and we will plant trees and landscaping. This will make the fence less visible to people walking, biking and driving by the facility.

Does this building really need that much space around it?

The facility was designed to have as small of a footprint as possible to leave room for future use of the rest of the property. The space around the building does need to be big enough for utility vans, boom trucks and fuel trucks that are used to maintain the underground tank and odor control facility to enter and exit the site regularly. The paved area around the building will allow these vehicles to safely access the building and the underground equipment.

How will parking be handled?

Maintenance vehicles working on the site will be parked inside the fence. Once construction of the new sidewalks is complete, the parking spaces along 27th Ave. S. will be replaced with parallel parking spaces, as directed by the City of Seattle Department of Transportation.

Is that permeable pavement?

We could not use permeable pavement for this project. The underground odor control equipment needs to stay dry to work properly and permeable pavement would allow water to drain through to the ground underneath, putting the equipment at risk. In addition, the vehicles and equipment necessary to maintain the facility are too heavy for permeable pavement to support in the long-term. The facility's stormwater will be controlled by the site's plantings and natural storage systems installed outside the paved area.

How will it [the facility] look from above, from the Light Rail cars?

The view of the facility from the light rail will be of a roof and trees. We also plan to install public art at the site. This may further improve the facility's look from the light rail.

Why build it [the facility] at this location?

This location offers several advantages:

- It allows us to connect the tank to the existing County pipe without installing large amounts of new pipe. This cuts down on the amount of disruption to neighbors and businesses from construction, in part because the work can be done off of the busy arterials. Impacts to traffic and businesses was a big concern to the people we spoke with about the project.
- The closer a facility is to the pipe that it serves, the smaller we can build the storage tank and related mechanical building. As the Rainier Valley grows and develops, having a smaller facility footprint means more space for development and/or green space around the light rail station.
- The result is a safe, reliable facility that uses existing pipeline and new technology to keep Rainier Valley sewage and stormwater out of the Duwamish River.

What is your landscape maintenance plan?

- King County has full-time landscapers that will maintain the plants around the site every few weeks.

Can residential space be built above the facility?

Building a residential structure above the facility would be extremely challenging for two key reasons:

- Maintenance vehicles will need to access the site on a regular basis.
- The underground tank is not able to support a multi-story structure on top of it.

King County is aware that areas around transit centers are of value in growing metropolitan areas. Facilities with above ground components, such as this one, have been successfully integrated into a variety of settings, including parks, public spaces and high-density residential areas.

How can the facility support the area's redevelopment?

The facility's design respects the stated needs of near neighbors who currently live, work, and own businesses near the site, including improved safety, walkability and minimal traffic disruption. With new sidewalks, lighting and green space along S. Hanford St and 27th Ave. S, the site will be safer for pedestrians and bicycles traveling through the area. The property where the facility will be located is relatively small and removed from the nearby busy streets. Once construction is complete, it will be an ideal space for businesses and residents to develop in accordance with the neighborhood plan.

Why can't the whole facility be underground?

The facility's electrical equipment and standby generator are built above ground to protect worker safety and prevent flooding damage. Underground electrical and generator rooms are more likely to fill with water than are above ground facilities. Flooded electrical areas are extremely dangerous to workers and reduce the facility's overall reliability. In addition, above ground facilities are easier to maintain and repair, reducing the facility's overall cost to ratepayers. For these reasons, King County is using the same facility design on similar projects in West Seattle, Magnolia and North Beach.

Thank you to everyone who submitted these questions. If you have anything additional you'd like to ask, please contact us.