

*“Providing a Better  
Environment for South  
Central DuPage County”*

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[www.dgsd.org](http://www.dgsd.org)

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information direct to you.



The Downers Grove Sanitary District is a separate unit of local government that provides sanitary sewerage service for you. We operate independently from your city or village. Our Board of Trustees meets monthly at the District office. These evening meetings are open to the public and include an opportunity for public comment. The District continues to evaluate and improve the transparency of its operations through increased reporting to the state and county, and provides extensive information on the District website, [www.dgsd.org](http://www.dgsd.org).



## CUSTOMER SERVICE, OUR FIRST PRIORITY

For information on our services and programs, District residents should call the District office at 630-969-0664. Normal business hours are weekdays 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Technicians are available at all hours to respond to emergencies, such as backups or sanitary manhole overflows.

**Our programs are designed to help you with sanitary sewer backups or other problems with your sewer service.**

Reporting of all sanitary sewer backups is essential to providing the information necessary for monitoring of sewer system conditions, identification of problem areas and eligibility for assistance programs. District personnel will investigate backups to determine the cause and appropriate corrective action. **Residents should note that charges by plumbers or sewer contractors for work performed prior to contacting the District are generally not eligible under our assistance programs.** The programs available to assist residents with prevention and correction of problems that may cause sanitary sewer backups include:

### Building Sanitary Service Repair Assistance Program

If a repair to your building sanitary service is necessary, the work may be eligible under the Building Sanitary Service Repair Assistance Program. Under the Program, the District will repair, rehabilitate or replace a building sanitary service under certain conditions. The Program covers the entire building sanitary service from the building to the public sewer. To qualify for an initial investigation, property owners are usually only required to submit a Program Application and a sewer rodding or televising invoice that occurred within the previous 12 months. The District will determine if the cause of repeated maintenance activity is a problem eligible for participation and, if so, the appropriate corrective measures. This Program is not a substitute for and does not cover routine maintenance of the building sanitary service such as periodic rodding. This Program also does not transfer ownership of the building sanitary service to the District.

## Reimbursement Program for Installation of Overhead Sewer or Backflow Prevention Devices

The District requires new construction to include plumbing features needed to protect property from backups that can occur at any time. Owners of older buildings should consider improvements needed to provide this level of protection. This cost sharing program is available for residents who have experienced sewer backup problems and desire to convert to an overhead sewer system or install backflow prevention devices, offering to pay half the project cost up to a limit of \$3,000.

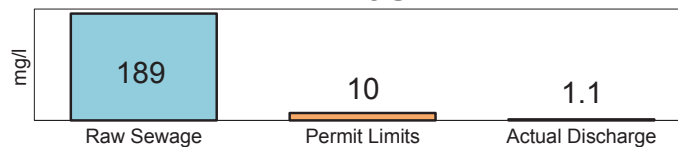
## Reimbursement Program for Sanitary Sewer Backups Caused by Blockages of the Public Sanitary Sewer

If District personnel determine that the sanitary sewer backup was caused by a blockage of the public sanitary sewer, the resident may be eligible for reimbursement of some costs associated with the backup. Please note that sanitary sewer backups occurring as a result of precipitation-related high flow conditions in the public sanitary sewer are not eligible for reimbursement under this Program. Blockages or problems of any nature in the building sanitary service are not eligible for reimbursement under this Program.

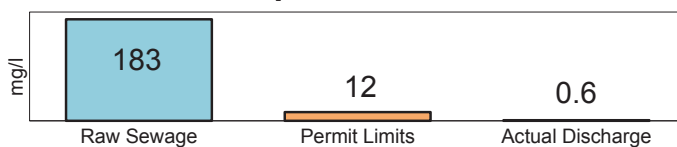
## WASTEWATER TREATMENT

The District's Wastewater Treatment Center operates under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit issued by the Environmental Protection Agency. The District facility discharges treated water to the East Branch of the DuPage River that is significantly better than permit requirements establishing stringent protective criteria. The charts below indicate the successful treatment provided by the Wastewater Treatment Center during 2016 for three major NPDES permit parameters. The parameters are indicated in milligrams per liter (mg/l):

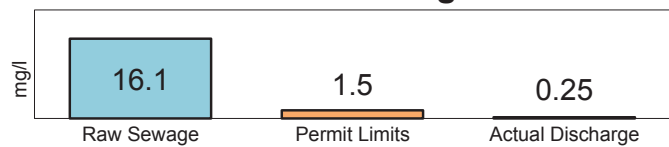
### Biochemical Oxygen Demand



### Suspended Solids



### Ammonia Nitrogen



The District continues to track regulatory efforts to establish nutrient standards for wastewater treatment plants. With continuing uncertainty about the environmental benefits of nutrient controls, the District has negotiated a schedule with Illinois EPA that provides time for the District to develop low-cost nutrient control technologies. The schedule also increases our participation with the DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup to better understand the impacts of nutrients in our watershed, and to help fund restoration projects in our receiving stream, with the goal of achieving the most cost-effective environmental improvements with limited available resources.

## CARING FOR OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

The District's most valuable asset is the sewer collection system, including more than 250 miles of gravity sewers. Beyond these sewers, there are nearly 300 miles of privately owned building service pipes connecting buildings to the public mains owned by the District.

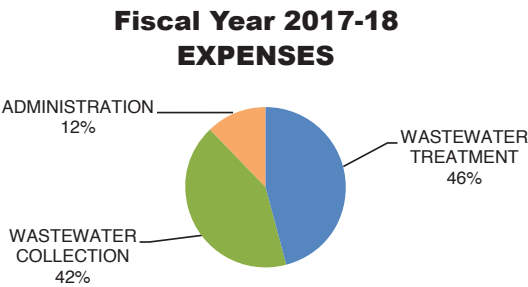
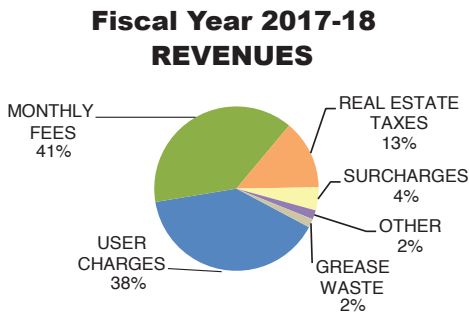
The system dates back as far as 1904 and requires a substantial commitment of resources to maintain in satisfactory working condition, meeting residents' expectations for service and regulatory requirements.

The most significant challenge is the appearance of ground and storm water, known as infiltration and inflow (I/I), in sewers intended to carry only sanitary waste from plumbing fixtures. This extraneous water can cause backups and overflows by exceeding the capacity to carry sanitary waste, and is costly to transport and treat.


The District has a comprehensive I/I removal and sewer system rehabilitation program. Priority is given to areas identified through flow monitoring, field observations and backup or surcharge reports. State-of-the-art techniques are employed, ranging from open-cut replacement to various trenchless technologies such as cured-in-place lining and grouting. Ordinances regulating private property I/I sources are enforced and rehabilitation is conducted on both public and private sources.

BUDGET AND FIVE-YEAR PLAN

The District has implemented a five-year plan, which projects revenues and expenses for all District activities, available for review on our website. For the current fiscal year, general corporate revenues are projected to be \$8.698 million and expenses are projected to be \$8.796 million. The expenses include \$4,049,194 for the sewer system, \$3,707,617 for wastewater treatment and \$1,039,389 for administration. The amount of expenses greater than revenues will result in a decrease in the District's operating fund balance. The charts below show the major types of revenues and expenses necessary for operations.



PAPERLESS BILLING AND PAYMENT OPTIONS

 In our efforts to control costs and improve the environment, we now offer paperless billing through the services offered by Invoice Cloud. Visit [www.invoicecloud.com/dgsd](http://www.invoicecloud.com/dgsd) to sign up, save paper and mailing costs, and access several convenient payment options. Paperless billing is free of charge and replaces your postcard bill with email reminders. Convenience fees apply to payments made through Invoice Cloud. Our postcard bill is still available for those not enrolled in paperless billing. The District's online billing portal offers a fee-based separate automatic payment option.

Other payment options include paying by mail, drop box, in person at the District's office or through EasyPay, a **free** automatic debit from your checking account. Enrollment in EasyPay is easy and may be done online at the District's website or by returning the enclosed yellow enrollment form to the District. If you already participate in this program, a new authorization form is not required.

Moving? Be sure to contact the office to arrange for final billing.

USER CHARGE SYSTEM

The District's user charge consists of two components: a volume charge based on water consumption and a monthly service fee. The volume charge remains at \$1.65 per 1,000 gallons of water consumption and the monthly fee was increased from \$13.50 to \$15.00 per account effective April 1, 2017. Surcharge and sampling and monitoring charges assessed to commercial and industrial users increased effective April 1, 2017. The user charge is evaluated annually and is set to collect the revenues needed to cover the cost of sewer system and treatment plant operation, maintenance and replacement, and District administration.

REAL ESTATE TAXES

This year the District levied \$1,184,000 for repairs to the sanitary sewer infrastructure, a 1.70% increase from last year. This levy results in a tax rate of \$0.0413 per \$100 of assessed value. A single-family residence with a market value of \$300,000 will pay \$41.30 in real estate taxes to the District in 2017.

STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT WASTEWATER

The District works with several local schools throughout the year including middle schools and high schools, as well as local colleges to educate students about wastewater treatment, the role of the sanitary district in the community and the value of water.

Most recently, the District teamed up with O'Neill Middle School in Downers Grove to teach students about biosolids. In April we also hosted tours of the wastewater treatment plant for students from Clarendon Hills Middle School. In May, students from Eisenhower Junior High School in Darien also visited the plant.

Interested in partnering with us? We would love to work with you and your education needs. Call us at 630-969-0664 or visit [www.dgsd.org/contact-us](http://www.dgsd.org/contact-us).





## NET-ZERO ENERGY FACILITY



In 2016, the District resolved to operate a net-zero energy wastewater treatment facility.

Historically, wastewater treatment plants have been heavy energy consumers because of the large motors needed to pump and treat the

collected sewage. The District has been able to acquire multiple grant-funded high-technology devices that allow more efficient treatment, and to extract enough energy from sewage solids to meet the remaining energy needs of the plant. High-speed turbo-blowers and associated aeration equipment use about half as much energy to treat the sewage than the original 1970's-era equipment. A combined heat and power facility converts extracted sewer gas into electricity and hot water used to digest sewage sludge. The wastewater treatment plant now recovers valuable energy resources and produces as much energy as it uses.

The District has set up a monitoring portal on its website to keep a monthly tally of energy production and use. The District has also received recognition as a 'Utility of the Future Today' from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies, the Water Environment Federation, the Water Environment Research Foundation and the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

## USED COOKING OIL RECYCLING PROGRAM

The District collects and recycles used cooking oil in partnership with SCARCE, a local environmental non-profit organization. Our customers and residents in the surrounding area are encouraged to recycle their used cooking oil instead of pouring it down the drain or disposing of it in the garbage.

Used cooking oil can be dropped off at the Administration Center at 2710 Curtiss Street in Downers Grove during business hours, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information, visit [www.dgsd.org/maintain-sewer-line/#cook](http://www.dgsd.org/maintain-sewer-line/#cook).

## WATERSHED CONSORTIUM

The District is a founding member and active participant in the DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup. The Workgroup is a consortium of local governments dedicated to managing the valuable stream resources of the East and West Branches of the DuPage River and Salt Creek. The Workgroup conducts state-of-the-art monitoring of stream biology, chemistry and habitat, using the data to promote projects and activities to cost-effectively restore these urbanized streams for their intended uses. For more information, visit [www.drscw.org](http://www.drscw.org).

## REDUCE INTERNAL PLUMBING PROBLEMS



To reduce the likelihood of plumbing problems in your home, in addition to service line backups and blockages in the public sewer, residents are reminded that most everyday use items should not be disposed of into the sanitary sewer system. These items include: disposable wipes (sometimes labeled 'flushable' which are not flushable in our system), personal hygiene products, disposable toilet bowl cleaner brushes and pads, disposable diapers, baby wipes, dental floss, razor blades and cat litter. Food grease, cooking oil and large quantities of food should also not be disposed through the garbage disposal or toilet. These items do not dissolve in water and can easily accumulate to cause blockages, equipment damage and sewer backups.

In addition, pharmaceuticals and all household hazardous wastes should be recycled at appropriate facilities and not be disposed of in the sanitary sewer system. Bulk solvent, paint, heavy duty cleaners or similar items cause hazards in the sewer system which can be dangerous for workers or the public, interfere with the operation of the treatment plant and pollute the river by passing through the plant because it is not treatable in our facilities.

For more tips on how to maintain your sewer line, visit [www.dgsd.org/maintain-sewer-line](http://www.dgsd.org/maintain-sewer-line). For more information on recycling resources in the community, visit [www.dgsd.org/external-resources](http://www.dgsd.org/external-resources).

## BIOSOLIDS PROGRAM

The District generates Class A biosolids as a byproduct of the treatment process. This product is a high quality fertilizer available to the public free of charge. Biosolids are available for pickup at our pickup station or delivery in larger quantities. A brochure is enclosed with more information.

We hope that you will attend the Wastewater Treatment Center Open House on Saturday, October 7, 2017, from 9 a.m. to noon. If you have any questions regarding any of the information contained in this newsletter, please feel free to contact the District office, view our website at [www.dgsd.org](http://www.dgsd.org) or scan the QR code below.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**DOWNERS GROVE SANITARY DISTRICT**

