

Dear Customer:

This information is being provided to you because the residence at this address is equipped with a residential grinder pump system that takes liquid waste from your home and pumps it to the city's sewage conveyance system located in the public right of way. The residential grinder pump system at this residence includes a pump, pump basin, piping, and electrical controls.

While the grinder pump system is owned by the City of Bainbridge Island, you, as the homeowner or tenant, are responsible for its proper use. It is essential that certain precautions be observed at all times to insure safe and reliable operation of the system. Improper care or misuse may cause a system failure that could result in a sewage back up into your residence as well as costly repairs being billed directly to you. This information is provided 1) to all new residents or tenants, 2) each year as annual customer re-education, and 3) during each maintenance site visit.

Maintenance of the system is performed by Correct Equipment Inc. under a service contract to the City of Bainbridge Island. Correct Equipment Inc. is responsible for preventive maintenance, planned corrective maintenance, and 24 hr/day emergency maintenance. Under normal circumstances the fees for these services are included in the monthly sewer bill. However, all costs incurred by the City or Correct Equipment Inc. as a result of customer misuse of the system will be billed to the customer. Additional fees may also be billed to the customer if maintenance access to the system is denied or restricted.

The Correct Equipment Inc. service representative for your residential grinder pump system is Bob Thurston. If you have any questions about your system or need to report an emergency, he can be reached at 360-301-3535 or 425-869-1233. Your call will be returned within one hour and if necessary to resolve an emergency, a site visit will be made within four hours. If you need additional assistance you may contact Chuck Krumheuer, City of Bainbridge Island Utilities Supervisor at 206-842-1212. For additional information please review the following Frequently Asked Questions.

***Why should I be familiar with the grinder pump system?***

Some problems can be inadvertently caused by homeowners or tenants because of their lack of understanding of their residential grinder pump system. Circuit breakers can be left off, too much flow can be added to the system, maintenance access can be obstructed, or prohibited substances can be flushed into the system. Simply taking the time to become familiar with the system can help to avoid many costly mistakes. Remember your grinder pump serves only your residence. What you do directly affects its operation. Any costs incurred as a result of customer misuse, either intentional or unintentional, will be charged to the customer.

***What are my responsibilities?***

- As the homeowner or tenant you are responsible for the gravity sewer from the building to the residential grinder pump basin inlet and for the power distribution system, including the emergency transfer switch (if installed) from the building to the grinder pump alarm panel.
- Correct Equipment Inc. is responsible from the pump basin inlet, through the pump, to the point of discharge into the city sewer main, and for the electrical equipment from the pump panel to the pump motor.
- The City is responsible from the point of connection to the sewer main at the right of way to the treatment plant.

***What services are covered by my monthly grinder pump sewer charges?***

Your monthly grinder pump sewer charges cover preventative maintenance, repair of normal wear and tear, and 24/7 emergency stand by response capabilities. Customer misuse of equipment, damage caused by operator error, or providing power during an electrical power outage is not covered by monthly grinder pump sewer charges.

***What constitutes misuse of the grinder pump system?***

- Flushing prohibited substances into the grinder pump system.
- Constructing unauthorized alterations around the pump basin or alarm panel.

***What are prohibited substances?***

Prohibited Substances that must not be flushed into the grinder pump system include: grease, glass, metal, shells, rocks, diapers, rags, cloth, plastic, gasoline, motor oil, flammable material, or explosives. The grinder pump must grind all solids into small pieces before they can be pumped into the city sewer. These prohibited substances can cause premature wear on the pump, plug the pipe lines, or cause the system to malfunction. These substances can also cause costly problems to the downstream infrastructure and treatment works. Customers will be charged for any damage caused by flushing prohibited substances into the residential grinder pump system.

***Why must the residential grinder pump basin be above ground level?***

First, maintenance personnel must have access to the pump basin at all times. Second, the system is designed to handle household waste only. Groundwater must not be allowed to enter the pump basin.

***What if my home is going to be left unoccupied for longer than a couple of weeks?***

During long periods of inactivity, solids can harden and plug both the grinder pump and grinder pump force main. To prevent this from happening, the system must be purged with clean water prior to being left inactive. Using the following procedure should help avoid any problems:

- Run clean water into the unit until the pump activates.
- Shut off the water and allow the grinder pump to run until the system shuts off automatically.
- Caution: **Do not disconnect power to the unit.**

***What should I do before I dig?***

Your residential grinder pump system includes buried piping and electrical systems located on your property. Before digging near any area that may have these buried utility systems, refer to the Easement Area Sketch included in your Easement Agreement for general system layout. If you determine that buried utility systems may be in the area where you will be digging, you should call 206-842-1212 and a qualified technician will be scheduled to make a site visit to assist in locating the underground utilities on your property. For non-emergency work allow 3 - 5 business days for locating service.

***What should I do in an emergency?***

Cut your water use back to a minimum and then call your Correct Equipment Inc. Service Representative, Bob Thurston, at 360-301-3535 or 425-869-1233 He will return your call within one hour. Many times, he will be able to help you troubleshoot and correct the problem without requiring a site visit. This is where your understanding and familiarity with the system will come in handy. If necessary, he will make a site visit to correct an emergency within four hours.

***What should I do in an electrical power outage?***

Your residential grinder pump system will not work without power. Neither Correct Equipment Inc. nor the City are responsible for providing power to your system during a power outage. Most power interruptions are of a short duration and are of little concern. Simply limiting your water use during this time will avoid any problems. Typically, your system will have reserve capacity for 5 - 10 toilet flushes. For longer duration power interruptions, the grinder pump system can be supplied power through a manual electrical transfer switch, if one is installed. This is a procedure that requires close attention to detail and should be practiced before an emergency occurs. Any damage caused to the residential grinder pump system by improper operation will be charged directly to the customer.

## ***Residential Grinder Pump System Operating Tips***

Your familiarity with the precautions outlined below is important to the reliable operation of your residential grinder pump system.

- ✓ Become familiar with the general function, layout, and limitations of the system
- ✓ Know the location of the pump basin and control panel outside your home and the location of the grinder pump system circuit breaker within your home
- ✓ Do not flush glass, metal, shells, rocks, diapers, rags, cloth, sanitary napkins, tampons, plastic, gasoline, motor oil, flammable material, or explosives into the system
- ✓ Keep the pump basin and control panel easily accessible at all times
- ✓ Keep the top of the pump basin 2-3" above the ground level
- ✓ Keep surface water directed away from the pump basin
- ✓ Do not drain hot tubs or add excessive flow to the system
- ✓ Do not dig without first identifying the location of buried underground electrical cables and piping
- ✓ Limit water use during a power outage - without power the pump basin can only hold 5 to 10 toilet flushes before it overflows
- ✓ If you have an emergency generator you plan to use for the grinder pump system, be familiar with your generator and the grinder pump system transfer switch before a power outage occurs
- ✓ In case of pump failure or system alarm, minimize water usage and contact the Correct Equipment Inc. Service Representative
- ✓ If your residence is left unoccupied for more than a couple of weeks, purge the system by running clean water into the unit until the pump activates, shut off the water and then allow the pump to run until it shuts off automatically

Thank you for your attention to these details. With proper care and attention your residential grinder pump system should provide many years of trouble free service.



**City of Bainbridge Island Public Works**

***“Solving tomorrow’s problems today”***

**The Correct Equipment Inc. Service Representative  
for your grinder pump system is:**

**Bob Thurston**

**TO REPORT AN EMERGENCY CALL  
360-301-3535 or 425-869-1233**

**City of Bainbridge Island**



**Residential Grinder Pump  
System**

**Customer Information**