

The Russ MacInnes Story



Russ MacInnes

A meter reader cannot find the water meter; what should he do? If you work for Northshore Utility District, you call Senior Utility Worker, Russ MacInnes. After reading meters for most of the 21 years with the District, Russ has a mental picture of the exact location for every District water meter.

About two years ago, the District installed 21,000 automatic meter reading devices. Meter readings are now transmitted electronically. There is no longer a need to visit each meter on foot. It used to take 70 to 80 hours to read every water meter for each billing cycle; that same task is now done in 6 to 8 hours. Actually, the District does not even have the position of Meter Reader anymore. A Utility Worker drives the neighborhoods with an on-board computer that picks up an electronic transmission from each water meter.

A few months ago, Russ' supervisor noticed he had difficulty opening doors and encouraged him to seek medical attention. After a series of tests and many medical consultations, Russ was diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) or Lou Gehrig's disease. ALS often begins with muscle weakness in an arm or leg, or with slurring of speech. Eventually, ALS affects the ability to control the muscles needed to move, speak, eat and breathe.

Obviously, such an affliction is devastating to the MacInnes family. At age 47, and a daughter just starting college, Russ' disability became a real hardship for the family. Even after exhausting his accrued sick leave time, Russ remained short of his disability retirement benefit date. Many District employees donated their accrued paid leave time to provide Russ with an income until his disability benefits kick in.

On June 27, 2013, District employees organized a "Pie the Bosses" event to raise additional funds for Russ.

All District employees could make a donation to throw a pie at any willing participant from the elected Commissioners on down. The first pie-in-the-face volunteer was Commissioner Bruce Gardiner, followed by the supervisors and other employees. The event raised around \$1,400 and many laughs.

The MacInnes family is very appreciative of the help. If you are interested in making a donation to the family, please make a check payable to Russ MacInnes. As a municipal entity, the District cannot accept or process your check. All funds received for Russ will be sent to him directly. Please also understand that this may NOT be a tax-deductible donation. 💧



Commissioner Bruce Gardiner – recipient of a direct hit from a donating employee

Call Us First!

It is 8 p.m. on a rainy Saturday night, your house is full of overnight guests, and your sewer has just backed up – yikes! What do you do?

Most people run for the yellow pages (or their smart phone), call the first advertisement they see and end up paying a plumber a lot more on repairs than might actually be needed. How can you be sure you are getting an honest, and professional, opinion? Give us a call! There is never a charge for our advice.

The District has someone on call to help, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Our staff will respond promptly and help assess the situation. If the problem is occurring on our side of the collection system – within the public right-of-way or within our easement – the responsibility lies with us. If the problem is determined to be located on private property, within your private side sewer, the responsibility lies with you. If the repair is your responsibility, we can provide you with a list of licensed and insured contractors who are approved to work in our District and are familiar with our requirements.



Emergency or not, if you need to repair your side sewer, please call us first. We have extensive records and can usually provide you with information regarding your private side sewer, such as location, type of material, age and even a copy of your side sewer drawing. In addition, if you need to repair your private sewer system, the District recommends that you obtain bids from at least 3 different contractors for the work. The contractor you select for the repairs will need to contact our office to obtain a side sewer permit and schedule an inspection for the repair. It is unlawful to repair or modify a side sewer without obtaining a permit and having the repair inspected by the District. There is no charge for a minor repair permit and inspection. If you experience a sewer back-up, please call us first. Although we cannot repair your private side sewer, we can help by providing you with useful information. **CONTACT INFORMATION:** General/Emergency: (425) 398-4400, Operations Dept.: (425) 398-4403 and the Engineering Counter (Records): (425) 398-4401.

Disposable Wipes, Not “Flushable”

Just because the package says a wipe is flushable, that does not mean it will break down in the sewer system! Our sewer team has found large bundles of these wipes down in the sewer system with *no* signs of the wipes breaking down. Extremely expensive sewer backups into your home could be caused by such bundles of items that do not break down quickly after being flushed. A large part of the problem is the terminology manufacturers use on the packages that these products come in, for example, “disposable”, “biodegradable”, “eco-friendly” and the worst of all “flushable”. The only things that should be flushed down your toilet should be human waste and toilet paper!

A few other items that should never be flushed down the toilet include

- 🌀 Personal Hygiene Products
- 🌀 Cleaning Products
- 🌀 Chemicals
- 🌀 Medicines
- 🌀 Kitty Litter
- 🌀 Dental Floss, Cotton Balls & Other Bathroom Trash
- 🌀 Diapers
- 🌀 Fats, Oils & Grease

If you have any questions on what should not be flushed down the toilet, please give us a call! 💧

Northshore
Utility District
Board of
Commissioners:

Don Ellis
President

Margaret Wiggins
Board Secretary

Bruce Gardiner
Commissioner

Trudy Rolla
Commissioner

Robert Peterson
Commissioner

Board of
Commissioner
Meetings
are held at the
District Office
on the
first and third
Monday of each
month at 5:30 p.m.
except Holidays.



District Office
P.O. Box 82489
6830 NE 185th St.
Kenmore, WA 98028

P. 425.398.4400
F. 425.398.4430

www.nud.net