

# the Flow

A Publication of Northshore Utility District

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## Inflow and Infiltration

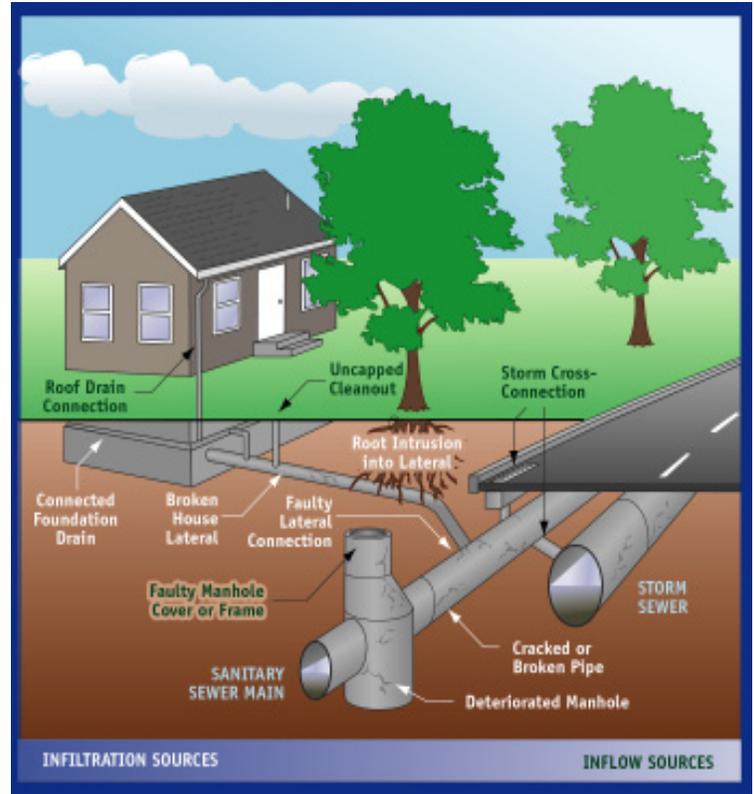
By Commissioner Margaret Wiggins



Many of our customers have already heard about the new Snohomish County sewage treatment plant called Brightwater. It is scheduled to begin construction next year and start service in 2010. It is a major undertaking and it's timing can save considerably in the construction costs. In the mean time, local agencies are preparing for yet another project to reduce

the pressure on King County's existing system capacity. The project is the Inflow and Infiltration (or I & I) Reduction Program.

The King County sewage treatment system was built to treat wastewater. Although some older parts of the system include surface water collection in its discharge into the treatment system, the remainder of the collection system in King County is a closed system designed to collect only wastewater. But this doesn't keep surface water and ground water from getting into the closed portions of the system through illegal connections and defects in the collection network. Besides being a waste of resources to treat storm and groundwater, the added volume during deluges can overwhelm the capacity of the treatment system and cause raw sewage to overflow.



Illustrated diagram courtesy of King County Wastewater Treatment

Members of several cities and agencies are meeting on a regular basis to identify the pipes most likely to have an I & I problem, and the best way to correct them. At some point, it may be less expensive to build more treatment capacity than

See ". . . I & I" on back page

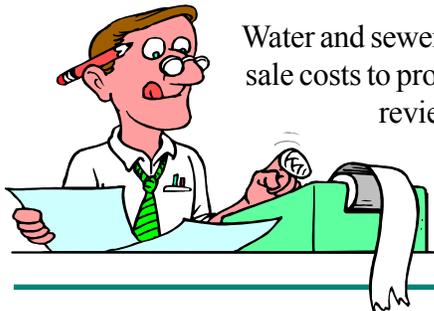
## Thawing Frozen Pipes & Meters

It appears that we are in for a very cold winter, something that we are not that used to here in the Pacific Northwest.

Frozen pipes may be thawed by wrapping them with rags and repeatedly pouring hot water over the rags. Once the pipes are thawed, remove the rags and rewrap pipes with dry insulation material to prevent more freezing. If this method is not successful, call a plumber. **NEVER USE AN OPEN FLAME OR ELECTRICAL DEVICE TO THAW FROZEN PIPES.** Using these methods can cause fire or electric shock. ■



# Your 2005 Rates



Water and sewer service rates are currently being reviewed because the wholesale costs to provide water and sewer services have gone up. The District reviews these rates annually to ensure that they are adequate. Our service rates are very competitive when compared to neighboring utilities. Please watch for any rate adjustments in the near future on our website at [www.nud.net](http://www.nud.net). ■

## ... I & I continued

to stop all possible sources of I & I. A committee of local sewer utilities is carefully studying the problem along with King County and its consultants.

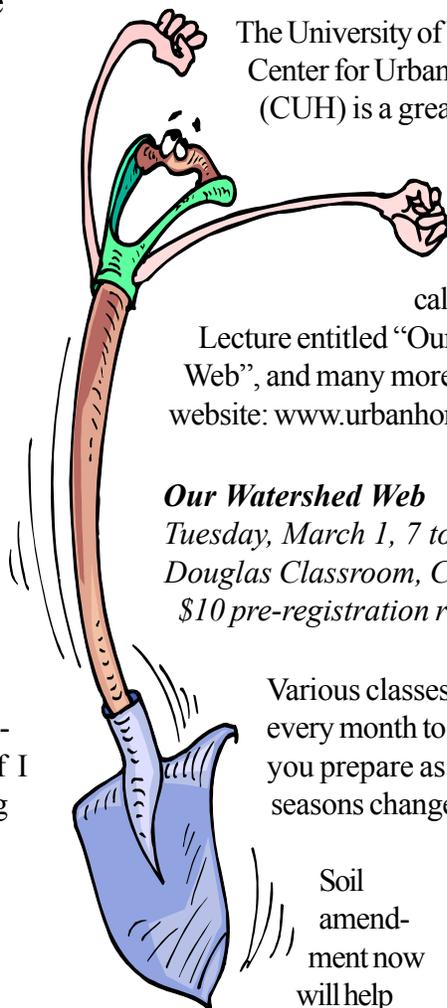
Northshore Utility District has taken a pro-active approach to the problem and has already started to identify problems in our system. Neighborhoods identified as having high I & I are being smoke-tested to identify illegal connections like those from downspouts and driveway storm drains. What we have discovered during our tests is many older homes have had illegal connections since construction. The current homeowners had no way of knowing about these illegal connections until smoke testing the wastewater distribution lines exposed illegal connections. As the program cranks up, more and more of these illegal connections will be found. These homes will be required to redirect their storm runoff to an appropriate surface water drain.

The pipes connecting the homes and facilities to the District's collection sewer mains are called side sewers. Because they are deep underground, homeowners are usually not aware of cracks or loose joints in these side sewers. King County's consultants have identified defective side sewers as a major source of I & I. Even when identified, the cost of repairing these defective side sewers will run in the thousands of dollars.

Protecting the environment from this possible source of pollution is a responsibility that this District takes very seriously. We will continue to work cooperatively with King County to identify and correct any I & I problems. ■

## Spring is Just Around the Corner!

It's freezing outside and your garden is quietly lying dormant. You may not be thinking about Spring, but it will be here before you know it! Winter is a great time to start thinking about your garden and to get prepared, for when Spring is here, you won't have the time.



The University of Washington's Center for Urban Horticulture (CUH) is a great resource of classes and lectures. Check out their Practical Gardening

Lecture entitled "Our Watershed Web", and many more at their website: [www.urbanhort.org](http://www.urbanhort.org).

### **Our Watershed Web**

Tuesday, March 1, 7 to 8:30 pm  
Douglas Classroom, CUH  
\$10 pre-registration required

Various classes are offered every month to help you prepare as the seasons change.

Soil amendment now will help your plants

survive the hot summer with less watering. ■



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Board of Commissioner Meetings are held first and third Mondays 6 p.m. at the District Office



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