

Grinder Pump Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Who owns/maintains the grinder pump stations?

A: The grinder pump will be owned by the drainage district, as is the pressure pipe on private property. The drainage district maintains the grinder pumps.

Q: What do I need to know about my grinder pump?

A: All of the wastewater in your home from toilets, showers, dishwashers, sinks, etc. empties into the grinder pump station. When the water in the tank reaches a certain level, the pump will turn on automatically and pump out the wastewater to the sewer system. Most of the time, you won't even notice the pump running; it produces about the same level of noise as a washing machine and usually runs for only a few minutes.

Take care not to dump oil, grease, paint, strong chemicals, sand, kitty litter, etc. down your drain. Feminine products and personal/cleaning wipes should be disposed of in a garbage can. These items should not be introduced into any sewer or septic system; they can damage or cause premature problems (parts wearing out) with your pump, or build up in the tank and prevent your pump from working properly.

Q: What about backups? How can we be responsible for a homeowner who may continue to use water when a pump is down, creating a backup?

A: It is in the homeowner's own best interest to alert the Water Resources Commissioner's Office as soon as possible when the high level alarm is audible. Education of the homeowner is key. In the event of an alarm condition, the homeowner should minimize use of water within the home until repairs are completed.

Q: Is this a replacement for septic or onsite treatment?

A: No, this is a collection and transportation device; it will not take the place of treatment. The sewage needs to be pumped to a sewer line or some form of treatment.

Q: What is the duration of operation per day?

A: Typical operation is between 10 and 20 minutes per day for typical residential houses.

Q: What is the flow rate of the pump?

A: The pumps operate between 8 and 15 gallons per minute depending on the pumping head.

Q: What is the size of the lines from the grinder pumps to the street network?

A: The low pressure lateral service line is typically 1 ¼ inches in diameter.

Q: What is the average yearly electrical cost to operate a unit servicing the typical single typical home?

A: A typical single family home will use 250 gallons of water per day. The E/One pump for this home will consume about 200 KWh of electricity per year. For example, if you pay 11 cents per kilowatt hour: \$.011 KWh x 200 KWh = \$22.00 per year cost of electricity to operate the E/One pump.

Q: How noisy is the pump?

A: With an outdoor unit buried in the ground, you will not hear it at all if you're 10 or 15 feet away. If you're standing on top of it, it sounds like your washing machine when it's running — just a hum.

Q: What if the power goes out?

A: Limit your water usage as much as possible. The tank has storage capacity and should be adequate for the short term because you are not using the dishwasher, washing machine, etc. When the power comes on again, the alarm may go off for a short time – this is normal because the water could be above the pump's alarm level and the pump needs a few minutes to pump down the tank to a normal level. If the alarm does not turn off, contact Oakland County Safety Dispatch at 248-624-6366.

Q: What if the alarm sounds?

A: If the alarm sounds on your grinder pump, push the silence button located on the bottom of the alarm panel. If the red light does not turn off automatically after 10 minutes, contact Oakland County Safety Dispatch at 248-624-6366. This number should also be located on your grinder alarm panel. The dispatch center is open 24/7 to take your call. As stated earlier-in the event of an alarm condition, the homeowner should minimize use of water within the home until repairs are completed.