

frequently

asked questions

Q: "Why is my sewer bill much higher than my water bill?"

A: Drinking water is pumped out of the ground from wells and receives much less treatment than is required by environmental regulatory agencies for treatment and discharge of sewerage into surface waters of the State.

Q: "Why are so many expensive upgrades and equipment replacement projects taking place in the system?"

A: Once it leaves a home, sewerage must be transported through miles of piping, pumping stations and structures before it reaches the treatment plant. These facilities, including the plant, are all powered by large pumps, motors, blowers and other mechanical devices which, like an automobile, gradually wear out over time and must be replaced.

Q: "Why is it illegal for me to have basement floor drains, sump pumps and roof drains hooked into my sewer service line?"

A: Modern sewage transport and treatment systems are designed to handle only domestic sewerage flows and components. The high water flows associated with heavy rains overload these systems and cause expensive repairs. Regulatory agencies such as EPA and DEP have also placed restrictions and mandates on the City citing the removal and treatment of these excess flows which can cause bypasses of the treatment plant causing pollution in the Kennebec River. An example of this is the new \$4,200,000 Combined Sewer Overflow/Retention and Treatment Basin (CSO/RTB) under construction at the Gardiner Waterfront scheduled to begin operation in September of 2016.

Q: "What can I do to help the Gardiner Wastewater Treatment and Public Works Departments transport and treat MY wastewater contributions?"

A: Do not flush any materials or products down your toilet not designed to enter sewers, such as flushable wipes that do not break down and clog up pipes and pumps causing expensive repairs, Also no plastic items, feminine hygiene products, food, grease, kitty litter and pet waste. Remember, this is YOUR treatment system and YOUR sewer bill reflects YOUR financial contribution to transport and treat everyone's waste.