

City mulls options for aging lakefront sewer line

Residents can offer input for management plan



A Utilities worker checks the lake line.

Nearly 15 miles of sewer line run along the eastern shore of Lake Washington, serving Utilities customers in Bellevue, Medina, Beaux Arts, unincorporated King County and the Points communities. The pipes that constitute the line were built in the 1950s

and '60s, and Bellevue Utilities is considering how best to manage them for continued reliable wastewater services and protection of the lake's ecosystem. The department is developing a long-term management plan for rehabilitation and/or replacement of the pipes, which run in or near the lake. Details about the lake line and a link to a survey can be found at BellevueWA.gov/lake-washington-line. Feedback on potential solutions is welcome.

To understand the potential impacts of this plan's implementation on the environment, the city is also developing an environmental impact statement. In the first, "scoping" phase of the EIS, the city will determine what should be studied in the EIS, and resident input will be key. Residents can comment from July 11 to Aug. 5 via an online open house at EngagingBellevue.com/lake-washington-line.

In addition to the online open house, a virtual EIS scoping meeting will be on Tuesday, July 26, 6-7 p.m., with registration available on the EngagingBellevue page. The content at the virtual EIS scoping meeting will be the same as the online open house, but the community will have an opportunity to provide comments directly to the planning and EIS team.

After the EIS scoping comment period concludes, the EIS team will review responses. There will be another opportunity to provide comment on the draft EIS, likely in early 2023.

For additional information about the project, please contact project manager Angela Chung (lkwalakeline@bellevuewa.gov or 425-452-4320).

Five actions you can take to prevent water pollution

Only rain should go down a storm drain. Untreated stormwater flows directly into local streams and lakes, harming salmon.

1. **Sweep; skip pressure washing.** If you must pressure wash, sweep first and divert water into the soil.
2. **Wash your car at a commercial car wash.** Otherwise, dirty water goes to the sewer for treatment.
3. **Fix vehicle leaks.** Visit FixCarLeaks.org for info on free leak inspections and a repair coupon for participating Bellevue repair shops.
4. **Scoop the poop, bag it and place in trash.** Pet waste contains harmful microorganisms.
5. **Practice Natural Yard Care.** Choose the right plants, build healthy soil and water wisely. Avoid pesticides and fertilizers.

Native cutthroat trout, like these found in Richard's Creek, live in most of Bellevue streams year-round. Photo by Bellevue Stream Team



Utilities discounts and rebates

The City of Bellevue offers programs to assist low-income residents with utility costs for water, wastewater and drainage.

Rate Relief

Rate relief offers 70% off basic utility costs for low-income seniors (62 and older) and low-income persons with permanent disabilities who meet specific residency and income guidelines. You may qualify for rate relief if your 2021 household income was \$40,500 or less for one person or \$46,300 or less for two people. The scale increases as the size of the household increases.

The form of relief depends on how utility costs are paid:

- **Utility Rate Discount:** If you pay a Bellevue utility bill, you may qualify for a rate reduction on your 2022 utility bills. This program is open through Oct. 28.
- **Utility Rate Rebate:** If your utility costs have been paid through rent or other third party, you may qualify for a rebate check on 2021 utility costs you paid. This program is open April 1 to Oct. 28.

Emergency Assistance Program

If you pay a Bellevue utility bill directly, and are not eligible for a rate discount, you may qualify for

a 100% discount for up to four months of basic utility service, if you are experiencing a one-time financial shock that interferes with your household's ability to cover basic needs.

There are no age or disability requirements for the Emergency Assistance Program. This assistance is available once every three years.

Additional Requirements

Additional requirements apply for rate relief discounts and rebates as well as the Emergency Assistance Program. Guidelines and applications are available at BellevueWA.gov/utility-relief, or call 425-452-5285 for more information.

The Value of Recycling



Does recycling work? Are the materials you recycle actually recycled? How clean, empty, and dry must materials be to retain recycling value?

Bottom line: 2022 recycling markets are thriving, accepted materials placed in your recycling containers are recycled, and residents and businesses benefit both the environment and economy by recycling plastic, paper, cardboard, glass, and metal.

In 2018, officials in China banned several imported recyclable materials, including mixed paper and

plastics. Since then, recycling markets are thriving again. In the Pacific Northwest some of the materials previously shipped overseas are being recycled locally.

Follow these tips:

- **When in doubt, find out!** Check Bellevue's recycling guidelines to learn what belongs in your recycling container. Find helpful tips at BellevueWA.gov/recycle-at-home
- **Recycling must be empty, clean and dry.** It's okay if a few drops of water remain, but it's important to empty all liquids to prevent mold. Close your recycling container lid to prevent rain or snow from soaking materials.

Bellevue Utilities News is available online and in other languages at BellevueWA.gov/utilities

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General information: 425-452-6932
utilities@bellevuewa.gov
utilities.BellevueWA.gov

Customer Service/Billing: 425-452-6973

Drinking Water Quality: 425-452-6192

24 Hour Emergencies: 425-452-7840
(flooding, water main breaks, no water, sewer overflows, pollutant spills)

Republic Services (solid waste service):
425-452-4762