



**King County**

Department of Natural Resources and Parks  
**Wastewater Treatment Division**

*Creating Resources from Wastewater*

# WEST POINT NEWS

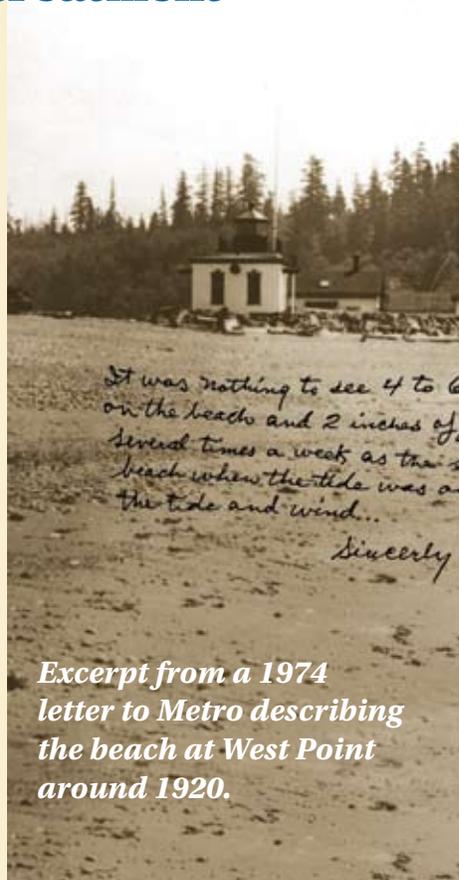
**Fall 2008**

## **50 Years Ago - Citizens Vote for Clean Water** **The birth of regional sewage treatment**

The story of the wastewater treatment utility now serving the central Puget Sound region began in 1956 when a group of local residents became concerned about the effect rapid urban growth was having on Lake Washington. Citizens proposed a state law that would allow local governments to form metropolitan municipal corporations to solve problems, like water pollution, which cross over the boundaries of cities, counties and special districts. In 1957, the state legislature passed this measure. A ballot measure to establish the Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle was passed by voters in 1958, giving the agency responsibility for water pollution control, public transportation and comprehensive planning within its boundaries.

The West Point treatment plant was completed in 1966, and by the 1980s, Lake Washington had become one of the world's cleanest urban lakes. Voters approved Metro's merger with King County in 1992, and King County Wastewater Treatment Division was born in 1994.

For more information on the history of this agency, visit [www.kingcounty.gov](http://www.kingcounty.gov) and search "birth of metro."



*It was nothing to see 4 to 6 inches of raw sewage on the beach and 2 inches of fuel oil with it several times a week as the sewerage ran on the beach when the tide was out and it went with the tide and wind...*

*Sincerely Roswell C. Heins*

*Excerpt from a 1974 letter to Metro describing the beach at West Point around 1920.*



**CELEBRATE THE CLEAN WATER VOTE!**  
**Visit the West Point Treatment Plant**  
*See back for details*

# Reducing Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) at south Magnolia

As part of its mission to protect public health and the environment, King County is responsible for conveying and treating wastewater collected by the City of Seattle. Many of the county's sewers and pump stations are more than 40 years old and need to be upgraded to ensure reliable operation. Some facilities must also be expanded to provide additional capacity or modified to meet more stringent regulations.

During heavy rains when flows exceed the capacity of the sewer system, the system can overflow into

Puget Sound from the county's CSO outfall pipe at south Magnolia. When this happens, about 90 percent of the combined volume of the overflow is storm water and the rest is diluted sewage. These events are called combined sewer overflows, or CSOs. From 2000-2007, the south Magnolia CSO discharged on average 18 times each year, a total of 30 million gallons per year.

CSOs help to avoid sewer backups into homes and businesses and onto streets, but CSOs can be a public health and environmental concern. King County's goal is to reduce the number of CSOs each year, with a long-term goal of less than one untreated discharge per location per year to meet state regulations.

To protect Puget Sound, the county is in the process of identifying CSO control options for **North Beach, West Seattle, and south Magnolia**. These locations are top priority, because they are where people are most likely to come in contact with water during recreational activities such as swimming. Although the sewage in CSOs is greatly diluted, CSOs may be harmful to public health and aquatic life because of bacteria and viruses found in sewage.

The map above shows the area draining to south Magnolia and nearby facilities.

At south Magnolia, CSO control options may include:

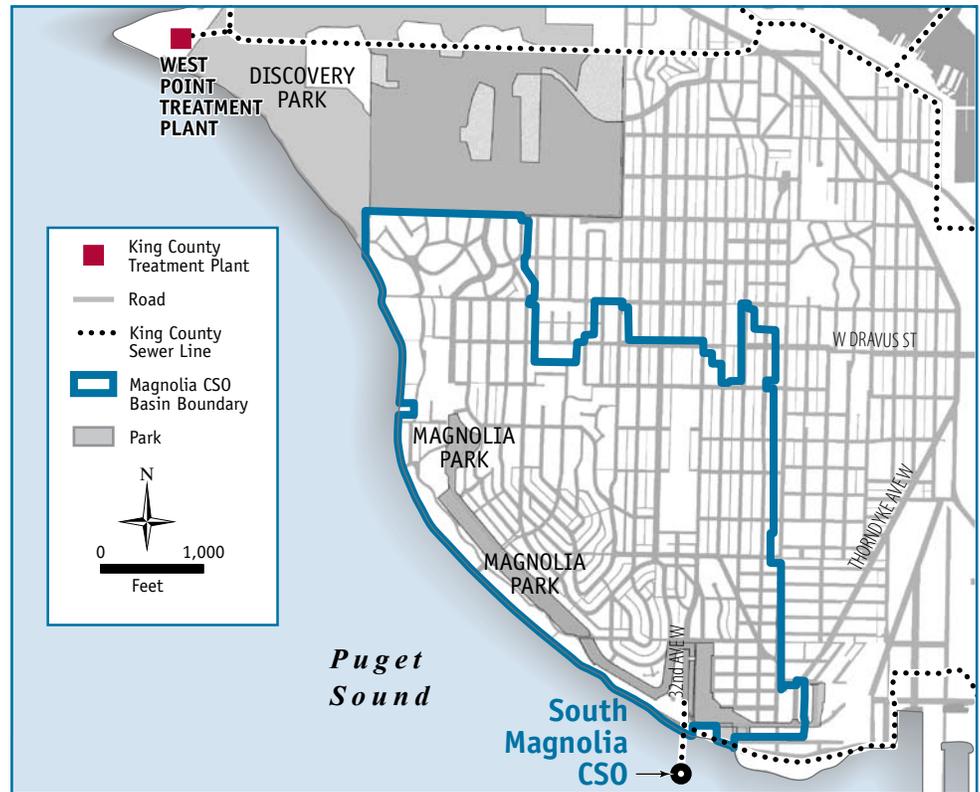
- **Storage** of peak flows during large storms. Once the storm passes, the existing county facilities would slowly convey flows to the West Point Treatment Plant. This option would involve constructing a large new storage tank or pipe in south Magnolia.
- **Reducing flows** of storm water and ground water into the wastewater collection system. The county will work with the City of Seattle and to see if there are ways to reduce flows into the city or county system.
- **Treatment of peak flows** during large storms. This option would involve constructing a local CSO treatment facility in south Magnolia that would operate only a few times a year.

These options can be used alone or in combination, depending on local conditions at South Magnolia.

## Your comments and ideas are welcome

The county is committed to working with the local communities to evaluate alternatives and address suggestions and concerns. We will work with the public to identify potential community and environmental impacts early in the environmental and design review processes. Our public information and involvement program will continue throughout design, construction and operation of the facilities.

For more information, please contact Jennifer Kauffman at 206-263-6029, or [jennifer.kauffman@kingcounty.gov](mailto:jennifer.kauffman@kingcounty.gov).



# Let's Talk Trash

## Protecting Water Quality Starts With You!

### When it comes to disposal...

Drains, toilets and trash cans are not all the same. Disposing of trash down drains and toilets can lead to sewer overflows and back-ups that can cause harm to human health and our local environment. **Think trash not toilets!** Flushing the wrong thing down the

toilet damages your household plumbing, your environment and the wastewater treatment system. If it isn't biodegradable, put it in the trash instead of the toilet.

For more information on things you can do to protect the environment search "Let's Talk Trash" at [www.kingcounty.gov](http://www.kingcounty.gov)



**Don't put produce stickers or grease down the drain**

### These Items Belong In the Trash Can

 <p><b>Band-aids &amp; bandage wrappers</b></p>	 <p><b>Cleaning wipes</b></p>	 <p><b>Dental floss &amp; teeth whitening strips</b></p>	 <p><b>Tampons &amp; applicators</b></p>	 <p><b>Expired &amp; unused prescription and over-the-counter medications.</b></p> <p>(Check out the Medicine Take Back Program at <a href="http://www.productstewardship.net/products.html/pharmaceuticals/medicines.html">www.productstewardship.net/products.html/pharmaceuticals/medicines.html</a>)</p>
 <p><b>Disposable diapers, nursing pads &amp; baby wipes</b></p>	 <p><b>Condoms</b></p>	 <p><b>Kitty litter</b></p>	 <p><b>Mini &amp; maxi-pads</b></p>	 <p><b>Facial wipes</b></p>

## Archaeology Tour at West Point Open House Saturday October 4th, 2008 at 11:00 a.m.

Discover what archaeology is all about as Laura Phillips from the Burke Museum joins King County Wastewater Treatment staff for a celebration of the historic 1958 Metro vote with a glance further back in history to over 4,000 years ago. Visit the site where Native Americans lived 4,200 years ago in Seattle's Discovery Park, and learn how it was discovered during construction at the Treatment Plant. Discover the geological history of the park and learn how the land and resources around Discovery Park have changed through time and how Native Peoples have adapted to those changes over time.



For more information on the West Point archaeological site at Discovery Park, visit the Burke Museum's award-winning Web exhibit, "The archaeology of Seattle's West Point," online at <http://www.washington.edu/burkemuseum/westpoint/>.



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### Tours and Brochures are Available

Want to learn more about how wastewater is treated? Learn about the treatment process and how we produce resources from wastewater like energy, reclaimed water and biosolids. See how King County has become a leader in protecting public health and the environment. Tours are available for schools, community, environmental, and professional groups, as well as all interested individuals and families!

To schedule a tour or request a brochure such as Let's Talk Trash, call 206-296-8286.

Let's Talk Trash is also available in Spanish.

"Hablemos de basura" también está disponible en español.





**Department of  
Natural Resources and Parks  
Wastewater Treatment Division**  
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Seattle, WA 98104-3855

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## West Point Treatment Plant History OPEN HOUSE Saturday, Oct. 4 10 a.m. - Noon



## West Point Treatment Plant History Open House

# CELEBRATE THE CLEAN WATER VOTE!

**When:** Saturday, October 4, 2008 from 10 a.m - Noon

**Where:** West Point Treatment Plant in Seattle's  
Discovery Park, 1400 Utah St. W., Seattle, WA



### What:

- Water Treatment Plant Tours by King County staff at 10:00 a.m and 11:00 a.m.
- Archaeology Tour by Laura Phillips at 11:00 a.m.
- Showing of "Liquid Assets," a PBS documentary about water infrastructure
- Closed toe shoes required for tours



*Follow signs to the plant from the Government Way park entrance. Some parking is available at the plant. Consider biking, hiking or carpooling to the event.*

See the inner workings of the treatment process, learn about water infrastructure, and discover the archaeological history of the West Point Beach! **Space is limited.**

**Please RSVP by calling 206-263-6028.**

For more information on West Point visit <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wtd/westpoint/>