

The Town of Groton Department of Public Works (DPW) has identified you as a sewer customer who uses a grinder pump system. This brochure will provide you with information about your grinder pump system, the DPW's role associated with maintenance of your system, and your responsibilities to ensure smooth operation of your system.

Protect Your Pump

CAUTION: Never connect a sump pump to the grinder pump. Also, never put any of the following materials into sinks, toilets or drains:

- Cooking fat, lard, oil or grease
- Degreasing Solvents
- Cigarette butts
- Dental Floss
- Sanitary napkins, tampons or diapers
- Q-Tips
- Sanitary wipes such as baby wipes or disposable floor wipes
- Hair clippings
- Cat litter
- Strong chemical, toxic caustic, or poisonous substance
- Explosive or flammable materials
- Glass, metal, wood, eggshells, seafood shells, coffee beans, aquarium rocks or gravel
- Plastic Objects
- Rubber gloves or other disposable gloves
- Fireplace ashes



These grinder pumps were all damaged during Hurricane Irene and were replaced by the Department of Public Works.

Questions?

If you have any questions about your grinder pump please contact the Department of Public Works at (860) 445-1016.

For more information visit our website at:

www.groton-ct.gov

GROTON
PUBLIC WORKS

What you need to know
about your

WASTEWATER GRINDER PUMP SYSTEM



Grinder Pump

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a grinder pump?

A grinder pump is a pump unit located at a low point in your house or in your yard where the wastewater drains from the house that grinds the wastewater up and pumps it to the nearest gravity sewer in the public street.



*Interior
Grinder
Pump*

Who is responsible for maintenance of my grinder pump?

Most of the grinder pumps located within the Town of Groton are owned and maintained by the Department of Public Works (DPW). In some instances however, grinder pumps were installed by developers and are privately owned. If you do not know if your grinder pump system is publically or privately owned, contact the DPW at (860) 448-4083. If your grinder pump system is privately owned, you will need to contact a licensed plumber or the supplier of the pump for maintenance. The DPW currently maintains 159 publically owned grinder pumps.



Exterior Grinder Pump Lids

How does a grinder pump work?

Wastewater from your home flows down your drains and collects in a holding tank. When the wastewater in the tank reaches a certain level, it automatically activates the pump to grind up your sewage into small particles, much like a garbage disposal. The pump then generates enough pressure to push the wastewater up the hill through your sewer line to the sewer main.

Why do I need a grinder pump?

Wastewater normally flows downhill by gravity through the sewer system. However, gravity service is not available to your property. Your residence may be at a lower elevation than the sewer main, requiring the use of a pump to force the wastewater up to the gravity sewer main.

What should I do if...

...my grinder pump alarm goes off?

If there is too much flow going into your grinder pump unit, the high sewage level will automatically trigger an alarm horn and light to alert you of the problem. In many instances, the problem could be an excessive amount of flow to the grinder pump. You should immediately discontinue your water use to prevent an overflow. If your system is publically owned, contact the DPW at (860) 445-1016. If your grinder pump system is privately owned, you will need to contact a licensed plumber or the supplier of the pump to resolve the problem.

...there is a power outage?

During a power outage, your grinder pump will not function. Severely limit the interior use of water in your home until power is restored. This means do not shower or wash dishes and limit flushing the toilet. Remember: "If it's brown flush it down, if it's yellow let it mellow".

While your holding tank has a limited capacity (typically 6 toilet flushes), if the system was already full and ready to pump just before the power went out, there will be even less storage available.

The DPW will provide a pump out service for your grinder pump during periods of extended power outage (48 hours or more) using a 65 kW portable generator. If you have a privately owned pump, you must contact the DPW to request this service at (860) 445-1016. You must maintain access to the pump control box and pump chamber and make sure there are no landscape plantings obstructing access.

What should I do with my pump when I go on vacation?

If you plan on being away for several days, replace the wastewater in the tank with clean water to help minimize odors. First run water from an inside faucet long enough for the grinder pump to start working. After the pump starts, turn the inside faucet off. The pump will run until the tank is empty and shut off automatically. This process will cleanse the pump and leave it filled with a minimum of clean water. Always leave the power to the pump on. This allows the heating element inside the pump to operate which helps eliminate condensation and freezing.