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Blake Brueckner, Vice President
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Glenn Walsh, Treasurer
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MEMORANDUM

TO: All PAWSD Customers
FROM: Justin O. Ramsey, PE, District Manager
DATE: August 24, 2021
RE: Sewer Cleaning

Routine sewer cleaning is important to keep sewer mains flowing as efficiently as possible. Debris in the sewer mains can cause backups, overflows and noxious odors. To prevent debris buildup crews utilize a combination of high pressure and special nozzles to force debris down a sewer main to a lower manhole where it captured and physically removed. The Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District (PAWSD) has approximately 60 miles of sewer mains. The cleaning of the lines is an ongoing effort where we along with our contractors try to clean 15 miles of line annually.

This process normally goes unnoticed, however some customers will hear strange noises echoing in their homes or water gurgling in the toilets, some homes unfortunately have water blown from the toilet. This is known as a “blown toilet”. A blown toilet is typically caused by a combination of the force used in the cleaning the sewer main, the location of the homes service line and house venting which allows air to exit the sewer main and enter the home. Crews do as much as they can to prevent this by venting the sewer main and using the minimum amount of pressure to complete the job. Homeowners can take precautions as well. Closing toilet seat lids will limit the distance the toilet water will travel. Removing the caps from cleanouts will prevent water from splashing from the toilet by allowing the air to vent prior to entering the home. (Please replace the cap once the cleaning is complete).

Any liquid blown out of the toilet should be nothing more than the water in the toilet unless there was waste in the toilet bowl that had not been flushed. The odors are from the air bubble from the sewer line that discharged through the toilet or other fixture.

Please go to the PAWSD website at www.pawsd.org or the PAWSD Facebook Page to determine if the cleaning will be in your neighborhood. We update the cleaning schedule weekly. If cleaning will be in your neighborhood please take the steps outlined earlier in this document to limit your risks. PAWSD apologizes for any inconveniences this activity may cause.