



ON TAP

When Cooking - Trap the Grease

With the fall and winter holidays approaching, many Tuolumne County residents will be busy cooking in their kitchens. To avoid potential plumbing and sewer problems, Tuolumne Utilities District (TUD) would like to remind residents how to properly dispose of fats, oils and grease. Sewer blockages can cause backups into homes resulting in an unpleasant mess that can cost hundreds and sometimes thousands of dollars to clean up.



Listed below are safe disposal tips of waste fats, oil and grease to help you avoid a plumbing emergency:

- Avoid pouring fats or vegetable cooking oils down the drain because liquid fats solidify in the pipes and create clogs.
- After grease has cooled, scrape the grease into a container with a tight fitting lid. Solidify in the refrigerator before putting it in the trash.
- Never put hard to grind items in your garbage disposal, including poultry skins, egg shells, carrots, potato skins, celery, pumpkin pulp, banana peels or pasta.

New Water Tank for Jamestown Near Completion

The District is near completion of the Jamestown Reservoir Replacement project which replaces a 1-million-gallon underground reservoir that was originally constructed in 1937. The Reservoir serves approximately 2,000 residents in the Jamestown area. In 2016, the District was awarded \$1.4 million in funding through a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) through Tuolumne County to install a new 1-million-gallon welded steel tank.

NOVEMBER – DECEMBER 2018

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In April 2018, the District Board awarded the construction of the new tank to Paso Robles Tank Inc. in the amount of \$884,865. The construction of the tank is primarily funded by a Community Development Block Grant. The District's local match will be \$300,000 which was identified in this year's Capital Budget.

The existing Jamestown Reservoir has a canvas cover that has experienced rips and tears, which required constant repair. The reservoir's concrete structure was also showing signs of cracking and spalling. The Jamestown Replacement Project includes the demolition of the old reservoir, onsite grading, steel tank construction, and onsite utility reconfiguration. The project was designed by TUD engineering staff and the site grading and underground work has been undertaken by the District's construction crews. The District plans to have the tank fully operational by the end of November 2018, weather permitting.

Have You Received Your Toilet Rebate?



The Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District has partnered with Tuolumne Utilities District (TUD) and Twain Harte Community Services District to offer rebates on low flow toilets, showerheads and pre-rinse sprayers.

RESIDENTIAL REBATES

TOILET: Receive up to \$100 when you replace your old toilet with a WaterSense toilet.

SHOWERHEAD: Receive up to \$25 for replacing your showerhead with a WaterSense showerhead.

BUSINESS REBATES

TOILET: Receive up to 70% off the purchase price of Water Sense toilets.

PRE-RINSE DISH SPRAYER: Receive up to 70% off the purchase price of a pre-rinse sprayer for your restaurant. A pre-rinse faucet with sprayer is perfect for rinsing excess food and sauces from your dishes prior to running them through your commercial dishwashing machine, saving water and money.

For more information and to apply, go to:
<https://tudwater.com/conservation>

Leaf Litter Is an Environmental Windfall

By Vera Strader, a University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardener of Tuolumne County

Leaf litter is truly an environmental windfall. Fallen leaves act as a wildlife boon enriching soil, providing a down-like comforter for small critters and, according to one estimate, benefiting at least 122 bird species nationwide. Mother Nature does not remove fallen leaves—and for good reason. Leaf litter provides food and shelter for earthworms, pill bugs, millipedes and a multitude of smaller life such as eggs and larvae of insects and spiders of many kinds. These creatures are all essential components of the food web providing sustenance to toads, frogs, lizards, and countless other animals.

Nearly all backyard birds require protein from insects to feed their young. A yard without thrushes and towhees mining for morsels in the litter and bluebirds and flycatchers snagging bugs from ground and air is a yard devoid of life. But, the story of leaves goes even deeper into the web of life in the soil itself. Leaf litter fosters living soils with vast numbers of beneficial soil bacteria, fungi, and nematodes working in concert to build healthy loam and to nourish plants.



Writing in “Teaming with Microbes,” Jeff Lowenfels and Wayne Lewis tell us that a healthy soil web breaks leaf litter into a rich, organic layer that supports life both above and below the soil’s surface. Treating soil, instead, with concentrated fertilizers drives away earthworms and kills nurturing bacteria and fungi. Without the buffering action of bacteria and fungi, the soil’s pH (acid/base balance) is thrown out of whack, say Lowenfels and Lewis. The soil then slowly loses the ability to hold air and water and to fight off disease.

In a study of the effect of blue oak litterfall (leaves, twigs, and acorns) on rangeland soil, researchers found that the improved environment for soil organisms under blue oaks leads to enhanced soil quality and fertility. Earthworms and ants attracted to this environment further benefit soil by mixing and aerating, fostering water penetration. Soil quality quickly declines upon the removal of the oaks.

In addition to leaf litter’s benefits to soils and wildlife, fallen leaves suppress weeds, mitigate erosion, and reduce the need for irrigation, pesticides, and fertilizers. As leaf litter breaks down, it “time-releases” nutrients to the soil and plants, diminishing the need for fertilizers that create toxic runoff into waterways.

But our yards are different from forests and rangeland. Sometimes fallen leaves are just too much, threatening to smother lawns and perennials. Rather than waste this leafy resource, blow or rake excess leaves to an unused area of the yard or compost them to create a free, nutritious, and water conserving amendment for your garden next year. To speed decomposition, try grinding or chopping leaves with a chipper or weed eater. On the lawn, use a mulching or rotary lawnmower to shred the leaves; leave in place to nourish the grass and reduce water needs. If you truly cannot use all your leaves, perhaps a neighbor would welcome your contribution.

Leaf litter that collects below diseased plants is best disposed of entirely. Examples are roses, peonies, iris, and hollyhocks that are frequently plagued with fungal diseases. Fruit tree leaf fall is also best removed to prevent

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Continued... Leaf Litter

possible reinfestation with certain diseases and insects. Avoid sending plant materials to a landfill whenever possible. Transporting debris creates pollution and, once in the landfill, yard waste consumes huge amounts of space and generates methane, a powerful greenhouse gas.

Leave the leaves to save time and money, enrich soil, help sustain wildlife, and benefit water and air quality. Mother Nature will thank you.

Vera Strader is a University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardener of Tuolumne County who mulches the leaves in her Sonora garden. UCCE Master Gardeners of Tuolumne County will answer gardening questions through their hotline at (209) 533-5912. For more information, go to the UCCE Master Gardeners of Tuolumne county website at http://ucanr.edu/sites/Tuolumne_County_Master_Gardeners/.

General Manager's Corner by David Andres, email: dandres@tudwater.com

New General Manager

It has been a pleasure to once again assist the Board of Directors and staff during my tenure as Interim General Manager at TUD. I have to admit my stay has gone rather quickly but we have been able to continue to work on many capital water and sewer capital improvement projects during this time. Also, a major goal has been completed, that is the selection of the next TUD General Manager.

Starting in June of this year, the Board authorized a contract for Executive Recruitment Services of W. Brown Creative Partners and the facilitation services of Barber & Gonzales Consulting Group to help in the recruitment process of hiring a new General Manager for the District. Thomas Haglund, General Manager at that time, retired in June 2018.

Following a series of facilitated stakeholder meetings and interviews with a group of highly qualified candidates, the Board has selected Edwin R. Pattison of Modesto as the new General Manager for the District. Mr. Pattison currently serves as General Manager for Mountain House Community Services District since 2014. He has also served as City Manager for the City of Lone and Water Resources Manager for Calaveras County Water District. As General Manager for the Mountain House CSD, a full-service municipality facing significant growth, Mr. Pattison oversees the Public Safety, Public Works including water and wastewater, Parks and Recreation, Finance and Administration departments. Mr. Pattison has 30 years' experience in public agencies/utilities and has worked extensively in the foothill regions.

"I am looking forward to joining the TUD team and collaborating with the Board of Directors and stakeholders to define and implement a positive vision for the future. I am eager to begin working with the Board, staff and community in meeting the challenges facing the District," states Edwin Pattison. Mr. Pattison holds a Master of Public Administration degree from California State University, Stanislaus and Bachelor of Science degree from University of California, Davis.

Mr. Pattison will begin his role as TUD General Manager on November 26, 2018.

