

# Borough of Wanaque

PASSAIC COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

MUNICIPAL OFFICE  
579 RINGWOOD AVENUE  
WANAQUE, NJ 07465



MAYOR DANIEL MAHLER  
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April 26, 2020

Dear Fellow Residents,

This past month has been a very difficult time in Wanaque, in New Jersey and in our nation due to the COVID-19 virus. The death rate among the elderly has been very high. We have seen this in nursing homes throughout the state, including those in Wanaque. We are also seeing many younger health care workers and first responders testing positive for the virus and some are dying. A few days ago a police officer from Bloomingdale passed away from the virus. Our condolences go out to his family.

Once again, we cannot stress enough the need to be extremely vigilant in keeping social distance at all times. Stay at home if possible. If you have to go out, wear a mask and protective gloves.

The pandemic has brought about two unanticipated consequences in Wanaque. The first item concerns the disposition of protective masks and gloves. Recently, the parking lot at Stop & Shop was littered with discarded masks and gloves. Please do not discard these items on the ground. Take them home with you and discard them in your own garbage.

The second unanticipated consequence involves our sewer plant. With more people staying home the volume at the sewer plant has increased. Our capacity is sufficient to maintain service. However, the problem is what is being flushed down the toilets. There has been a large increase in items being flushed down the toilets causing blockages and pump failures in the system. This has increased the operating costs due to additional overtime and the cost of replacement equipment. Should this continue, it could result in increased sewer rates. The following items should NEVER be flushed down the toilet, even if they are marked "flushable": disinfectant wipes, hand wipes, baby wipes, baby diapers, napkins, paper towels, rags, sanitary pads and condoms. These items should all be placed in the garbage. The only things that should be flushed down the toilet are toilet paper and human waste.

Our sewer system is a gravity system with intermittent grinders and pumps. The grinders pulverize the effluent making it easier to pump, like putting something in your blender. Putting one sanitary wipe in your blender may result in it being chopped it up, but put in 20 or more at once and the blender will become clogged. It will then have to be replaced. (Please do not try this at home) The grinders and pumps in the sewer system are industrial grade and much more powerful than a home blender, yet the equipment is getting clogged from these materials. We all have to work together to keep the plant operating efficiently and help keep the rates from increasing.

Thank you for your cooperation. Stay safe and stay healthy.

Sincerely,

Mayor Dan Mahler