



# CANTERWOOD DIVISION 12 STEP ASSOCIATION

## Happy Summertime!

Welcome to the Summer 2024 newsletter! We thought now would be a good opportunity to share some of the great news your Board has about the Division 12 STEP system.

## Know at a Glance

While your STEP equipment may not be top of your mind—until there's a problem—at a minimum, you should know where your STEP components are:

- Be sure to locate the lids in your yard. It's essential to keep them uncovered, and replace any that are cracked. Rainwater infiltration can dramatically increase our pretreatment costs—and the charges assessed by Gig Harbor.
- Know where your STEP system shutoff valve and alarm box are. Typically, they are visible from the location of your STEP tanks.

## Reserve Study Accomplished

Our first bit of good news is great news indeed! We have adequate reserves to manage equipment and system failures. We completed the new Reserve Study assessment, and the independent findings concurred with the Board assessment that we are 99% funded. What this means is that we are well positioned to manage potential failures without the need for any special assessments. Now if that isn't a relief of mind.

## Bad News Begets Good News

As you may recall, our flow meter that Gig Harbor City uses to assess our sewage treatment fees was to be replaced this year. The bad news is that the meter quit before providing the expected six-month warning. It also now appears it was providing inaccurately high readings in its final months—resulting in higher treatment costs. But the good news is that the Board ordered a new meter that is appropriate for wastewater, and Board volunteers Lynn Singleton and Chad Scialabba, working with the City, got it installed—despite some inclement weather. The new meter even features a remote digital readout for City workers to observe instead of climbing down into the large cement vault each time. Improved accuracy and safety is a win-win we will take!

## A Penny Saved Many Dollars Saved...

According to estimates, Board member volunteers have saved us approximately \$5,000 over this last year. From procuring and installing the new flow meter to maintaining and repairing our equipment—your board has worked tirelessly to be efficient and mindful stewards of our resources. **Hug a Board member today!** With their consent, of course. ;)

## Dare to Look!

Our STEP website

<https://canterwooddiv12step.org> is a great source of information about the Association and our systems. If you want to understand your system or have questions—we encourage you to check it out. Can't find something there? **Please let us know!**

## 2024 Board of Directors

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## Good News and Challenges

Thanks to the installation of our two new flow meters and more accurate dosing, our Operations and Maintenance (O&M) costs are down. We do want to point out, however, that our O&M contract with Aadvanced Septic expired in June, and we are beginning the new contract process. In the interim, we are still able to have any needed services performed without a current contract.

## Help Us Help You

With the bulk of the STEP system's infrastructure located and documented in 2023, and all the equipment in the pump house and vaults put in the best working order ever in 2024, really the only components that remain a question are the tanks located in the 71 lawns that STEP members privately own.

The biggest concern with the privately owned tanks—from a system perspective—is outside water getting into the system through a cracked or ill-fitting tank lid. They call this *Infiltration and Inflow (I&I)*.



If we could ask each of you to take a few minutes sometime this week and locate your three lids. Are they covered with soil or vegetation? Are there visible cracks in them? Do they rock when you step on them? Once you find and inspect your lids, if there are issues, yes, you will have a few minor expenses. But being proactive now could save you and the entire Association a sizeable amount of money in the long run. If you need any help, see the website or call a Board member today.

## Thank You!

We hope you found this summer newsletter helpful. If you have any questions, suggestions, or comments, please contact us—either through the website or using the email addresses provided in the lower left.