

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Joanne Lind, (360) 528-5772
joannelind@lottcleanwater.org

LOTT Essential Operations Continue, Offices Closed During COVID-19 Crisis

Essential LOTT operations will continue during this crisis. Our skilled and dedicated plant staff are keeping systems running to ensure effective wastewater treatment at both the Budd Inlet Treatment Plant and the Martin Way Reclaimed Water Plant. LOTT offices and the WET Science Center are closed as a precaution until further notice. These closures are intended to help slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus to protect community members and keep our health services from being overwhelmed. The closures also reduce risk to LOTT staff, ensuring we can continue to operate our vital wastewater treatment facilities.

We have received some questions about the potential risk of COVID-19 from wastewater. According to the CDC, the risk of transmission of the virus through wastewater is thought to be low. Although transmission of COVID-19 through sewage may be possible, there is no evidence to date that this has occurred. Data suggest that the disinfection methods utilized at LOTT facilities – ultraviolet light and chlorine – are sufficient to inactivate the virus.

At this time, we are reminding everyone to take extra care to NOT flush wipes, paper towels, tissues, and other trash. Some wastewater utilities are reporting customers are flushing wipes or paper towels due to shortages of toilet paper. Wipes clog pipes – even those that say “flushable” on the package! Flushing these items can cause blockages and backups of raw sewage into your home or city streets. They can also clog pumps and other treatment equipment. If you must use wipes, paper towels, or tissues, dispose of them in the trash.

While the LOTT offices are closed, office staff are working remotely, and progress on active construction projects continues. To contact LOTT staff, email or call and we will respond within two business days. For non-emergency inquiries, please email info@lottcleanwater.org or leave a message at 360-664-2333. To report a LOTT-related wastewater emergency, call 360-528-5700.

LOTT continues to take our lead from Thurston County Public Health. We encourage Thurston County residents to visit their website to stay up-to-date with the latest public health information and find answers to specific questions about COVID-19.

<https://www.thurstoncountywa.gov/phss/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>.

Questions about how LOTT is responding to the crisis can be directed to Joanne Lind at joannelind@lottcleanwater.org or (360) 528-5772.

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