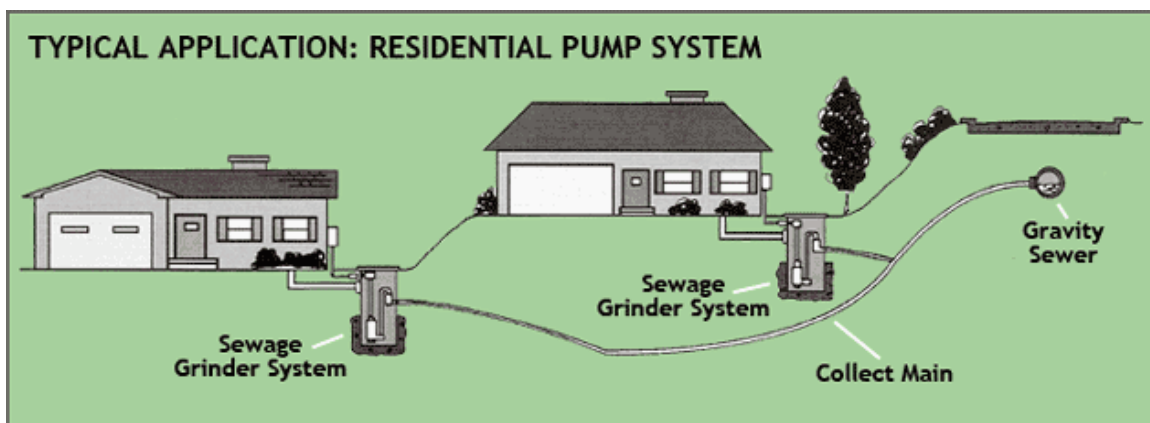


# Property Owner Guide to Grinder Pump Operation

## What is a residential grinder pump and why do I have one?

The residential grinder pump serving your home is an important part of the larger community sewer collection system. The pump grinds the sewage from your home (much like the garbage disposal in your kitchen) and pushes it through small plastic pipes to the larger lines in the street. A residential grinder pump is often installed when the home's sewer system is at a lower elevation than the main wastewater line.

A sewage holding tank has been installed underground on your property and a sewage grinder pump is housed in the tank. The tank cover is round and is the only part that shows above the ground. All of the wastewater from your home flows into the buried tank. When the tank fills to a certain level, the grinder pump turns on automatically. The grinder pump normally will run for one or two minutes and will automatically turn off when the tank has been emptied. The pump is programmed to operate in cycles, rather than continuously. Cycles are determined by the amount of water used. During a usual day, the grinder pump will turn on and off about 5 or 6 times. While the pump is running you may hear a low humming noise. Excessive noise may indicate a problem and you should call the non-emergency number.



### **How can I help to maintain my grinder pump?**

The grinder pump can handle any wastewater that is normally discharged to the sewer from the kitchen, bathroom, or laundry. Some chemicals and materials may cause operating problems or safety hazards.

#### **Never put any of the following materials into sinks, toilets or drains:**

- Cooking fat (lard, oil, grease)
- Glass, metal, wood, seafood shells
- Diapers, socks, rags or cloth of any kind
- Plastic objects (toys, eating utensils, etc.)
- Any strong chemical, toxic, caustic, or poisonous substance
- Degreasing solvents
- Any explosive or flammable material
- Gasoline, kerosene, fuel oil, paint thinner, antifreeze
- Lubricating oil or grease
- Hair clippings or kitty litter

These materials may clog your home system or create unsafe conditions in your lines and tank!

Note: BCU is not responsible for any expenses incurred due to negligence by the property owner in maintaining the grinder pump.

### **What other maintenance is suggested for the grinder pump?**

The property owner is responsible for maintenance of the grinder pump. BCU recommends an annual inspection and cleaning of each grinder pump.

### **What are some special situations that may arise?**

#### **If the Alarm Sounds:**

If there is a grinder pump failure, the tank which contains the pump will become too full. An alarm horn and light located in the alarm box on the outside of your home will automatically activate. You should:

- Discontinue water use until the unit is safe for use. This will help to prevent overflows.
- Silence the alarm by depressing the alarm light on the front of the alarm box. The alarm horn should silence but the light will remain on until the grinder pump is repaired.
- Wait fifteen minutes before taking further action. A high level of water usage will sometimes cause a false alarm. If the pump is operating correctly, the tank will automatically be pumped down and the alarm light will turn off.
- If the alarm light is still on after fifteen minutes, call our 24-hour emergency dispatcher at 252.235.4900. Inform the representative that you are in the Briar Chapel Community and that the grinder pump alarm light serving your property is alarming.

- Never attempt to open the tank cover or the electrical panel box. CAUTION: Electrical shock or damage to the system may occur.
- There is no trip charge for the first call. Envirolink, Inc. will assess the alarm condition and inform the property owner of appropriate remedies.
- Multiple trips to the same property (more than one trip per year) will result in trip charges. Charges may apply if your pump failure was caused by property owner negligence. See above section for materials that constitute negligence.
- Repair fees are the responsibility of the property owner.
- In the event a property owner fails to complete the required repairs, repairs will be made and the cost of the repair plus administration fees will be added to the property owner's monthly sewer bill.

#### **In Case of Power Failure:**

If there is a power failure which affects your home, your grinder pump will also experience a loss of power and not be able to operate. The grinder pump tank has more than a day's holding capacity, but interior water use should be limited until power has been restored.

#### **A few more important notes:**

- Electric power, alarm wires, and the sewer line are buried under the ground between the home and the tank. Before digging in the area, call 811 to have a technician locate the lines.
- The grinder pump has a small breather vent located on the top of the tank. It is important to keep this vent open and free of debris, such as mulch or grass.
- In the event BCU has to complete the repair due to property owner inaction, BCU will not be responsible for any damage to landscaping or items placed adjacent to the grinder pump station while performing any maintenance function.
- If your home is newly constructed and less than one year old, then your grinder pump may still be under warranty through your builder. Please let BCU know that the unit is less than one year old and provide them with the contact information for your builder and/or the installer. Any problems you experience with the grinder pump system during that period should be referred to the builder or their representative.
- If you are going to be away from home for more than thirty (30) days, please contact Envirolink for some tips on how to minimize your pump's operation while you are away.
- Never connect a sump pump to the grinder pump.
- **Non-emergency contact number: 252 235-4900; 8:00 am – 5:00 pm**
- Non-emergencies include situations such as to lawnmower damage to vents or general questions.