

# Authority Times

News and Information for Customers  
of the Borough of Conshohocken Authority

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Pictured from left, Brent Wagner (BCA Executive Director), State Representative Greg Scott, Senator Vincent Hughes, Edward Mongan (BCA Operations Manager), Shannon Stewart (BCA Finance Director), Fred Ebert (BCA Engineer), Tina Sokolowski (BCA Board Chairwoman), Lauren Gallagher (BCA Solicitor) and George Bass (BCA Vice Chairman).

## BCA Gets \$1.4 Million Grant

The Borough of Conshohocken Authority was thrilled to welcome PA Senator Vincent Hughes and State Representative Greg Scott to Conshohocken Borough Hall for the ceremonial check presentation of the \$1,454,471 grant that was recently awarded to the Authority.

This COVID-19 ARPA H2O grant is from the Commonwealth's Financing Authority and will be used for electrical upgrades to the

wastewater treatment facility. To receive such funding in this competitive environment is an incredibly fortunate event. The grant award is the result of consistent effort from the Authority board and staff, along with help from Conshohocken Borough Council, State Representative Scott, and Senator Hughes. The Authority will continue to be aggressive in seeking new grant opportunities.

## Authority Improves Biosolids Handling Program

Over the course of the last three years, the Borough of Conshohocken Authority has been making increased efforts to decrease the amount of dewatered sludge, or "cake" that is hauled offsite for disposal. Sludge hauling is the largest expense in the Authority's operations budget. This expense involves transporting the cake to a landfill.

The more water we can extract from the

sludge, the more solids we haul out, meaning more efficient disposal. With that objective in mind, the Authority's solids program begins with our Plant Operator and Belt Filter Press Operator. Together they monitor plant conditions and implement adjustments through educated strategies, all with the aim of increasing disposal efficiency.

Some of these changes are lower

sludge blankets in the clarifiers, increased digestion, and thickening times, determining a better polymer by conducting a bench test, reviving and old Belt Filter Press screen cleaning system and replacing the blowers and diffusers for both aerobic digesters. A more in-depth report will be completed later this year once the rest of our ideas are applied.

### BOARD MEMBERS

**TINA SOKOLOWSKI**  
Chair

**GEORGE BASS**  
Vice Chair

**APARNA CHHIBBER**  
Secretary/Treasurer

### MEETINGS

**April 23**

**May 28**

**June 25**

**July 23**

**August 27**

**September 24**

**October 22**

**November 19**

**December 17**

**Meetings are held in  
the Borough Hall:  
400 Fayette Street  
Conshohocken**

**Meeting time 6:30 pm**

# Your Garbage Disposal Isn't a Trash Can

Contrary to popular belief, your home's garbage disposal should not be a dumping ground for trash. There are many food items that can damage your disposal, clog your drain and, in some instances, damage a home's sewer main and lateral or cause it to run less efficiently.

Dumping too much or too many hard-to-break-down items in a garbage disposal can cause the materials to not be broken down by the bacteria in the sewer main or clog the lines before the waste ever reaches its destination. The best way to ensure proper garbage disposal operation is to adhere to a checklist of items that should never be put in the system.

## **What not to dispose of in your garbage disposal**

### **Grease, oil, or bacon fat**

Even if you use hot water to rinse the material down the garbage disposal, grease hardens and coats the blades, causing them to work less effectively. In addition, oils can also clog drains

### **Coffee grounds**

Coffee particles accumulate in pipes and cause blockages. Coffee filter and grounds work best in the garbage can.

### **Potato peels**

Starch in potato peels transforms into a gluey paste that can cause the blades to stick or damage the pipes.

### **Fibrous vegetables**

Vegetables such as celery and asparagus are considered fibrous because it is stringy. The vegetable's strings can wrap around the disposal blades and cause the motor to stop.

### **Banana peels**

Other fibrous materials that should not make its way into garbage disposals are banana peels, onion skin, corn husks and artichokes. The fruit and vegetable jackets protect the food inside and therefore are tough on garbage disposal systems. Skins can jam or block the drain.

### **Fruit pits**

Cherry, avocado, peach, and olive pits are too hard for garbage disposals to break down.

### **Animal bones**

Bones dull the garbage disposal blades as they would kitchen knives. Beef, chicken, pork, lamb, and fish bones should always be thrown in the trash.

### **Egg shells**

The stringy membrane of egg shells can wrap around the garbage disposal and clog your pipes. Instead toss them in the trash or use them as fertilizer.



### **Rice and pasta**

Rice and pasta continue to expand even when dumped down the garbage disposal and can clog pipes.

### **Chemicals**

Harsh chemicals like bleach and Drain-O can ruin the disposals seals and eat through pipes.

### **Miscellaneous items**

Like items that people should not flush down the toilet, cigarette butts, rubber bands, bread ties, sponges, wipes, pull tabs, and any other non-organic items should not be put in a garbage disposal. These materials are unable to break down, which can cause it to get stuck in the lines or dull the disposal blades.

### **Garbage disposal do's**

Turn on a medium to strong water flow before turning the garbage disposal on. Continue running the water for 15 seconds after the grinding stops. This will help flush the drain line and disposal of remaining food particles.

Occasionally put a small amount of ice into the disposal to help clean the inside and grinding area.

Consider having your kitchen drain line snaked once every year or two as preventative maintenance.

### **Garbage disposal don'ts**

Use only cold water during the food grinding process.

Avoid putting too much down the garbage disposal at once. Keep cuttings in a separate container and feed them slowly into the disposal while running plenty of water.

## **To Flush or Not to Flush?**

**These items should NOT be flushed down the toilet**

- Baby wipes
- Cat litter
- Diapers
- Disposable wipes
- Fat, grease, oil
- Feminine products
- Paint
- Paper towels
- Pesticides
- Pharmaceuticals



## **Thank You, Board Members!**

The Borough of Conshohocken Authority would like to say thank you to two long-time Authority directors for their many years of exemplary community service.

Carol Smith, who was appointed in January of 2014 and Janene Reilly, appointed in January 2015, have decided to forego re-appointments to explore new opportunities. During their tenure, both had chaired the Authority board, as well as served in other official roles. Carol and Janene worked hard to support the Authority staff and ensure that rate payers received consistent and transparent service. They will be dearly missed, and they leave very large shoes to be filled.