First Ever Tucson Citizen Water Academy Fall Session was a Huge Success!

Roughly 30 attendees received an inside look at all facets of water and wastewater during the Tucson Citizen Water Academy (CWA). Tucson Water, the University of Arizona's Water & Energy Sustainable Technology Center, and Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department (RWRD) hosted the CWA with four consecutive Wednesday evening series held on September 25, October 2, 9, and 16. To assist our ratepayers, the fall session of CWA was scheduled in the evening to accommodate work schedules and other daytime commitments. The CWA provided an inside look at how citizens are part of the local water cycle; examined drinking water supplies, explained the wastewater reclamation process, compliance regulations, and discussed research and innovations for the future. Not only did CWA provide citizens a better understanding of what happens after the flush; it also detailed what it takes to run water and wastewater utilities and explained the breakdown in what utility service fees fund.

Subject matter experts from all CWA collaborators shared the method and science behind our water resources and the wastewater treatment process. RWRD Director Jackson Jenkins stated, “RWRD staff are proud of what we do for our community every day. We look forward to venues such as the CWA to help give stakeholders a better understanding of the many facets involved in providing this service to our customers. We are a diverse organization with many dedicated

Grease Collection and Recycling Locations

East
- O’Rielly Chevrolet
- 6160 E. Broadway Blvd.

Midtown
- City Council Ward 3 Office
- 1510 E. Grant Rd.

Northwest
- Pima Community College Northwest Campus
- 7600 N. Shannon Rd.

South
- Kino Sports Complex
- 2500 E. Ajo Way

Sahuarita
- Sahuarita Town Hall Complex
- 375 W. Sahuarita Center Way

West
- Pima Community College West Campus
- 2202 W. Anklam Road

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employees with special and technical skill sets that allow us to fulfill our mission.”

CWA’s attendees enjoyed this eye opening experience filled with science. Attendee Mimi Battin shared her experience, “It was fantastic, and some of my friends read all of the handouts. This has just been marvelous. I’ve learned so much.” Cindy McCain suggested, “Somehow this has to get scaled up and scaled out so that it touches each one of us to be a responsible water user and how do we work with you not against you because I recognize the seriousness of the situation.” Employee dedication did not go unnoticed by attendee Peggy Ollerhead, “Your employees should know that it was the pride they all seemed to take in their work I was very impressed by that and the fact that they donated their time to take us on the tours. I think universally they all seemed to really take pride in whatever their role was at the facilities and I was very impressed by that.”

The CWA will run two sessions yearly, one in the spring and one in the fall so keep your eyes pinned for the spring 2020 academy!

Source:
Lowe, Lindsey. (April 23, 2019). Are flushable wipes really flushable? What happens to those flushable wipes once they go down the drain? Retrieved from https://www.today.com/series/one-small-thing/are-flushable-wipes-really-flushable-11519457/id=sm_rnd_pdp_tdp_fbma&is_ss=1&is_sst=0&n=1&scid=sm_npd_td_fbma&fbclid=IwAR2_YvXVBxOb1PfPWfWfQH3-Np-p444mp5wQZW-FON504XWOMlNExqgEBTxsDs October 30, 2019.

Wipes clog pipes!
Disposable wipes should NOT be flushed! If disposable wipes make it through RWRD’s 3,500 miles of sanitary sewer system, they are removed at the beginning of the treatment process and are taken to a landfill. However, Rex Kinney, a master plumber with Jersey Plumbing Service in Basking Ridge, New Jersey, shared on NBC’s Today Show that most wipes do not make it past the 45-degree elbow within the homeowner’s plumbing pipes going out to the public conveyance system.

Wipes are not biodegradable in the public sanitary sewer system and their presence can cause clogs and equipment failure in lift stations where mechanical pumps facilitate the conveyance of sewage in many areas of the community. Obstructions in sewer pipes could lead to SSOs and/or costly repairs to the equipment at our water reclamation facilities. So please remember wipes are not flushable. Wipes clog pipes!

Source:

Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department Contact Information
General Information: (520) 724-6500
Roach Control Hotline: (520) 724-3400
Billing Section: (520) 724-6609
Sewer Emergencies: (520) 724-3400
To Report Odors: (520) 724-3400
Sewer Outreach Subsidy (Low-income bill assistance): (520) 779-5443
Sewer Connection Information: (520) 724-9000
To Report Vandalism: 911

You can also access this information and more on our website: www.pima.gov/wastewaterreclamation

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