

Do not put grease in drains, residents and businesses advised

BY MARIAN MCMAHON
Gazette Newspapers

LAKE COUNTY – Utilities Department personnel asked that residents and businesses not put any grease, oils or similar items down their drains because it causes problems, especially during winter months.

"Sewer's a little different; in the freeze, we're getting a lot more grease problems," Director Rick Martin said. "People don't think about when they put grease down their sanitary, but as it gets cold, that grease solidifies. So most of the problems, if I'm looking back to Jan. 11th, over half of them are due to grease that plug up the lines."

Commissioner Judy Moran asked if they were residential or commercial.

"A lot of them are the main; the grease that gets into the main; we don't really go into the residents' areas," Martin said, noting the mains then need to be jetted out to open them up.

Commissioner Dan Troy noted people used to collect their grease in metal coffee cans, then put them in the trash when they were full.

He said people need to remember to never pour grease (or oil) down their drains since it solidifies and clogs pipes.

"Just think before you pour it down the drain, is this something you would want to front-end load into your own arteries? You know what would happen if you did that, so don't do that with our arteries," Troy said.

"I just wanted to acknowledge and thank our work crews who'd been out the last two nights in this brutal cold and keeping everybody in water," said Randy Rothlisberger, assistant sanitary engineer, at the Jan. 20 commissioners meeting. "We've had several breaks over the last several days because of the cold. Cold water tends to get the pipes brittle and we tend to have more breaks."

The west end of the county suffered the most breaks.

Martin said there were 43 breaks, five of which had been reported in the previous 14 hours. It has been one of the worst Januaries for breaks.

Eastlake had 14, Wickliffe had seven and Willoughby had nine.