

# KIMBERLY HEIGHTS SANITARY DISTRICT

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## About the Kimberly Heights Sanitary District

The Kimberly Heights Sanitary District (KHSD or the “District”) is a separate unit of government, which operates and maintains the public sanitary sewer collection system that primarily serves the Kimberly Heights subdivision.

The Kimberly Heights subdivision is located in the Southwest Quarter of Section 20 in Bremen Township, Cook County, Illinois. The Kimberly Heights subdivision/**Kimberly Heights Sanitary District service area, is bounded by Ridgeland Avenue on the west, 167th Street on the south, and Cook County Forest Preserves on the north and east (George W. Dunne National Golf Course and Yankee Woods).**

The Kimberly Heights Sanitary District was established in 1960 by a voter referendum and was formed for the purpose of constructing, operating, and maintaining a centralized sanitary sewer collection system for the benefit of the property owners within the Kimberly Heights subdivision. The KHSD sanitary sewer system replaced individually constructed and maintained septic systems that otherwise would have been necessary for each property. The KHSD sanitary sewer collection system was constructed and put in service in 1964 and greatly improved the public health and safety of the area.

## Contact information for the Kimberly Heights Sanitary District

Kimberly Heights Sanitary District  
PO Box 636  
Tinley Park, IL 60477-0636

email: [KHSD@ameritech.net](mailto:KHSD@ameritech.net)

Phone: 708-466-4369

Payment portal (credit card or e-check)

<https://bit.ly/KHSD-pay>

On the left side of the screen, Click on “**Make a one-time payment**” and follow the instructions to enter the requested information.

**Please contact the KHSD if a property within the District’s service area is being sold or transferred to confirm paid status of the annual sewer user fees, any other outstanding issues, and provide new owner information.**

## **The Kimberly Heights Sanitary District Sewer Collection System**

The KHSD sanitary sewer system consists of 3.5 miles of sewer main with 80 manhole access points. The sanitary sewer system uses only gravity to convey the sewerage through the mains. The sanitary sewer system takes the wastewater from each property and delivers it to the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD). The MWRD “reclaims” the water that is part of sewerage wastes to allow it to safely re-enter our area waterways and disposes of the solid wastes that remain. **The KHSD sewer system was NOT designed for the removal of storm water.**

### **Kimberly Heights Annual Sewer User Fee**

The Kimberly Heights Sanitary District charges a flat fee per sewer connection which is billed once a year directly to each property owner. The service period follows the District’s fiscal year covering service from May through the following April. The bills are typically mailed in June of each year.

Property owners in the Kimberly Heights subdivision who had annexed to the Village of Tinley Park do **NOT** pay the Village’s sewer charge for collection and transmission services as part of the Village utility bill.

The Sewer User Fee is in addition to real estate taxes paid to the Kimberly Heights Sanitary District through property tax bills.

### **Why is the KHSD Sewer User Fee a Fixed Amount?**

Sewer collection/use fees are typically based on water usage because the majority of water brought into the home ends up going down the drain into the sanitary sewers.

About 40% of Kimberly Heights properties remain unincorporated with individual wells where a water meter is typically not available. The Annual Sewer User Fee has been computed as a flat fee per sewer connection which is the most equitable method under the current circumstances.

### **Will the KHSD User Fee Ever Go Away?**

**NO.** A Sewer User Fee is required to be charged to sewer system users by all entities that are served by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD). As long as the Kimberly Heights Sanitary District exists, the sewer user fee must remain. The amount may change, but the fee will always exist.

As long as there are properties requiring use of the sewer system, the Kimberly Heights Sanitary District, or a successor, will continue to maintain it. The Village of Tinley Park is expected to be the future successor (by agreement or statutory provisions). The KHSD Sewer User Fee would be replaced by a similar sanitary sewer collection system charge that would be

included on the Village's utility bills. (Kimberly Heights homeowners who receive water from Tinley Park currently do not have a sanitary sewer collection charge on their utility bills.)

### **Please Notify the KHSD For Any Sewer Problems**

It is important that the KHSD be made aware of manhole overflows (SSO), or any sewer backups that occur in individual homes. These incidents typically relate to heavy rain events. This information is needed for the KHSD's efforts to identify sources of Infiltration and Inflow (I/I) and better enable the Board to address problem(s) affecting the overall system.

Unfortunately, KHSD may not be able to provide an immediate resolution. The KHSD is aware certain manholes continue to surcharge in heavy rains. That problem is directly related to defects in the individual service laterals connecting each dwelling (including the church and school) to the KHSD sewer mains, and cannot be rectified until significant replacement or rehabilitation of the individual service laterals by the property owners has occurred.

KHSD's maintenance efforts continue to focus primarily toward reducing the I/I entering the sanitary sewers which is the direct cause of the occasional sewer surcharging (SSO). It is critical that we are made aware of the issues as they occur so they may be logged and investigated as necessary. KHSD is also required to include these incidents as part of an annual report to the MWRD.

### **Please Keep Manholes Clear and Accessible**

We ask that all homeowners keep the sanitary sewer manholes clear and accessible. While the flat surface of the manhole cover looks like the perfect level foundation to put a birdbath, garden statuary, or other yard items, please do not place anything on top of the manhole covers. It is important that the KHSD and its authorized representatives are able to easily access the manholes to monitor and maintain the sanitary sewer system at any time, day or night.

### **Service Lateral Maintenance is Homeowner's Responsibility**

The service lateral is the sewer line that connects the occupied structures (houses, church, and school) to the KHSD public sanitary sewer mains. Typically, the service lateral is a 4 to 6 inch diameter pipe. The service laterals, individually and collectively, are also referred to as the "Private Sewer System." It is estimated that the collective length of service lateral piping within the private/homeowner portion of the sewer system rivals or exceeds that of the public portion of the KHSD main sewer system.

KHSD has always assumed responsibility for the portion of certain service laterals that cross under a street right-of-way. The District's responsibility for an under-street lateral is from the connection with the District's sewer to the property line. KHSD assumes the responsibility for

that under-street portion of the lateral to help minimize disruption of the streets existing within the right-of-way.

The household service laterals (with the exception of the under street segments noted) are the individual property owner's responsibility to maintain in good working order. Since the formation of the District, the KHSD ordinances have stipulated that property owners are responsible for proper maintenance of their service laterals.

Because the private sewer system (service lateral) is buried underground, it is frequently taken for granted, until the homeowner experiences a problem (e.g. "out of sight, out of mind"). We have found that the sewer problems homeowners experience most frequently are caused by tree roots growing into the service lateral through cracks or loose joints combined with other "flushed" waste materials causing a blockage. In some rarer cases, a portion of the service lateral may have separated or collapsed. These same lateral defects that attract tree roots, also allow rain and ground water to enter the sanitary sewer system, and must be eliminated.

The majority of the homes and buildings (church and school) in Kimberly Heights were built over a 30 year period between 1955 and approximately 1985. This means that both the structures and their related sewer service laterals are now typically more than 40 years old. The materials and techniques commonly used for constructing the original sanitary sewer service laterals were not fully effective at keeping infiltration and inflow (I/I) water sources from entering the service lateral, especially as they have aged. **It has been identified that up to 80% of I/I enters a sewer system through private system sources.**

## **Contact KHSD Before Performing Any Work on Service Laterals**

Before doing any work on a service lateral (the sewer that runs from the home to the sewer main), please contact the KHSD. Under new MWRD requirements, the KHSD must maintain records of work performed on service laterals, even if it is simply to clear a blockage. The KHSD can also assist owners in identifying the location of their service lateral on the property.

## **Illegal Connections**

**It is illegal to discharge gutters, sump pumps, or other storm water drainage into the sanitary sewer. If found to exist, they should be immediately disconnected.**

KHSD can assess fines, disconnect sewer service, or take other actions if illegal connections are found. A number of these had been identified in the KHSD's prior testing and inspections and were corrected.

**Illegal connections cannot be restored.** Where previously identified illegal connections are found to have been reconnected, the property owners are subject to fines and other legal action.

## **Don't Flush These, Please!**

It is illegal to dump waste oil, hazardous chemicals, or non-sewerage wastes into the sewers. Homeowners should also avoid dumping household fats, oil, and grease (FOG) down the drain. It can cause blockages both to your own house sewers, as well as the KHSD's sewer mains.

The MWRD initiated a "**No Wipes Down the Pipes!**" campaign due to the increased popularity of disposable wipes of all types. Disposable wipes can create serious clogs within the wastewater systems. Many wipes claim to be flush-able, but in reality, they don't break down like toilet paper or human waste and interfere with the water reclamation process. For cleaning and personal hygiene, these wipes can be beneficial, but they should always be disposed with the trash, not flushed down the toilet.

Also, unused or expired drugs should never be flushed down the drain. There are programs specifically designed for collection and proper disposal of expired, or unused, drugs. Check with your local pharmacist or the Village of Tinley Park for available resources for proper disposal.

## **Storm Water Drainage in the Kimberly Heights subdivision**

For many years, separate storm and sanitary sewer systems have been required under local subdivision and building codes to accommodate rain/storm water and sanitary sewerage in new subdivisions and developments. Kimberly Heights was initially planned in 1955 before such storm sewer standards were established and required. There is no underground storm sewer system within the Kimberly Heights subdivision, except along 167th Street. The 167th Street storm sewers were installed by Cook County when the street was widened in 1991.

Storm water drainage in Kimberly Heights is almost exclusively overland, using the ditches running alongside our streets to convey the storm water to creek tributaries or other detention/retention drainage facilities. The overall storm drainage system in Kimberly Heights has deteriorated over time, both by natural aging forces, and modifications made by homeowners which have altered the original overland drainage ways and its outfall.

In some cases, the ditch may visibly no longer exist because a pipe has been installed or the ditch has simply been improperly and illegally filled in. Over the years, many property owners have both intentionally and unknowingly changed the original drainage swales and contours on their properties. Pools, sheds, garages, and house additions frequently have impacted the original property grading and yard drainage. Additionally, homeowners raising or leveling low areas of their yard for esthetics have often filled in the drainage swales and ditches, or installed incorrectly sized drain tile. Most alterations have negatively impacted the operation of the overland drainage system from the way it was originally designed and intended to function.

Collectively, these changes have both created and compounded storm drainage problems throughout the subdivision. Many of the current defects in the overland storm drainage system in Kimberly Heights cannot be easily corrected without a full analysis and development

of a restoration plan for the overall storm drainage system within the subdivision. Such comprehensive activities are further complicated since oversight and responsibility for the storm drainage system is now split between Bremen Township and the Village of Tinley Park depending on whether property is within the corporate limits of Tinley Park, or unincorporated Bremen Township.

The Bremen Township Highway Department in recent years has replaced driveway and street culverts, installed drainage tile, and adjusted ditch grades in the unincorporated portions of the subdivision. This work has generally not followed any comprehensive plan that considers both the upstream and downstream impacts. The resulting impacts of this work on localized problems and the overall subdivision drainage is mixed.

**Storm water drainage is not provided by KHSD and is not the KHSD's responsibility even if a Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO) becomes mixed with that storm water drainage.**

Like the sanitary sewer service lateral, drainage on an individual property is that owner's responsibility. If you have problems with storm drainage, or have questions about your property's drainage, please contact either the Village of Tinley Park Public Works Department (708)444-5500, or the Bremen Township Highway Department (708)333-9534, depending on whether your property is incorporated or unincorporated.

**Please be reminded that it is illegal to use the KHSD sanitary sewer system to collect or divert storm water or relieve temporary ponding and other water accumulations in yards.**

**Temporary ponding in the yard is not flooding.** Flooding occurs when significant amounts of water enter a home through abnormal means, or renders streets impassible. The natural ponding in yards, during, or following a rain storm should generally dissipate within a few days. If this temporary ponding is a significant personal concern, you should first contact the Village of Tinley Park Public Works Department or Bremen Township Highway Department (depending on whether your property is incorporated or unincorporated) for guidance regarding recommended corrective actions that may be required. You may also consider consulting with a landscape engineer to identify how to properly correct the contours of your property to redirect surface water away from your home or other accessory structures and toward the appropriate ditch or storm water catch basin. This could include installation of underground drainage pipe to discharge storm water into the ditch or catch basin at the street side of the property. Also keep in mind that you cannot deliberately change the grading on your property to shift surface or storm water onto your neighboring property(ies) and thus shifting a problem to someone else.

### **I'm Not Sure if My Property is Unincorporated, or if I am in the Village of Tinley Park. How Can I Determine This?**

All properties in Kimberly Heights have a Tinley Park mailing address regardless of whether it is incorporated into the Village of Tinley Park or not.

The easiest way to determine if your property is unincorporated or within the Village of Tinley Park, is to look at your property tax bills. At this time, if Tax Code 13130 or 13148 is printed on

the bill, the property is within the Village of Tinley Park. The tax bills will specifically list the Village of Tinley Park, Tinley Park Library Fund, and Tinley Park Park District (Tax Code 13148 only), as taxing agencies if the property is incorporated. Tax Code 13120 is reflected for properties that are unincorporated Bremen Township, and will also include the Acorn Public Library District (the Village of Tinley Park. Line items for the Tinley Park Library Fund, and Tinley Park Park District will not appear on an unincorporated property).

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