

# customer Pipeline



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## Local lessons from Superstorm Sandy



Massive power outages on the East Coast caused by Superstorm Sandy interrupted daily living for millions of Americans. If a sustained power outage occurred in the East Bay from a storm, earthquake or other disaster, how might that affect your water and wastewater services?

EBMUD uses power at treatment plants to treat drinking water before it reaches your tap, to pump water to houses at higher elevations, and to treat wastewater after it leaves your home.

If a power outage occurs, we can use back-up generators at the most critical facilities, as well as portable pumps. But this limited back-up equipment depends on fuel. Superstorm Sandy taught us that fuel might be scarce after a natural disaster.

Fuel shortages and power outages also may delay repairs to buried water infrastructure damaged in an earthquake.

It's best to be prepared for any unexpected water outage.

**1 Store enough water for 3-7 days** for all the members of your household, frequent visitors and pets. Depending on the damage to pipelines and the availability of power and fuel, it may take EBMUD days or weeks to restore water service to all customers.

You will want to have enough drinking water on hand to meet your basic needs until temporary supplies are made available in your community.



**2 Be prepared to disinfect water.** Even if pipelines are intact and water is available after a major disaster, treatment and testing to ensure water quality may take time. You may be advised to boil or disinfect your tap water before drinking it. But, as occurred after Superstorm Sandy, if there is no power or natural gas at your home, then you'll need an alternate heat source, like a camp stove, to boil water or unscented liquid bleach to disinfect it.



**3 Consider adding a sanitation kit** to your emergency preparedness supplies in the event sewer service is disrupted and you can't flush your toilet. Your kit should

include toilet paper, wipes and hand sanitizers, plastic garbage bags, a bucket and a deodorizing chemical such as lime, bleach or chemicals sold for camping.



Visit [www.ebmud.com](http://www.ebmud.com) for more emergency preparedness tips.

# A complicated and congested underground

Much of what makes our communities function lies beneath our feet.

There are more than 4,100 miles of water lines running under the East Bay, and many more thousands of miles of sewer, recycled water, gas, power, cable, phone and fiberoptic lines.

In older neighborhoods, abandoned utility lines often run parallel

or near active lines and create even more congestion underground.

When EBMUD crews repair or replace a water line in your neighborhood, they must dig carefully around adjacent pipes and intersecting utility lines.

Before any water pipe repair can begin, all active utility lines must be located and marked on the street.

Sometimes, waiting for accurate information can delay water infrastructure repair work. But it's worth the wait. Hitting the wrong utility line with heavy equipment could be an added inconvenience for nearby residents if services, like cable or phone, are knocked out temporarily.

At the worst, hitting the wrong line could be deadly.

Protecting the community, workers and the environment is an important priority at EBMUD, especially when working on critical infrastructure like water systems.

If we're working in your neighborhood, know that safety is our highest priority.

If you plan to dig on your property, call 811, the national "Call Before You Dig" number before you start. Underground Service Alert North will notify all utilities to mark and locate any lines running beneath your property. Call at least two working days before your project begins for this free service.



## Stormy days are bad news for leaky pipes

Rainy weather is good news for EBMUD's reservoirs, but bad news for an overwhelmed sewer system.

Most East Bay homes were built before 1950, and many still have their original private sewer laterals. A private sewer lateral is the pipe that connects the plumbing in a home to the main line located in the street. Over time, many of these pipelines have cracked, become disjointed or displaced by tree roots.

During local storms, when too much water enters the sewer system through these cracked pipes, sewage overflows into San Francisco Bay may occur.

By having your private sewer lateral inspected, tested and repaired, you can protect the Bay.

In 2013, if you sell or remodel your house in excess of \$100,000, most communities in our area will require you to obtain a private sewer lateral compliance certificate before transferring title or before final inspection and permit sign-off.

Visit [www.eastbaypsl.com](http://www.eastbaypsl.com) to learn more about private sewer laterals, compliance certificates and how you can protect the Bay.



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### EBMUD Mission Statement

To manage the natural resources with which the District is entrusted; to provide reliable, high-quality water and wastewater services at fair and reasonable rates for the people of the East Bay; and to preserve and protect the environment for future generations.