

## General Manager's Monthly Bulletin - March 2021

Ross Valley Sanitary District (RVSD) provides this monthly news bulletin to stay connected to the community we serve. We welcome your feedback on any information in the bulletin. If at any time you no longer prefer to receive this information, please email us at [info@rvsd.org](mailto:info@rvsd.org). Visit us online at [www.RVSD.org](http://www.RVSD.org) for more information.

As spring arrives with longer days and warmer weather, we note that the amount of rainfall for our area is only 40 percent of normal to date. Rain or shine, RVSD remains dedicated to ensuring our 200 miles of sewer lines and 19 pumping stations are properly maintained and operating. Our staff continue to observe the appropriate physical distance requirements, use sanitizer products and wear protective masks while performing our daily operation and maintenance tasks.



### Upcoming 2021 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Projects

Bidding for the [Butterfield/Arroyo-Kenrick Gravity Sewer Improvements Project](#) closes on April 29. Construction is anticipated to begin by mid-June. This project is funded by a competitive State Water Resources Control Board low-interest loan.

Design work for the [FY 2020/21 Gravity Sewer Improvements Project](#) is expected to be complete at the end of April, with bidding in May. We anticipate reviewing bids and selecting the project contractor by early June. Construction is anticipated to begin in July.

Design work for the Larkspur Pump Stations 14, 24 & 25 Improvements Project design is wrapping up, with bidding anticipated to begin in April. Construction is anticipated to begin in August. Removal of the abandoned sewer from the Ross Creek streambed near Shady Lane and replacement with a natural rock riffle will begin after plans that have been submitted to the state and federal agencies are approved.

Web pages will be launched for each project as the bidding phase begins.

### Easement Access Initiative

We are happy to report that since reaching out to property owners with a sewer utility easement on their property in late February, over 400 customers have provided us with their contact information. THANK YOU!

We want to continue to develop productive relationships and be able to provide timely information to property owners with an easement whenever possible. The information you provide now will help reduce or eliminate any "surprises" when RVSD maintenance staff need to access the easement to ensure the system keeps moving.

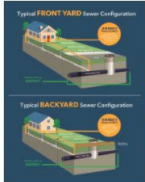
## SEWER UTILITY EASEMENTS

To better serve our customers, RVSD occasionally needs to access public utility easements on private property. Routine maintenance and repair work are essential to keep the sewer system working properly. During emergency conditions, access to easement areas and the ability to work within them is essential.

The types of sewer system infrastructure located on easements includes manholes, rockholes and pipes, mostly located underground. Manholes and smaller rockholes are access points on the sewer system. Their iron lids need to be uncovered and always accessible to District personnel.

RVSD has an unusually high percentage of the public sewer system on private property. Approximately 27 percent of pipes – about 66 miles of the sewer system's total 220-miles of pipe, and 34 percent of manholes – are located on 15 percent of the private parcels located within our service area. This averages out to about 35 percent of the total system being located within an easement.

An easement is a defined area of private property that is legally designated for specific use, access and travel through by an entity other than the property owner. Different types of easements include the right-of-way, sewer (utilized by RVSD) and easements for public utilities such as drinking water, electricity and gas service.



Some of these easements are explicitly recorded as encumbrances on private property, and the rest are prescriptive easements because they have existed in their locations for decades.

Easements provide RVSD the legal right of use and access to any of its facilities, equipment or assets that are located on private property in order to maintain the region's interconnected sewer system. This legal right of access applies whether or not the easement is officially recorded.

As one of the steps in RVSD gaining access, property owners, residents and businesses with a sewer easement located on their address may receive a door hanger notice like the one shown in the illustration to the right.

RVSD has a [Private Sewer Lateral Ordinance](#) in place (see Sections B and C) for the communities it serves. This Ordinance provides RVSD the legal right of use and access to service any of its facilities, equipment or assets and make emergency repairs to pipes and equipment located within an easement on private property.

### More information

Click on the interactive map below to find out if your property has an RVSD easement on it. Our goal is to connect with all impacted property owners in advance to provide timely information and build productive relationships moving forward.

Click individual graphic links under each title below for more easements information.

### Easement Examples



More information about easements is available by visiting our [Sewer Utility Easements web page](#). A [Sewer Easements Search interactive map](#) can also be used by following the instructions provided to see if there is an easement on your property. You can always visit the Easements web page, email [Info@rvsd.org](mailto:Info@rvsd.org), or contact us at 415-259-2949 with any questions or for more information.

## Larkspur Landing

In January, RVSD submitted the draft Larkspur Landing site cleanup completion report to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for their review and comment. Once the final revised report has been accepted by the EPA, the site will be officially available for consideration of the appropriate unrestricted land use. We will continue reaching out to the public throughout the process. Three Larkspur Landing Informational Presentations have been made as part of the public outreach process to discuss future disposition of the property. The first two presentations were held last September and December. The third presentation was held this past January 27.

All three Informational Presentations are posted on the [Larkspur Landing webpage](#). We encourage our ratepayers to track and participate in this discussion as the Board weighs alternatives, and we will keep you informed about additional opportunities to provide input.

## FY 2019/20 Force Main Appurtenance Project is Complete

The RVSD Board adopted Resolution No.21-1601 on March 17, approving final acceptance and authorizing the General Manager to file the [Notice of Completion for this project](#). Construction to repair, replace and/or install new air valves and build two new anode test stations began last May and was completed in February. The improvements allow for better isolation, redirection or shut off of flows in various parts of the system in case of a force main break. The improved air valves are also less likely to clog with grease and allow for the effective release of trapped gasses that can otherwise reduce the system capacity needed in wet weather.

## Inspect and Maintain Your Private Sewer Pipe

Private sewer pipe (laterals) connect homes and businesses to the District's sewer system – and they are responsible for about 50 percent of all spills! [Property owners are responsible for keeping their private sewer laterals clear](#). These laterals are often damaged by roots, ground settling, construction work and age. Please be sure to inspect and maintain private sewer pipes!

## Making Home or Yard Improvements?

We want to remind homeowners to be aware of the dangers that construction, yard and other types of debris and obstructions can cause if workers need access to your property. If your project involves digging, you or the person you have hired must contact [USA North 811](#) before breaking ground.

Home - Sustainability - Inspect & Maintain Your Sewer Pipe

### INSPECT & MAINTAIN YOUR SEWER PIPE

Private sewer laterals connect homes and businesses to the District's public sewer system and are responsible for about 50% of all sewer spills. Maintaining private sewer laterals (often damaged by roots, ground settling, construction work and age) is the property owners responsibility. Damaged pipes allow large volumes of water to flow into the collection system. This can overstrain pipes and the treatment plant, leading to dangerous spills. Below are steps you can take to avoid cracks and leaks when you buy a home or encounter periodic plumbing problems.

**Maintain / Repair**  
Laterals can be cleaned and maintained with roto-rake type equipment or repaired by trenching or utilizing technologies that don't require extensive digging such as "lining" and "pipe bursting". Use a licensed and insured plumbing contractor who can provide advice, inspection and repair services. All repairs must comply with District standards and be inspected by a District Inspector.

Visit the [Sewer Installation and Extensions page](#) for information on all requirements and procedures or call the district at 415-259-2949. You can also go to the [Contractors, State License Board website](#) or call 800-321-2762 to verify contractor licensing and get contractor hiring tips.

**Tip**  
Make sure your storm drains, sump pumps and gutters flow into a storm drain and not into your sewer lateral.

**Inspect**  
A TV or Video inspection will show lateral defects, such as cracks, root intrusion, open or offset joints and sagging. Along with determining the potential for storm water to flow into the system, these defects can clog the sewer, cause back-ups and overflow into your home. Water or air testing will also show defects, but will not reveal the type or location of the problem.

**Sump Pumps**  
Do not connect sump pumps to sewer lines.

Is your sump pump connected properly?  
Connecting sump pumps to the sewer system is illegal!

Visit our [Sewer Utility Easements](#) page and review our [Sewer Utility Easements FAQs](#) for more information about easements before making any changes or improvements in your yard!

## Safety Continues as a Top Priority

Our fully trained staff are equipped to comply with local, State and Federal safety and quality protocols for managing the RVSD sanitary sewer system in your neighborhood. Every day, their work ensures our interconnected wastewater collection system, pumping equipment and essential District services continue to run smoothly. Additional reminders to be aware of include:

**Access to our public lobby and other facilities remains closed to the public and all non-essential visitors until further notice.** We continue to issue permits (payments by check only), schedule essential inspection appointments and process grant and loan applications electronically via [info@rvsd.org](mailto:info@rvsd.org), Monday through Friday. Call 415-259-2949 for assistance.

**If you have a public sewer emergency, such as a manhole overflow or leaking pipe, or you smell or see sewage on the ground, please contact us immediately for 24-hour response at 415-259-2949.**

We are here to assist you and answer questions related to the sewer system. Please know that you can continue to count on your community sewer system to operate safely, reliably and efficiently. Don't hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns at **415-259-2949** or email us at [info@rvsd.org](mailto:info@rvsd.org). Thank you!

*Steve Moore, General Manager*



### Important Reminders:

[Click here](#) to review our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that explain sewer overflows and what to do.

**Call the RVSD Emergency Line 24/7 at 415-259-2949 if you see or have a public sewer emergency.** Common reasons to call include a manhole overflow, leaking pipe, odors or visible sewage on the ground. Our emergency crews are available 365 days per year, 24 hours per day, seven days per week!

**Before you hire a plumbing contractor,** [click here](#) to check the California Department of Consumer Affairs Contractors State License Board (CSLB) for more information. Make sure any plumber you hire is familiar with district policies and programs for any private property sewer emergency.



All of this information can be viewed online [here](#) or by clicking the "EMERGENCY" icon on our website [homepage](#).

**Upcoming 2021 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) construction projects will continue during the COVID-19 Shelter in Place Order.** These infrastructure upgrades help maintain the region's interconnected sewer system as we continue to provide cost-effective wastewater collection service that protects public health and the environment by reducing the risk of sewer overflows. You can view [upcoming projects being planned and going out to bid](#) as well as recently completed projects throughout our service area.

Watch our [Capital Improvement Program](#) (CIP) web page for the latest information and updates on these upcoming projects. Individual web pages will be launched for each project as the bidding phase begins.

- **Butterfield/Arroyo-Kenrick Gravity Sewer Improvements** – Bids for this project are due by April 29. Contractor award and start of construction is anticipated to take place by mid-June.
- **FY 20/21 Gravity Sewer Improvements**– Design work is nearly complete. Project bidding and contractor award is anticipated by early June. Construction is anticipated to begin in July.
- **Larkspur Pump Stations 14, 24 & 25 Improvements**– Design work is nearly complete. Bidding is anticipated in April, with construction anticipated to begin in August.
- **Ross Creek Sewer Removal Project**– Project is in the permitting phase, with a goal to begin

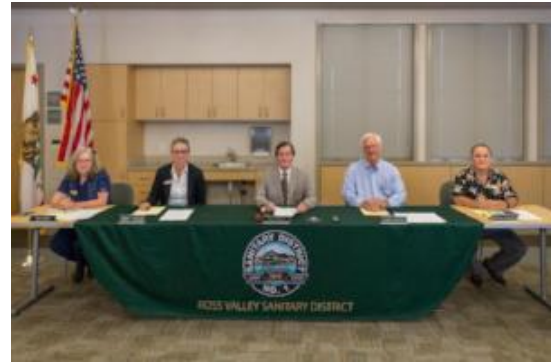
construction this summer, during dry weather.

Want to receive timely construction updates? [Click here](#) to select the project you want updates for or call us at 415-259-2949.

**Due to current COVID-19 conditions, members of the public are invited to attend RVSD Regular Board Meetings safely and remotely from a computer, tablet or smartphone.**

Ross Valley Sanitary District Board Meetings are typically held the third Wednesday of each month at 5:00 PM.

**The RVSD Regular Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 21, 2021, at 5:00 PM via GoToMeeting.**



[Click here](#) for updated meeting access information 24 hours before the meeting. [Check the agenda posting here](#) 72 hours before each meeting for open session time.

**Want an alert when the next Board meeting agenda is available?** Please write to our [Clerk of the Board](#) to request to be included in upcoming agenda alerts.

Click here to visit  
[RVSD.org](http://RVSD.org)