

General Manager's Monthly Bulletin April 2022

Ross Valley Sanitary District (the District) 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 wish to receive this newsletter, please select "Unsubscribe" at the bottom of this message. Visit us online at www.RVSD.org for more information.



We end the month of April with much needed rain! Throughout the month, the District was busy working on a variety of projects, including demolition and fabrication work at Larkspur Pump Station (PS14) on Doherty Drive by Hall Middle School. Work on the FY 2020/21 Gravity Sewer Improvements Project is wrapping up and work on the Larkspur Pump Stations Improvements Project, located on Doherty as well as South Eliseo Drive, is anticipated to be complete in October.

Photo: Tamalpais Creek culvert at Evergreen Drive, Kent Woodlands

Remember, if you see a public sewer emergency such as a manhole overflow, leaking pipe, or sewage on the ground, **please call the RVSD Emergency Line 24/7 at 415-259-2949 as soon as possible**. When leaving an emergency call, be prepared to provide your name, phone number, and address where the incident occurs. After-hours calls will route to our on-call staff for immediate assistance.

Outdoor Drainage Fixtures

Did you know that outdoor showers and sinks utilize a sewer lateral to transport wastewater to the sewer main? These laterals are under RVSD's jurisdiction if they reside outside a building footprint. If you are planning to install an outdoor shower or sink, you will need to [apply for a lateral permit](#) with RVSD, and have the work inspected by a District Inspector.

Outdoor drainage fixtures can be a source of inflow & infiltration (I&I). When storm water enters the sewer system through I&I, it can cause sewer spills and backups in your home. Additionally, I&I can overwhelm Central Marin Sanitation Agency's treatment plant, leading to the discharge of partially untreated wastewater into the bay.



The District needs your assistance in ensuring that I&I is reduced by not allowing rainwater to enter the sewer system. Below are the District requirements for outdoor drainage fixtures:

- Install a roof over outdoor showers or kitchen sinks
- Cover outdoor sinks when not in active use
- Curb and grade shower floors

Thank you!



Lateral Replacement Grant and Loan Program Funding

Funding is still available for the District's [Lateral Replacement Grant and Loan Programs](#). Submit your grant or loan application to RVSD before **June 30th** to ensure you receive funding. The District provides individual grants up to \$1,500 and low-interest loans up to \$25,000 to replace your private sewer lateral. If you have questions about the program, please contact RVSD Administrative Staff at 415-259-2949 or email info@rvsd.org.

2022 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Projects Planning Update

Planning work for upcoming Capital Improvement Program projects includes improvements to Lift Station 20 off E Sir Francis Drake Blvd (across from the Larkspur Ferry Terminal) as well as the FY 2022/23 Gravity Sewer Improvements Project to replace existing gravity sewer lines throughout the District service area. The FY 2022/23 Gravity Sewer Improvements Project is still in design by Harris & Associates.

2021-22 Capital Improvement Progress Report Updates

FY 2020/21 Gravity Sewer Improvements:

This project is nearing completion. All contract work is complete except for minor punch list work and rehabilitating several manholes throughout the District. Additional work is planned for Woodland Road near Evergreen Drive in Kentfield starting in June, to address some excessive groundwater infiltration that we observed when we installed new sewers upstream on Laurel Way (photo right and at beginning of newsletter). Visit the [project webpage](#) for updates and more information as it becomes available.



Larkspur Pump Stations 14, 24, & 25 Improvements:

Construction is underway at PS 14. Current work includes construction of a new equipment pad for the relocation of the diesel fuel tank that holds fuel for the generator. Additionally, concrete demolition in the wet well of the pump station is complete. Structural steel is expected to be installed in the coming weeks for the new entry landing into the wet well stairway. Visit the [project webpage](#) for updates and more information.

More information about the District's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) can be found on our [CIP project](#) webpage. You can also visit our [Recently Completed Projects](#) web page for more information about completed projects to date.



RVSD Drought Measures and Recycled Water Use

Last year's hydrology in Marin County, on the heels of a prior dry year, put reservoir levels at a record low. In response, [Marin Municipal Water District](#) (MMWD) imposed an unprecedented prohibition on public works' use of potable water (from hydrants). This included water used for our routine hydro-jetting to clean sewers as well as soil compaction for trench restoration, street cleaning, and dust control. It was a unique challenge, as no other water district in the Bay Area has ever issued such a restriction.

RVSD and its joint powers partners [San Rafael Sanitation District](#) and [Sanitary District No. 2](#) (Corte Madera) were positioned well to meet the challenge, due to RVSD re-starting the [Central Marin Sanitation Agency](#) (CMSA) recycled wastewater truck fill station in 2019. We were all able to receive a variance in July 2021 from MMWD to "maximize recycled water", since health and safety depend on sewer cleaning and there are no recycled water hydrants in our service areas. [Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District](#) in North San Rafael is the only sanitary district in the MMWD service area with recycled water hydrants.

RVSD uses an average of 800,000 gallons per year (2.5 acre-feet/year) for essential sewer cleaning to protect health and

safety. Since we were already committed to using recycled water (see Recycled and Potable Water Use graph below) RVSD accepted the challenge to maximize recycled water. In July-August 2021, using water tanks on our older sewer cleaning trucks and a rented water truck, RVSD was able to use recycled water for 97 percent of its sewer cleaning.



However, RVSD fell behind on its targeted miles cleaned because of the 20–45-minute travel time back to CMSA instead of filling up our trucks 2-4 times per day using nearby hydrants. RVSD also experienced higher costs of renting a water truck, fuel costs, and labor dedicated to truck driving instead of sewer cleaning, as well as higher maintenance costs. Since roots grow more aggressively into sewers during drought conditions, there was a “double whammy” effect, which led to an increase in sanitary sewer overflows and back-ups into residences this past year. Also, the CMSA plant could not produce recycled water during the entire month of January 2022 due to operational issues related to wet weather flows.

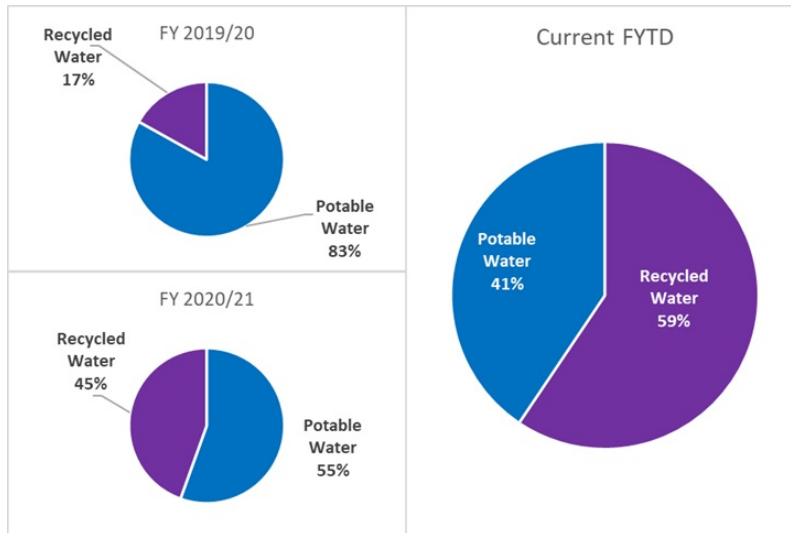
Altogether, since July 2021, RVSD has used recycled water for 59 percent of its sewer cleaning. Prior to the MMWD prohibition, RVSD used recycled water for 45 percent of its cleaning, so we were able to increase its use through this drought emergency.

Fortunately, the reservoirs filled up again by January, but we were able to learn important lessons about maximizing recycled water use for sewer cleaning. We learned that a strict prohibition on use of potable water for sewer cleaning is not sustainable or necessary going forward, and that conservation through use of recycled water is an optimization exercise, not a maximization exercise.

We experienced the negative impacts of increased sewer overflows and back-ups, especially during the October 24, 2021 storm, along with falling behind on sewer cleaning targets. We learned that some of our sewer cleaning equipment was damaged due to higher salt, chlorine and solids in the recycled water, and that potable hydrant water is needed to “freshen” our equipment and reduce wear-and-tear from using only recycled water. We learned that we could save about 1.5 acre-feet of potable water per year, which is not significant from a water supply standpoint (water use in RVSD is about 5,000 acre-feet per year).

RVSD provided an engineering report to MMWD in May 2021 that estimated the cost per acre-foot to provide recycled water for all the sewer cleaning within RVSD is \$165,000 per acre-foot. For comparison, desalination is estimated to cost \$2,600 per acre-foot, raising Soulejule Dam \$2,100 per acre-foot, and expansion of conveyance of Sonoma County transmission facilities \$1,400 per acre-foot, all around one hundred times less per gallon. Based on these lessons, we are hopeful that MMWD will not extend this prohibition, nor require it in future drought emergencies except as a last resort.

RVSD - Recycled and Potable Water Use, 2019 - 2022



Larkspur Landing Update

Cleanup activities are complete at the Larkspur Landing former treatment plant site as required by the U.S.



Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

A special meeting of the Board was held March 30 to receive the results of the Larkspur Landing online survey that was made available for community members to complete by March 10, 2022.

At that meeting, the Board decided to postpone action on the property pending decisions by the City of Larkspur on its General Plan and Housing Element. [Visit the Larkspur Landing web page](#) to view the survey results

and learn more. Want future Larkspur Landing Updates? Please send an email to info@rvsd.org and request being added to our Larkspur Landing interested parties list.

nextdoor RVSD is on Nextdoor!

Subscribe to our Nextdoor page [here](#) as one of the ways you can find out if there will be construction in your neighborhood.

LinkedIn RVSD is on LinkedIn!

Follow our LinkedIn page [here](#) to stay up to date on current job announcements and other news about the District.

Important Reminders:

[Review our Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) that explain sewer overflows and what to do if you see one.

Before hiring a plumbing contractor, 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.

Steve Moore, General Manager

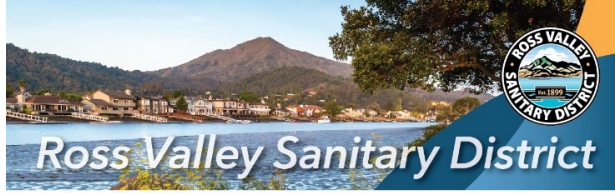


Members of the public are invited to attend RVSD Regular Board Meetings safely and remotely from a computer, tablet or smartphone.

Ross Valley Sanitary District Board Meetings are typically held on the third Wednesday of each month at 5 p.m. These Board Meetings will continue to be held virtually until further notice.

The next RVSD Regular Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 18, 2022 at 5 p.m. 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 being included in upcoming agenda alerts.



Ross Valley Sanitary District

You can receive
\$1,500-\$2,500

in Lateral Replacement Grant Program (LRGP)
funds toward the cost of **replacing**
your sewer lateral.

CLICK HERE to learn more, or visit www.RVSD.org/LRGP

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