

General Manager's Monthly Bulletin

January 2019

Ross Valley Sanitary District provides this monthly news bulletin of current notable activity and events to stay connected to the community we serve. We welcome your feedback on any information in the bulletin and if at any time you no longer prefer to receive this information, simply unsubscribe using the link below.

For more information, visit www.RVSD.org.

A Tale of Two Storms - In January, RVSD experienced two exceptional storms: the first on Sunday January 6 and the second on Wednesday January 16. The first storm resulted in a sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) in San Anselmo. During the second storm, an SSO was averted in Larkspur due to bypass-pump planning and rapid response based on our "SMART manhole cover" flow monitoring.

At RVSD, the month was a tale of two storms: an SSO that was, and an SSO that wasn't.



The January 6 SSO occurred at our 16/17 [Gravity Sewer Improvement Project](#) (Meadowcroft and Nokomis), and is estimated at 245,700 gallons. Of that amount, approximately 105,000 gallons was captured before it reached surface waters. Another 77,400 gallons was prevented from overflowing by trucks pumping it out of the overflowing manhole, and transporting it downstream back into the system.

It happened on Broadmoor Avenue at Morningside Lane, with the overflow consisting of less than 10% untreated wastewater from sinks, showers,

laundry and toilets and over 90% from storm water. The photo to the left shows water flowing from the manhole on Broadmoor toward Morningside.

We are still investigating the details of this SSO and will provide a 45-day technical report by February 20 on the cause, the spill volume, and how much was out of our control due to the extraordinary storm, estimated to be a once-in-five-years type event.

The Sleepy Hollow rain gauge upstream of the SSO registered 4.44 inches in one day, and 0.92 inches during one hour. Weather reports had predicted a storm in the 1- to 2-inch range. The temporary bypass pumping and piping set up around the construction site to convey the storm-swollen flows was not able to handle the volume we actually experienced.

The January 6 overflow went into the street gutter from Broadmoor onto Morningside in front of five houses, and entered a storm drain inlet, which is piped under ground to Sleepy Hollow Creek near Beverly Lane.

Aware that a problem could develop based on the rainfall and SMART manhole covers, RVSD staff were on site before the first drop spilled, and we personally notified and assisted the residents of homes along the overflow path to make sure they did not come into contact with the overflow, shown in the photo above.

Signs were posted along the street where the SSO occurred between noon and midnight on Sunday during the storm.

We sampled the location where the SSO reached Sleepy Hollow Creek as shown in the photo to the right and posted signs for the public to avoid contact. The water quality data will be summarized in the 45-day technical report.

We calculated the necessary pumping and piping to avoid future SSO's at this construction site for up to a once-in-ten-years type of event. Subsequent storms have been effectively bypassed.



We hope to finish the current work on this project in February, with final completion of work on Broadmoor likely to be after the rainy season, where we are increasing the pipe sizes to prevent these very SSOs in the future.

The January 6 SSO generated local media interest, and we were interviewed for three written articles (two from the Marin IJ), three television news stories, and two radio interviews.

We emphasized accountability for avoidable SSOs, being prepared for the coming storms, the higher-than-expected rainfall, and the importance of our capital improvement program to provide long-term solutions to storm-caused overflows from the sanitary sewer system.

We have learned from the experience and are refining our strategy to communicate the presence of SSOs to residents and businesses affected by these events, which we aim to minimize and eliminate in the future.

On January 16, an "atmospheric river" storm delivered 3.43 inches of rainfall in one day at the Marin Municipal Water District's (MMWD) nearby rain gauge at Lake Lagunitas. That night we avoided a potentially massive SSO in the Diane Lane area of Larkspur, a known trouble spot that is targeted for long term capital improvement.

Our SMART manhole covers measure the wastewater level remotely, and when waters rise to levels of concern, we receive an alarm, mobilize and deploy a bypass pumping system designed for this area as shown in the photo to the right.

For this second storm, we were positioned to pump excess storm water in our sewer system 350 feet from the SMART manhole to the next downstream manhole, using a system of hose ramps and a silent generator.

These preventative measures were taken to ensure the safety and comfort of residents as our crews worked throughout the night to avoid the possibility of an SSO in the area.



When conditions such as these two recent storms come along and community members are concerned about falling trees, power outages and flooded roadways, RVSD staff are working tirelessly to keep wastewater in the sewers as we rebuild the system in order to meet our mission of delivering high quality wastewater collection with no avoidable overflows.

This tale of two storms ends with many thanks to our crews that work to protect public health and the environment, no matter the circumstances!

Steve Moore, General Manager



Construction Notifications on Nextdoor - Ross Valley Sanitary District has joined Nextdoor to share construction updates that have a direct impact on your neighborhood. Please look for our construction notifications on Nextdoor soon. Each will be neighborhood specific -- and know that we will provide timely information using multiple information platforms to minimize disruptions related to construction activity.

We look forward to connecting with you on Nextdoor to build stronger, safer, and happier neighborhoods throughout Ross Valley!



Rainy Season Reminder - Wet weather can increase the chance of sewer overflows into our creeks and Bay. Being ready when winter rains further saturate the soil is easy!

[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 have a public sewer emergency, such as a manhole overflow, leaking pipe, smell odors, or see sewage on the ground. Emergency crews are available 365 days of the year, 24 hours a day, 7 days per week!

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

Please contact a plumber or a [licensed contractor](#) familiar with district policies and programs for any private property sewer emergency.

RVSD CIP Construction Update - As 2019 begins, work continues to progress on RVSD Capital Improvement Program (CIP) construction projects to rehabilitate underground sewer pipes and associated structures throughout our service area.

These sewer line repairs and rehabilitation projects are critical to protect public health and the environment by reducing the risk of sewer overflows. Click on each of the CIP construction projects to find out the latest project information and updates.

1. [Fairfax, Larkspur, San Anselmo Sewer Projects](#)
2. [Kentfield PS 15 Improvements](#)
3. [Ross Common / Upper Shady Lane Sewer Improvements](#)
4. [San Anselmo Sewer Improvements](#)



[Click here](#) for a CIP overview, or to view our interactive project map. A magnifying glass icon is provided with the map to enter your address and see if construction is currently, or will take place in your neighborhood. You can also click on the map area you are interested in to identify the project name, contact information and more.

You can also [click here](#) to select and receive timely construction updates or call us at 415-259-2949.

We greatly appreciate your patience as we make these much-needed infrastructure improvements.

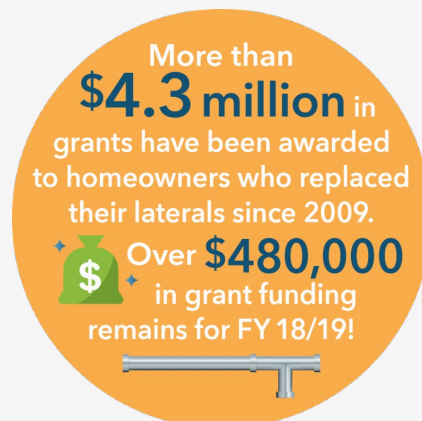
Lateral Replacement Grants and Loans Available - RVSD is committed to partnering with the community to replace outdated sewer laterals. We established a grant and loan program with committed resources to help homeowners repair and replace faulty sewer laterals on their property. Of the total \$1.1 million funding for these two programs, approximately \$750,000 remains for FY 18/19!

More than \$4.3 million in grants have been awarded to homeowners who replaced their sewer laterals since 2009. Over \$480,000 in grant funding remains for FY 18/19!

[Click here](#) to see the Lateral Replacement Grant Program Guide. Grant funding of up to \$2,500 is available for individual properties located:

- In high inflow and infiltration (I&I) basins as determined by prior RVSD flow studies
- On streets with Paving Condition Index (PCI) values of 30 and lower
- On streets planned for future paving by local agencies within the next 12 to 18 months

Over \$275,000 in loan funding remains for FY 18/19. The standard maximum loan amount for lateral replacements is \$10,000. For properties facing higher paving costs due to work on a moratorium street or to remove illegal storm water connections such as sump pumps or roof drains, the maximum amount is \$15,000. [Click here](#) to view the Lateral Replacement Loan Program Guide and see if you qualify!



Next Board Meeting - The next Regular Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 13, 2019 at 5pm. [Check the agenda posting here](#) 72 hours before the meeting for open session time. The meeting will be held at the Central Marin Police Authority's Community Room, located at 250 Doherty Drive in Larkspur. The agenda will be posted to the [RVSD website](#) on Friday, February 8.

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.

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