



## General Manager's Monthly Bulletin

April 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](http://www.RVSD.org).

**April Updates** - With spring's arrival comes welcome news that our sewer system weathered a challenging winter. We experienced only one noteworthy incident, which happened to be at a location where sewer infrastructure was being rebuilt to increase capacity and reliability.



There were a few other small overflows this winter, all caused by other utilities, plumbers, and a tree falling on a sewer. It feels like we have turned a corner on reducing storm related overflows, but problem areas remain. One example is in Larkspur, where the sewer system the District annexed in 1993 has undersized sewer trunklines and dated pump stations in of need upgrades.

We are taking several actions now to prepare for the 2019/20 fiscal year that begins July 1, including finalizing the annual budget, working on a new labor agreement, conducting long-term planning to address unfunded pension liabilities, and developing a five-year plan for sewer rates. [Click here](#) to view videos of the March 20 and April 17 Public workshops on the sewer rate schedule as they are posted.

We are also preparing to sell revenue bonds to finance the new RVSD facility at 1111 Anderson Drive in San Rafael, cleanup of contaminated soils at our Larkspur Landing facility, and the next wave of capital projects required by the Cease and Desist Order from the Regional Water Board. The bond is being issued to pay for these necessary upgrades to avoid adversely affecting sewer rates.



**ROSS VALLEY SANITARY DISTRICT**  
2960 Kerner Blvd., San Rafael, CA 94901

**Budget Year 2019/20 Sewer Service Charge Assistance Program  
Application**

From budget year 2019/20 onward, the Ross Valley Sanitary District Sewer Service Charge Assistance Program will be reflected as a 25% discount visible on your property tax form. There are a couple of factors to confirm eligibility for the Sewer Service Charge Assistance Program. This application is for one single-family residence, you must own and occupy the residence located within Marin County, and your annual gross household income\* is not more than the Low-Income Limit for that applies to the number of family members.

Department of Housing and Urban Planning Low-Income Limits 2018 (Marin County)	
Household Size	Gross Annual Income Threshold
1	\$82,200
2	\$93,950
3	\$105,700
4	\$117,400
5	\$126,800
6	\$136,200
7	\$145,600
8	\$155,000

This application must be filed on or before **June 30, 2019**, for the 2019/20 budget year. Failure to file on time will result in rejection of your application unless good cause can be shown for failure to timely file. If approved, the sewer service charge assistance will only apply for one year. You must file a new application form for each year to remain eligible for the program.

All applicants must complete the following information (Please print clearly or type):

**PROOF OF INCOME (Required)**

Total Household Income\* \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*Household Income is the combined gross income, taxable or non-taxable, for all persons who occupy a single-family residence and does not include Federal and State income tax adjustments, deductions, exemptions or credits.

Please enclose in a sealed envelope a copy of your 2018 filed tax return (Form 1040, 1040A or 1040EZ) or PG&E bill showing participation in the CARE Program. This form will be stamped and kept.

**District affordability of sewer rates program.** Since 2016, the District has offered the [Sewer Service Charge Assistance Program](#), which currently benefits about 120 ratepayers with a 25% discount. They qualify because their income is below the Department of Housing and Urban Planning low-income limits. For example, if the 2018 household gross annual income is less than \$82,200 for one person or \$93,950 for two, customers qualify for this discount. This year we are moving from a rebate approach to embedding and showing the discount on County property tax forms. [Click here](#) for an upcoming 2019/20 budget year application. **Completed applications need to be submitted for filing on or before June 30, 2019.** At this time, all recipients must file a new application each year to remain eligible for the program.

Marin County residents pay double the sewer fee for single-family homes with an approved Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU). This can provide an unintended disincentive to develop ADUs, which help provide affordable housing in our County. In our upcoming proposed sewer rates, we propose cutting this additional fee in half, so that single family homes with ADUs will pay 1.5 times the sewer rate instead of double.

**A Public Hearing on Proposed Rates for Sewer Service Charges will be held on Wednesday, June 19, 2019 at 6 pm** in the Central Marin Police Authority community room at 250 Doherty Drive in Larkspur. We welcome our ratepayers to attend the hearing. Please [click here](#) to see full Public Hearing notice.

**Protecting Public Health and the Environment**  
**Ross Valley Sanitary District**  
**Notice of Public Hearing on Proposed Rates for Sewer Service Charges**  
Wednesday, June 19, 2019 at 6:00 pm  
Central Marin Police Authority  
250 Doherty Dr., Larkspur, CA 94939  
The Ross Valley Sanitary District will hold a public hearing on a proposed rate schedule for Sewer Service Charges

A sewer system operation that is well-maintained and high-performing prevents wastewater overflows in our community, responds quickly to customer needs, coordinates with other utilities, and keeps pollution from entering our creeks and the Bay. This service is essential to protecting public health and the environment and maintaining a high quality of life.

Ross Valley Sanitary District collects a Sewer Service Charge on each property that is connected to the District's sewer system. Property owners receive the annual charge on their property tax bill, which is collected by Marin County. The District uses these funds to operate and maintain 200 miles of sewer pipes and 19 pump stations - to collect, pump, and transport four million gallons of wastewater per day. These funds also pay for treatment of wastewater by Central Marin Sanitation Agency (CMSA) for reuse and discharge to the Bay. The average age of the pipes in the District's collection system is 65 years old with over 40% installed prior to 1935. In the last three years, capital funding has helped the District complete more than \$40 million in infrastructure improvements for sewer and pump station rehabilitation, resulting in an improved sewer system with fewer stormwater-related overflows.

**WHY NOW?**  
The District has been under regulatory order by the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board over the past five years to implement timely maintenance of our sewer system and to make systematic infrastructure upgrades to achieve long-term reliability. In order to continue to meet these goals, the Sewer Service Charge is proposed to increase over the next five years, but at an average rate that is lower than the previous five years. The proposed rate increases are designed to meet the District's regulatory requirements and community expectations for well-maintained and high-performing sewer system operation.

**HOW MUCH?**  
Under this proposal, rate revenue from the sewer service charge will increase 6.8% on July 1, 2019, then 6.8%, 5.8% and 5.8% on each subsequent July 1, leading on July 1, 2023. The proposal involves structural changes to the rates to ensure equity between customers; therefore, the actual changes to Sewer Service Charges in the first year (July 1, 2019) will vary. A portion of the property taxes that the County collects from District customers helps fund the capital improvement program for sewer pump station rehabilitation in the District, except in the City of Larkspur, an affiliate of the annexation in 1993. Because none of the property tax collected from the property tax payers in the District goes toward capital funding in the District, the Sewer Service Charge for Larkspur residents is proposed to increase relatively more in the first year, and then track with the rest of the District's ratepayers from that point onward.

For Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU), the proposal includes lowering the rate to 50% of the rate for a single-family residence.

Please see the Sewer Rate Study report posted to the District's website for complete details.

**Your Sewer Service Charge pays to maintain and upgrade sewer system infrastructure as well as wastewater treatment costs. We help keep rates low by using leading technologies to monitor, rehabilitate and replace aging infrastructure. Applying nationally recognized maintenance techniques to improve reliability and dependability. Continuously working to improve service, lower costs, and increase efficiency. By law, Sewer Service Charges can only pay for sewer system and treatment plant maintenance, operation and rehabilitation. The proposed Sewer Service Charges will provide reliable and dependable wastewater collection and treatment services while protecting our creeks, the Bay and public health. Written protests on the proposed Sewer Service Charges must identify the owner(s) or tenant(s) of the property and provide the property address. Protests must be mailed prior to the close of the Public Hearing on June 19, 2019 and may be filed delivered during the hearing. Mailbox is closed for:**  
**Julie McEne**  
**Clark of the Board**  
**2960 Kerner Blvd.**  
**San Rafael, CA 94901**  
E-mail protests are not accepted. If written protests are presented by someone other than the owner(s), the District cannot approve the proposed rates.

**www.RVSD.org**

Have you seen our public service announcements on TV? We recently began a three-month pilot with Xfinity and DirecTV to air a series of Public Service Announcements (PSAs) educating viewers about the importance of keeping items including Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG, disposable wipes, unused drugs, and sump pump discharges out of our sewers. A message about our [sewer lateral replacement grant and loan program](#) is also airing. [Click here](#) to view all of the PSAs.

In early April, the [District issued notices inviting bids](#) for two summer/fall projects: the Butterfield/Meadowcroft-Arroyo sewer replacement project in San Anselmo and the Excavation and Remediation of Contaminated Soils at 2000 Larkspur Landing Circle in Larkspur. The Larkspur Landing soils have trace amounts of PCB from a marine paint that was used to paint the buildings of our former wastewater treatment plant in the 1970s. The U.S. EPA approved a site cleanup plan in March 2019. [Click here](#) for more information about the Larkspur Landing Property.



Plans are underway for a community celebration and "ribbon cutting" on Tuesday, June 11 during the lunch hour at Bon Air, Greenbrae to mark the completion of work on Pump Stations 12 and 13 in Greenbrae/Larkspur. Watch for more details in next month's bulletin.

Have an enjoyable spring, everyone!

*Steve Moore, General Manager*

**RVSD 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 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!

[Click here](#) to check the California Department of Consumer Affairs Contractors State License Board (CSLB) for information before you hire a plumbing contractor. 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 by clicking "EMERGENCY" on our website homepage or [click here](#).

**RVSD CIP Construction Update** - RVSD Capital Improvement Program (CIP) construction projects are taking place now 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.



Look for construction projects taking place as the rainy season ends. Click on each of the CIP construction projects listed below for 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 - Butterfield](#)
5. [San Anselmo Sewer Improvements - Nokomis](#)

[Click here](#) for a CIP overview, for direct access to our interactive project map you can [click here](#). A magnifying glass icon is provided with the map to enter your address and see if construction is currently taking place, 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.



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

RVSD APPRECIATES your patience during construction as we fulfill our commitment to making strategic long-term infrastructure improvements.



*Ross Valley Sanitary District*

 **Your efforts**  
protect our environment!

**Help prevent sewer backups:**

- Keep fats, oil & grease out of your drain.
- Keep hazardous waste, pesticides & medications out of drains.
- No wipes in the pipes! Flush only toilet paper.
- Inspect & maintain your sewer pipes.



**At RVSD, we're also doing our part ...**  
We have achieved 100% renewable energy through Marin Clean Energy's Deep Green program!

[www.RVSD.org](http://www.RVSD.org) • 415-259-2949

**Next Board Meeting** - The Ross Valley Sanitary District Board Meetings are typically held the third Wednesday of each month at 5pm at the Central Marin Police Authority's Community Room, located at 250 Doherty Drive in Larkspur.

**The next Regular Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 15, 2019 at 5pm.** At this meeting we will present the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 draft budget.

[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.

**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](#)*