The Heron

Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District

Fall 2019

Treatment Plant Upgrade Project — Full Speed Ahead!

Since last May, the District's treatment plant has been undergoing a major upgrade, with substantial construction activity encompassing two areas. The secondary wastewater treatment process, which is subject to increasing regulatory compliance, is getting significant equipment upgrades, while the recycled water treatment process is being expanded to nearly quadruple its capacity.

The work is going full speed ahead, making noteworthy progress, and will continue into 2022.

So far, the work has included: installation of over 100, 30-inch diameter concrete caissons (structural piers) drilled 10 to 12 feet into bedrock for the new Aeration Basin and Electrical Building (the caissons will vary in length from 10 feet to over 50 feet!); significant concrete pours to create the new Anoxic Basin, Aeration Basin, and Electrical Building, requiring the delivery of over 400 cubic yards of concrete via 80 concrete truck trips in and out of the site, and; continual deliveries of large quantities of reinforcement steel and other materials.

This ongoing work brings significant truck and equipment traffic on Smith Ranch Road. Please observe these safety guidelines if you are visiting the Plant offices or reclamation ponds and trail:

- **Be Cautious** – you are near a major construction zone; drive slowly and watch in all directions for equipment, trucks, and work crews on Smith Ranch Road
- **Be Aware** of temporary closures of Smith Ranch Road
- **Observe** all safety/traffic signage and follow directions from construction staff

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Grade beam reinforcing steel

From left to right: Crystal Yezman, Member, Board of Directors; Rabi Elias, Vice President, Board of Directors; Mike Cortez, District Engineer; Irene Huang, Associate Engineer

District Administrative and Engineering Offices are *Moving*

As major construction continues at the treatment plant, we're also making a temporary change: our administrative and engineering departments will soon be moving to an off-site office very nearby.

The new offices are located at **101 Lucas Valley Road, Suite 300**, just a few minutes' drive from the District's main facilities. The District's general manager, four administration staff members, and two engineering staff members are expected to be in the new office as of **December 1**.

The existing offices have very limited space for staff and for parking, so we are leasing the new office site for five years. During that time a new main office building will be built at our treatment plant site which will have more room for our staff and include additional parking. It will be a more comfortable and productive setting for both staff and those visiting the main office.

Please note that the District Board of Directors meetings will also take place at this new site. After **December 1**, anyone wishing to attend a Board meeting or meet with the administrative staff is invited to come to the new location.

We are confident that this move will not cause any inconvenience to visitors. There will be signage on the front of the "old" offices reminding visitors of the new location.

Sewer Lateral Ordinance Being Developed

Helping Protect the Environment and Maintain Efficiency

Do you know the condition of your sewer lateral? That's the pipeline that sends wastewater from your home to the main sewer pipeline in the street — eventually leading to the District's wastewater treatment plant.

To address the potential for excess flows from private sewer laterals, the District is developing an ordinance that requires an evaluation of each residential property's sewer lateral for condition and potential illegal connections. The goal of the new ordinance is to reduce the chance of wet weather-related sewer spills, and improve the efficiency of the treatment plant operations.

Illegal connections to the sewer lateral, such as sump pump discharges or gutter downspouts, are known as inflow, and cause unnecessarily high flows in the sewer main network. When that happens, it increases the potential for sewer spills, and requires the treatment plant to process higher flows at increased cost for power and chemicals. Another factor contributing to heightened flow is infiltration which is when an older sewer lateral, and/or one that is subject to tree root disruption, develops cracks that allow groundwater into the system.

After gathering community input on the proposed ordinance, the District Board of Directors discussed and modified it at its September 19, 2019 regular meeting. A Public Hearing was held on this issue on November 21, 2019. This ordinance is consistent with the District's infrastructure and environmental stewardship philosophy and, once in place, will help keep your wastewater rates as low as possible while protecting the environment.

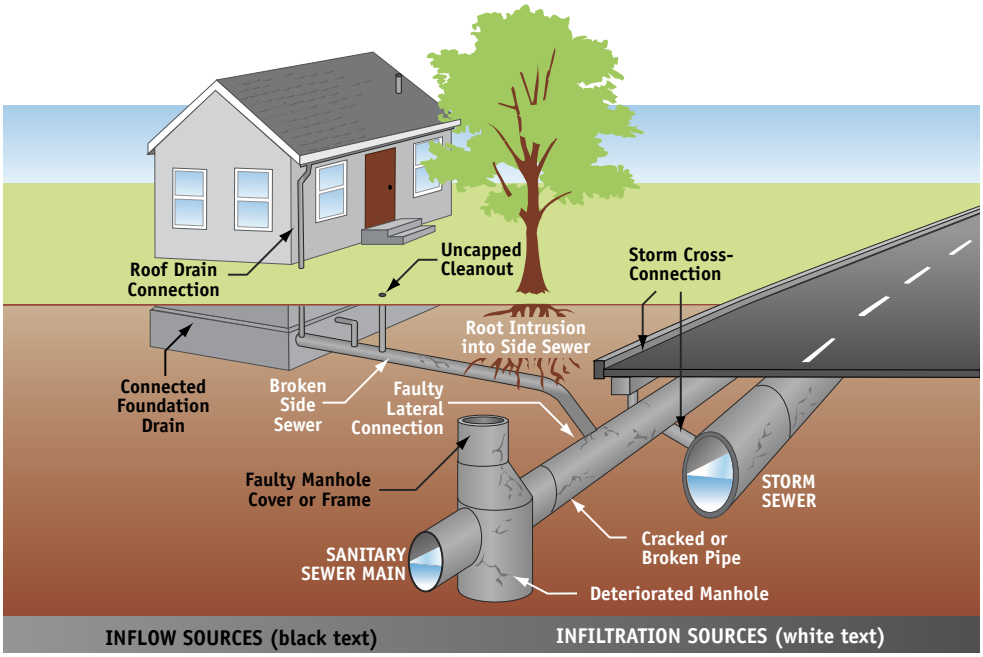
Triggers	Inspection	Evaluation	Determination
• Home sale or transfer • Home remodel ($30k or more valuation)	• Hire a licensed plumber or a PACP Certified Inspector for CCTV inspection of lateral and inspect property • Submit to District for review	District will evaluate the CCTV inspection and provide a recommendation letter to current homeowner and realtor (if home sale)	• If a property owner chooses to replace their sewer lateral, they may utilize the District's Lateral Assistance Program. • A notice of violation for inflow infractions may be filed with the County Recorder if they are not resolved within 90 days of discovery

The table above describes some fundamental aspects of sewer lateral inspections and replacement that the ordinance will address.

Excess flows from private sewer laterals increase potential for sewer spills and escalate treatment plant costs.

The general elements of the proposed ordinance are described in the table above, including a triggering event such as a home sale.

Repair or replacement of the sewer lateral is the responsibility of the property owner. The District offers a Lateral Replacement Loan Program which can help homeowners finance the work with a low interest (2%) loan for up to $10,000. For more information, visit www.lgvsd.org/doing-business/sewer-lateral-assistance.



Source: King County, WA

flickr: Rick Leche

Understanding the Recycled Water Storage Ponds

Many people visit the District's Reclamation Area, which includes three ponds. They enjoy walking the 3.5 miles of paths around the ponds, taking in the views, and observing the abundant wildlife.

It's important for everyone to understand that the ponds primarily function as recycled water storage facilities. When the District produces secondary treated recycled water (effluent) at the Treatment Plant, it is either used to irrigate District pasture land; taken by the Marin Municipal Water and North Marin Water districts for landscape irrigation; or stored in the ponds for later release to Miller Creek.

It's normal for the ponds' water levels to fluctuate throughout the year. Typically, water may only be released to Miller Creek from November to June. Pond levels are therefore normally lowest in June and into the summer months. From June to October, when release to Miller Creek is prohibited, water is instead directed to the storage ponds. Normally the water level will be highest just before the permitted release period starting in November.

The pond closest to the small parking area/trailhead is known as the Wildlife Pond. It's important to address the occasional over-abundance of cattails there, to best maintain the overall health and vitality of the pond. Cattails in various areas are intermittently or seasonally removed to increase the water surface area, open areas to wind and small wave action, and create wildlife "pathways" among the cattails.

Additionally, removal of some of these plants helps reduce mosquito breeding areas. This program is consistent with the Marin/Sonoma Mosquito & Vector Control District mission of protecting the public health and welfare (msmosquito.com) and with requirements of the State of California and San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board. The first phase of cattail removal taking place this fall is noteworthy due to the large accumulation of plants. Reduction of cattails is a necessary step in improving the overall condition of the pond and providing for easier and more effective management in the future.

PG&E's "Public Safety Power Shutoff" Program

Advance Preparation Allows District to Maintain Operations

Earlier this fall, many communities in the Bay Area and throughout northern California went through multiple PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS). Under the PSPS program, when certain conditions occur (gusty winds and dry weather, combined with a heightened fire risk) PG&E can shut off electricity in specified high-voltage power lines in order to reduce the risk of those lines igniting nearby vegetation. The program was implemented by PG&E in response to the major northern California wildfires of 2017 and 2018, some of which were determined to have been caused by power lines igniting vegetation.

Those power shutoffs included the District's facilities — and because of our advance planning and preparation we were well-equipped to ensure the continuation of operations.

Twenty-three of the 28 pump stations located in various areas of the District's service area have standby generators on site, which were quickly activated when an outage took place. Additional generators had already been rented to provide backup power to the pump stations that don't

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already have one on site. There is also a large generator at the treatment plant capable of powering our critical operations. During the summer the District performed a 24-hour simulated power outage in order to gather real-time data such as generator fuel burn rates. All that planning paid off when the actual power shutoffs occurred, as we were able to smoothly continue our operations.

While the hope is that such conditions in the future won't result in planned power shutoffs, you can be confident that the District is ready to maintain its critical operations and continue to serve the community with its services, even when PG&E power is temporarily unavailable — for any reason.

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Installation of mud valves and drain lines for Anoxic / Aeration Basin

- **Do Not Park on Smith Ranch Raod** – the only parking for the reclamation ponds is at the trailhead parking lot

For the latest information and to sign up for periodic construction updates, visit the District's web page at www.lgvsd.org.

The upgraded treatment plant will allow the District to continue to provide the high-quality technical processes required to meet stringent environmental regulations, and exceptional services for generations to come!