

## General Manager's Monthly Bulletin

November 2018

*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).

### **A Message from our New General Manager -**

The RVSD Board of Directors unanimously approved the appointment of Steven Moore as our new General Manager at the October 25 public meeting. As Board President Thomas Gaffney noted, "After an extensive recruitment process, we are excited to have Steve join Ross Valley Sanitary District as General Manager. His education, experience and involvement working on local and regional water issues and projects is a great fit for the District."

Steve began his new role earlier this month and has the following message for the community:

*I am pleased to address you as the new general manager at Ross Valley Sanitary District, responsible for the safe collection and conveyance of wastewater to the Central Marin Sanitation Agency treatment plant. I have quickly learned the organization I have joined is mobilized and ready for the special challenges the upcoming rainy season creates for our older sewers here in the Bay Area's highest rainfall zone.*



*On Thanksgiving weekend we received over 2 inches of rain with no sanitary sewer overflows or service calls! This great start is due in part to the investments ratepayers have made to improve sewer system reliability in the public streets and in the laterals on private property. The "smart" manhole cover meters we have installed keep track of sewer water levels, which remained at more routine levels this past weekend.*

*As the number of storms progresses, soils become saturated and more storm water finds its way into our sewer system, increasing the risk of overflows to our creeks and Bay. These overflows contain harmful bacteria and pollutants that impact public health and aquatic life, and need to be avoided. When storm water fills our sewers past a*

certain level, we mobilize and set up bypass systems to keep wastewater in the sewer system.

Deeper into the wet season, you may see our crews out in all hours during storms, wearing fluorescent rain gear and setting up these bypasses to minimize any overflows into the creeks and Bay. Give them a friendly wave, as they work on the front lines to protect the environment in our community.

While we have used technology to improve smart monitoring of our system, we always appreciate hearing from you! **If you see a sewer manhole overflowing during a storm, please call us at (415) 259-2949.** Your eyes in the field can help us quickly reduce and minimize the impact of too much water in the sewers or from sewer clogs. These are among the challenges we can better address together each year.

I look forward to sharing more information and data with you as the rainy season unfolds. Thank you!

**The Rainy Season is Here** - The first storm of the season has passed, marking the beginning of rainy weather in our community. RVSD is pleased to report that with these first rains there were no instances of sewer overflows. This positive result is due in part to the extensive RVSD Capital Improvement Program (CIP) construction projects that are taking place in your neighborhoods.



As we rehabilitate old or outdated sewer pipes underground, we are managing a construction program that is spread out over more than 34 miles of roads throughout Ross Valley. The infrastructure we are repairing is operated and maintained by RVSD to collect, pump and transport approximately four million gallons of wastewater per day.

These sewer line repairs and rehabilitation projects are critical to protect public health and the environment by reducing the risk of sewer overflows. This first storm of the season has shown that our hard work paid off!

We can all be ready as winter unfolds and the soil becomes more saturated with more rain on the way. RVSD's crews of skilled, thoughtful professionals are working around the clock to maintain our systems. Emergency crews are available 365 days of the year, 24 hours a day, 7 days per week!

## DID YOU KNOW?

***Eastern Marin County has the highest average annual rainfall in the Bay Area, influenced by the high ridge of Mt. Tamalpais.***

Wet weather brings an increased chance of sewer overflows into our creeks and Bay. [Click here](#) to review our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that explain sewer overflows. You can always 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.

We provide 24-hour response for RVSD infrastructure. If you have a private property sewer emergency, please contact a plumber or a [licensed contractor](#) familiar with district policies and programs.

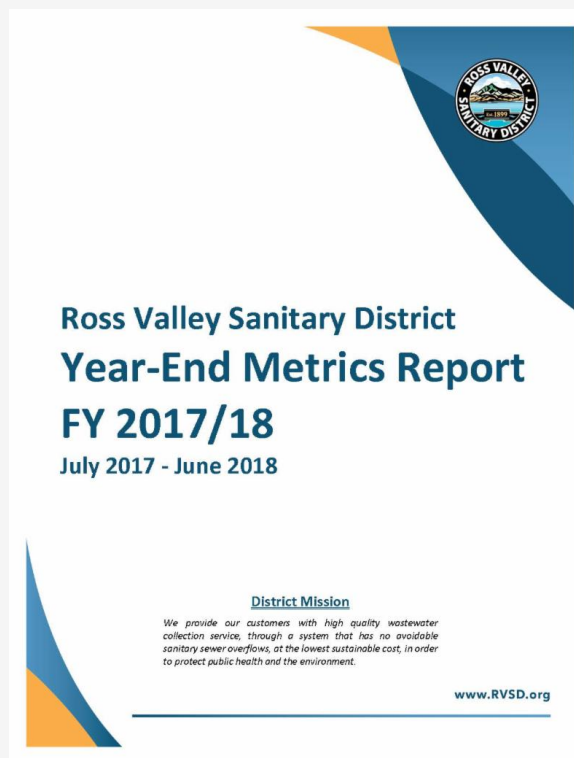
You can see all of this information by clicking the red "EMERGENCY" icon on our website homepage, or [click here](#).

**Year-End Metrics Report** - The RVSD Board of Directors has received the Year-End Metrics Report for Fiscal Year 2017/18 which illustrates District performance across

multiple work groups and covers the following sections: Low and Wet Weather Infiltration and Inflow (I&I), Pump Stations, Line Maintenance, Service Calls, Condition Assessment, Repair, Inspections, and Lateral Programs.

[Click here](#) to see the report. Note that yearly metrics are compared through time to review and analyze performance trends.

RVSD is pleased with improvements this report details as we strive for the efficient operation and maintenance (O&M) of a collection system focused on minimizing performance failures and potential effects that may harm the public and the environment. Among the RVSD work groups and cross-department teams that contributed to O&M performance are: pump stations, line maintenance, inspections, condition assessment, repairs, and service call teams including sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) response. RVSD schedules and tracks O&M activities using computerized maintenance management (CMMS) and enterprise management (EMS) systems.



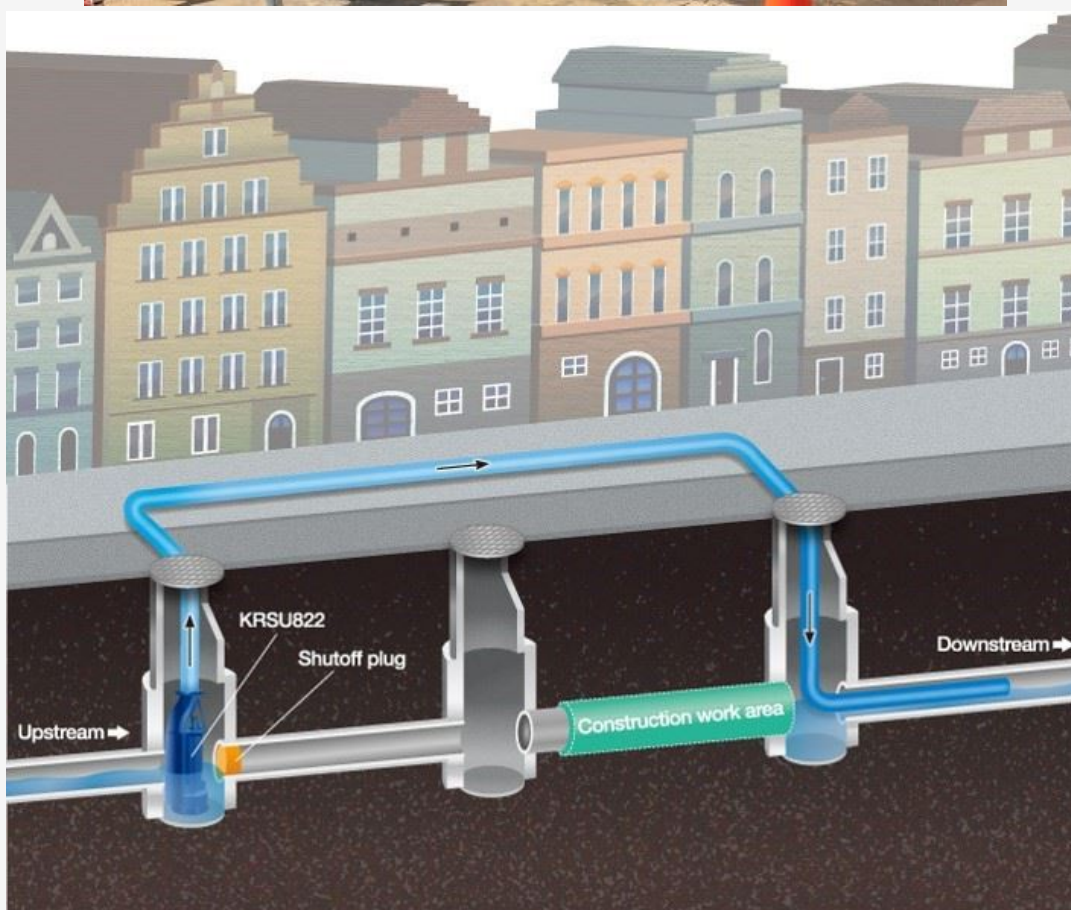
As RVSD steadily increases the use and functionality of these systems, the information collected in the field by staff and managed through the CMMS/EMS allows management to make data driven decisions for O&M activities based on metrics. These metrics help in the review and assessment of which decisions are working and which need improvement to support system performance and asset management.

Besides tracking our various program outputs, this year-end report also includes an estimate of environmental outcome. Using measurements of rainfall, runoff volume, and sewer flows during wet weather, we have calculated that the percentage of Ross Valley rain volume that finds its way into the sewers appears to be declining. Reduction in this metric over time is a goal of our capital and maintenance investments, and because it correlates with a reduced risk of sewer overflows, it can improve our ability to protect public health and the environment.

### **What are RVSD crews doing when you see them in the community?**

**Bypass Pumping** - Sanitary crews rehabilitate existing sewer lines by using a common process known as Bypass Pumping, which allows the work to be conducted without interrupting the flow of sewage. Instead, the sewer flow is "bypassed" by pumping around the pipe that is being repaired or replaced.

Bypass Pumping takes place when pumps are placed upstream from a faulty pipe and connected to a temporary pipeline that diverts all the sewage around the area being repaired and back into the existing sewer line downstream. Service to area homes and businesses is not interrupted and in some cases thousands of gallons of sewage are pumped per minute in a safe and sanitary manner. Examples of this process are shown in the photos below.



**Smoke Testing** - Winter season wet weather inflow and infiltration (I&I) flows can increase flows from 4.5 million gallons per day (MGD) to 60 MGD, straining the wastewater system capacity and increasing the risk of sanitary sewer overflows. An effective tool that RVSD uses to help identify I&I sources into the wastewater system is called smoke testing. During this process, residents may notice smoke coming from vent stacks on houses or nearby storm drains.

This EPA-approved, non-toxic smoke is odorless, white or gray in color, non-staining, creates no fire hazard and is considered to be harmless to humans, pets, food and materials. Properties located within the testing area are notified two-weeks in advance by mail and with individual door hangar notices placed 48 hours before testing begins. Local fire departments are aware of testing dates and locations in case a resident calls

in response to observing the smoke, as seen in the photo below.

[Click here](#) for more information about smoke testing.

To reduce I&I and the risk of overflows, storm drains identified through smoke testing should be disconnected and re-routed to the storm drainage and creek systems, preferably through "green infrastructure", or "low impact development" such as rain gardens, which reduce both pollutants and peak flood flows. More information on storm drainage solutions are available from the Marin County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program (MCSTOPPP) at [www.mcstoppp.org](http://www.mcstoppp.org) under "rainwater capture and management".



### **Smart Manhole Covers -**

Another tool used by our work crews are "smart" manhole covers, equipped with sensors that allow us to monitor flows and respond to trouble spots in real time, as well analyze the data to be proactive in preventing sewage overflows.

This photo shows RVSD crews managing the smart manhole covers last year to help identify system inflow trouble spots that could be caused by illegal hook-ups from homes with rain gutter downspouts connected directly to a sewer pipe or a basement sump pump connected to a sewer line.



The sensor technology allows RVSD to act quickly before a sewer spill occurs by applying bypass pumping as described above to divert potential sewer overflow into pump trucks or a bypass pipe. This process allows us to reduce and possibly eliminate the sewer spills that have occurred in past winter seasons with heavy rainfalls.

**RVSD CIP Construction Update:** Work is progressing on RVSD Capital Improvement Program (CIP) construction projects to rehabilitate underground sewer pipes and associated structures throughout our service area.

Current CIP construction projects include:

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, to find individual project information including construction notices, updates and more, or to view our interactive project map.

With the map, you can use the magnifying glass icon to enter your address and see if construction is happening or will take place in your neighborhood, or click on the map area you are interested in to identify the project name, contact information and more.

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

As with any construction project, you can expect noise, dust, some traffic lane closures and detours, parking restrictions, travel delays, and in some cases night-time work during critical construction activity. We work to ensure mail and package delivery to construction areas is not interrupted and maintain local and emergency access at all times. We greatly appreciate your patience as we make these much-needed infrastructure improvements.

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

***As the first county sanitary agency, RVSD is over 119 years old!***

**Maintenance of Private Sewer Laterals** - On July 1, 2018 [Ordinance No. 100](#) was adopted to update RVSD's existing ordinance on maintenance of private sewer laterals. The updated ordinance provides a simplified process for mandatory inspection and testing of laterals, new provisions regarding shared laterals and publicly-owned facilities, and updated language regarding enforcement .

You can [click here](#) to review the process for receiving a Certificate of Compliance demonstrating that all of the Private Sewer Laterals located on your property are without leaks and have proper connection. Go to the guidelines section and select the condition which applies to you.

Private sewer laterals are part of the system of pipes in need of repair to prevent the infiltration of rainwater, which can overwhelm the wastewater collection system and treatment plant. As RVSD works on district repairs, we are working in partnership with the community to improve the entire system to avoid sanitary sewer overflows or discharges of partially treated wastewater into the San Francisco Bay.

**Lateral Replacement Grants and Loans Available** - RVSD offers financial assistance funding for sewer lateral replacements. We are committed to continue partnering with the community to replace outdated sewer laterals and established this grant and loan program with committed resources to help homeowners repair and replace faulty sewer laterals. 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, or on streets with Paving Condition Index (PCI) values of 30 and lower or which are planned for future paving by local agencies within the next 12 to 18 months.

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 see if you qualify!

**Next Board Meeting:** The next Regular Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 19, 2018 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, December 14.

**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.

Over  
**\$4 million**  
has been awarded to  
homeowners who replaced  
their laterals since 2016. ♦  
More than **\$982,000**  ♦  
remains for FY 18/19!



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