



General Manager's Monthly Bulletin

February 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.

Rainy Season Update - RVSD weathered three large storms in February and experienced no storm-related sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs). Peak rainfall was at its highest February 25-27, when the San Anselmo [rain gauge](#) hit a one-day peak of 6.52 inches on Feb 26 and logged a total of 10 inches over two days - a new daily and storm peak for this year. During the February 13-14 storm, the San Anselmo rain gauge hit 6.2 inches in one day and 8.5 inches over two days. Both February storms were larger than the one where the SSO occurred at a capital project construction site during the 4.44-inch storm on January 6.

At Larkspur we avoided 200,000 gallon SSOs on February 13 and 26 through bypass-pump planning and rapid response based on our "SMART manhole cover" flow monitoring. Our SMART manhole covers measure the wastewater level remotely. When waters rise to levels of concern, we receive an alarm, mobilize and deploy a bypass pumping system if needed.



We did respond to several storm water overflows and localized flooding this month but are relieved to report they were from storm drains not sewers.

We have completed our investigation into the January 6 SSO that occurred at our 16/17 [Gravity Sewer Improvement Project](#) (Meadowcroft and Nokomis) on Broadmoor Avenue at Morningside Lane, and submitted the 45-day technical report to the Regional Water Quality Control Board on February 19. [Click here](#) to see the report.

The earlier 10-day SSO estimate of 245,700 gallons has been revised downward to 225,742 gallons. Of that amount, approximately 100,720 gallons was captured before it reached surface waters. An additional 79,600 gallons were prevented from overflowing by trucks pumping it out of the overflowing manhole and transporting it downstream back into the system.

The overflow itself was mostly storm water, consisting of about 9% untreated wastewater from sinks, showers, laundry and toilets, around 20,000 gallons, half of which did not reach the creek. Our report details our proactive response to an unfolding emergency on that weekend, arriving before the spill commenced, and staying past midnight to document, contain and clean up the spill.

The water quality sampling of Sleepy Hollow Creek did not indicate any discernible impact from the diluted SSO discharge on the creek water quality. This is because the bacteriological and ammonia indicators in the upstream storm water runoff were elevated due to sources such as pet waste, trash, vehicles and other sources of urban runoff pollution. These background levels in Sleepy Hollow Creek, typical of urban creeks statewide, masked any measurable impact of the SSO using this suite of water quality indicators. This finding does not lessen the importance of preventing SSOs, because these indicators do not measure all potentially harmful constituents in untreated domestic wastewater.

In February we believe we avoided a repeat of SSOs near the San Anselmo Fire Station thanks to a combination of recently completed capital improvement work, condition assessment work, and repair work.

Two years ago on January 10, 2017, there was a 45,000 gallon SSO that occurred near the San Anselmo Fire Station, when the rainfall was earlier in the season and at about 7 inches, was less rainfall than we experienced this year on February 13-14 or 25-27.

Our Large Diameter Gravity Sewer II-2 capital project was completed in mid-2018 and increased sewer capacity in the area. The project cost was approximately \$2.5M, and included pipe lining and rehabilitation on portions of the existing 18-inch and 36-inch trunk sewer lines in Downtown San Anselmo. The project also included a new pipe segment, 18-inches in diameter, which interconnects the two existing trunk lines and allows them to provide redundant flow capacity for each other. This increased capacity helped convey the sewer flows swollen by storm water from two of the February 2019 storms that were larger than the 2017 storm that led to SSOs.

Additionally, back in January 2017 after the overflows, the Condition Assessment crew performed smoke testing (as illustrated in the photo below) and found an abandoned, connected 18-inch trunk line on the bank of San Anselmo Creek. Utilizing the smoke testing information, our Repair crew implemented a plan to fix the problem.



Within days a mechanical plug was installed, eliminating a major source of storm water inflow.

When we can repair the system instead of replace it, we stretch precious ratepayer dollars further and strategically address vulnerable parts of our aging collection system infrastructure, better protecting public health and the environment.

Please note that Smoke Testing is conducted by RVSD throughout the community to help detect leaks in sewer pipes. Regular smoke testing is not a cause for concern

Our "all of the above" strategy to both repair and upgrade our sewer system will reduce risks of SSOs over time, lowering our operating costs and increasing our permit compliance. Using this example of the 2017 San Anselmo Fire Station SSO, we believe we are beginning to see the tangible benefits of our ratepayer investments in both capital projects and ongoing assessment and repairs.

Steve Moore, General Manager

Rainy Season 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](#).

New Headquarters to Address RVSD's Long-Term Facility Needs - At a [public meeting on February 13](#), the RVSD Board of Directors announced that after years of managing temporary locations and a comprehensive search for alternatives, the District had entered into contract and begun a 45-day due diligence period to purchase a new headquarters at [1111 Andersen Dr., San Rafael, CA 94901](#).

The new facility is located near the [Central Marin Sanitation Agency \(CMSA\)](#) treatment plant where RVSD wastewater is treated. The building and location offer a rare opportunity to secure an existing commercial property that is zoned for utility operations like RVSD's, with no impacts to residential areas. The proposed building also brings immediate financial benefits as half of the new facility is currently occupied by Comcast Corporation.



Consolidating four current locations to one will end a decades-long temporary arrangement and achieve significant long-term efficiencies and enhanced rapid response capabilities through better access to all District communities. For example:

A consolidated location will streamline operations by having RVSD field crews, engineers, staff and managers working together in a single location.

The new facility will better meet worker needs in an upgraded work environment. A centralized location will provide the public with an easily-accessible site to conduct business, attend monthly board meetings, and participate in educational sessions on topics such as the [RVSD lateral grant program](#). The current board meetings are held at the Central Marin Police Authority Community Room in Larkspur, which is a temporary arrangement.

RVSD 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. 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 you can also click here for direct access to 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.

[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 MCE's Deep Green program!

www.RVSD.org • 415-259-2949

The poster features a scenic background of a lake and mountains. It includes the RVSD logo, a list of instructions to prevent sewer backups, and information about the district's 100% renewable energy achievement. A small image of a boat on a lake is also present.

Next Board Meeting - The next Regular Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 20, 2019 at 5pm. At this meeting we will begin the public discussion of options for sewer rates recommendations scheduled for July 2019.

[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, March 15.

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](#)