

General Manager's Monthly Bulletin - February 2021

Ross Valley Sanitary District (RVSD) provides this monthly news bulletin to stay connected to the community we serve. We welcome your feedback on any information in the bulletin. If at any time you no longer prefer to receive this information, please email us at info@rvsd.org. Visit us online at www.RVSD.org for more information.

As the end of February arrives, RVSD remains dedicated to ensuring the essential daily operation and maintenance of our 200 miles of sewer lines and 19 pumping stations. While conducting these activities, our staff continues to always observe the appropriate physical distance requirements, use sanitizer products and wear protective masks.

Planning for upcoming 2021 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects continues. The Butterfield/Arroyo-Kenrick and Fawn Drive Gravity Sewer Improvements Project is finalizing design, with project construction anticipated to begin by mid-June. This project is funded by a competitive State Water Resources Control Board low-interest loan. The FY 2020/21 Gravity Sewer Improvements Project (Sequoia Park, South Eliseo Drive, Rancheria/Evergreen (Kent Woodlands), El Portal (Greenbrae), and Skyland (Ross)) is also in the design phase, with bidding, award and start of project construction phases anticipated to all take place by mid-July.

The Larkspur Pump Stations 14, 24 & 25 Improvements Project design should be complete in March, followed by bidding, award and start of project construction phases anticipated to take place by mid-August.

Plans to remove an abandoned sewer from the streambed of Ross Creek near Shady Lane and replace it with a natural rock riffle are complete and in the process of being permitted by the appropriate state and federal agencies.

Web pages will be launched during the bidding and award phases of each project. Stay tuned!





Easement Access Initiative

RVSD's number one goal is to provide safe, reliable and efficient sewer services to our customers. Our interconnected sewer system is unique because approximately 35 percent of the system is located on private property. RVSD has the legal right of use and access to any of its facilities, equipment or assets that are located on private property in order to maintain the region's interconnected sewer system. To continually improve the services we provide, an "easement initiative" has been launched to connect with affected property owners.

We want to continue developing productive relationships that facilitate providing timely information whenever possible. Our goal is to continue working with each property owner, renter and customer to reduce or eliminate any "surprises" when RVSD maintenance staff need to access these easements and open manholes to keep the system flowing for the health and safety of everyone in our community.

Letters to alert property owners with a sewer utility easement along with a copy of our [Easements Brochure](#) have been sent. Additional easements information can be found by viewing our [Easements FAQs](#). This information and more is available online by visiting our [Sewer Utility Easements](#) web page. Once there, a [Sewer Easements Search](#) interactive map allows customers to follow the instructions provided to see if there is an easement on their property.

Please visit the [Easements](#) web page, email Info@rvsd.org, or contact us at 415-259-2949 with any questions or for more information.

Larkspur Landing

RVSD submitted the draft Larkspur Landing site cleanup completion report to the U.S. EPA for their review and comment on January 15. When the final revised report is accepted by the U.S. EPA, the site will be officially available for consideration of the appropriate unrestricted land use.

As the public outreach process to discuss future disposition of the property continues, a third Larkspur Landing Informational Presentation was held on January 27 to discuss how the state's Surplus Land Act affects the property. The second Informational Presentation was given on December 3, focusing on Current Land Use Entitlements and the Larkspur General Plan update. The first public Informational Presentation was on September 30, 2020, and focused on potential Transaction Structures (i.e., lease, sale or joint venture development).

All three Informational Presentations are posted on the [RVSD Larkspur Landing webpage](#). We encourage our ratepayers to track and participate in this discussion as the Board weighs alternatives, and we will keep you informed about additional opportunities to provide input.

The District uses recycled water to perform wastewater collection system maintenance activities. We began this sustainability practice in August 2019. We hydro-jet sewers to remove debris and roots to keep the system flowing, as well as to clean and prepare the lines for four-foot long cured-in-place-pipe point repairs. Until recently, we used only potable water for these activities. We have four sewer cleaning vehicles (two Ramjet trucks for high volume cleaning and two Harben trucks for more precise high-pressure cleaning) that are filled with recycled water at the CMSA Truck Fill station - set up in 2016 during the last drought. In January, we passed 100,000 gallons of recycled water use since the beginning of the fiscal year in July 2020.

Each gallon of recycled water used saves a gallon of potable water. This is especially important now that we are experiencing another moderate drought in Marin County. Effects of drought conditions are noted by our maintenance crews who have seen more fine-root intrusion in our pipe system this year, as the plants naturally seek water sources. Wastewater flows become more attractive to roots when conditions are exceptionally dry.

SEWER UTILITY EASEMENTS

To better serve our customers, RVSD occasionally needs to access public utility easements on private property. Routine maintenance and repair work are essential to keep the sewer system working properly. During emergency conditions, access to easement areas and the ability to work within them is essential.

The types of sewer system infrastructure located on easements includes manholes, vaults and pipes, mostly located underground. Manholes and smaller vaults are access points on the sewer system. Their iron lids need to be uncovered and always accessible to District personnel.

RVSD has an unusually high percentage of the public sewer system on private property. Approximately 37 percent of pipes – about 66 miles of the sewer system's total 200-miles of pipe, and 34 percent of manholes – are located on 15 percent of the private parcels located within our service area. This averages out to about 35 percent of the total system being located within an easement.

An easement is a defined area of private property that is legally designated for specific use, access and travel through by an entity other than the property owner. Different types of easements include the right-of-way, sewer (utilized by RVSD) and easements for public utilities such as drinking water, electricity and gas service.



Some of these easements are explicitly recorded as encumbrances on private property, and the rest are prescriptive easements because they have existed in their locations for decades.

Easements provide RVSD the legal right of use and access to any of its facilities, equipment or assets that are located on private property in order to maintain the region's interconnected sewer system. This legal right of access applies whether or not the easement is officially recorded.

As one of the steps in RVSD gaining access, property owners, residents and businesses with a sewer easement located on their address may receive a door hanger notice like the one shown in the illustration to the right.

RVSD has a [Private Sewer Lateral Ordinance](#) in place (see sections 8 and 9) for the communities it serves. This Ordinance provides RVSD the legal right of use and access to service any of its facilities, equipment or assets and make emergency repairs to pipes and equipment located within an easement on private property.

More Information

Click on the interactive map below to find out if your property has an RVSD easement on it. Our goal is to connect with all impacted property owners in advance to provide timely information and build productive relationships moving forward.

Click individual graphic links under each title below for more easements information.

Easement Examples



Safety Continues as a Top Priority

Our fully trained staff are equipped to comply with local, State and Federal safety and quality protocols for managing the RVSD sanitary sewer system in your neighborhood. Every day, their work ensures our interconnected wastewater collection system, pumping equipment and essential District services continue to run smoothly. Additional reminders to be aware of include:

- **Access to our public lobby and other facilities remains closed to the public and all non-essential visitors until further notice.** We continue to issue permits (payments by check only), schedule essential inspection appointments and process grant and loan applications electronically via info@rvsd.org, Monday through Friday. Call 415-259-2949 for assistance.
- **If you have a public sewer emergency, such as a manhole overflow or leaking pipe, or you smell or see sewage on the ground, please contact us immediately for 24-hour response at 415-259-2949.**



We are here to assist you and answer questions related to the sewer system. Please know that you can continue to count on your community sewer system to operate safely, reliably and efficiently. Don't hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns at **415-259-2949** or email us at info@rvsd.org. Thank you!

Steve Moore, General Manager



Please continue to help avoid actions that cause sewer overflows!

Please also remember to only flush toilet paper. "Flushable" wipes (which are not biodegradable), paper towels, rags and shop towels do not break down. They clog your home's pipes and contribute to clogs and overflows in the public sewer system, affecting health and safety of the entire community and environment. Please take a look at our series of informational videos available for the entire family to learn from on the [RVSD Sustainability webpage](#).

[Click here](#) for more information about how to properly dispose of Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG).

[Click here](#) to review our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) explaining sewer overflows and what to do to prevent them.

Remember to ALWAYS put wipes, paper towels and similar products in the trash, not the toilet. ONLY toilet paper and human waste are flushable.

You can also [click here](#) to see videos on how to properly dispose of wipes, expired and/or unused medications, Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) and more! The links below provide more information about what to do with "flushable" wipes and similar items.

- [California Association of Sanitation Agencies \(CASA\) website](#)
- [Avoid Fatbergs! Don't Flush Wipes Due to Virus, California Says](#)
- [California Issues Warning about Disinfecting Wipes](#)

- [California Water Board Do NOT Flush Wipes News Advisory](#)
- [Disinfecting Wipes Being Flushed Down Toilets Causing Major Pipe Problems](#)

Important Reminders

[Click here](#) to review our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that explain sewer overflows and what to do.

If you see or experience a public sewer emergency, call the RVSD Emergency Line 24/7 at 415-259-2949. Common reasons to call include a manhole overflow, leaking pipe, odors or visible sewage on the ground. Our emergency crews are available 365 days per year, 24 hours per day, seven days per week!

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

Upcoming 2021 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) construction projects will continue during the COVID-19 Shelter in Place Order. These infrastructure upgrades help maintain the region's interconnected sewer system as we continue to provide cost-effective wastewater collection service that protects public health and the environment by reducing the risk of sewer overflows. You can view [upcoming projects being planned and going out to bid](#) as well as recently completed projects throughout our service area.

Watch our [Capital Improvement Program](#) (CIP) web page for the latest information and updates on these upcoming projects. Individual web pages for each project will be launched soon!

- **Butterfield/Arroyo-Kenrick Gravity Sewer Improvements** – Project design is being finalized. Bidding, award and start of project construction phases are anticipated to all take place by mid-June.
- **FY 20/21 Gravity Sewer Improvements**– Project is in the design phase. Bidding, award and start of project construction phases are anticipated to all take place by mid-July.
- **Larkspur Pump Stations 14, 24 & 25 Improvements**– Project design should be complete in March. Bidding, award and start of project construction phases are anticipated to all take place by mid-August.
- **Ross Creek Sewer Removal Project**– Plans are complete and in the process of being permitted by the state and federal agencies.

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

[COVID-19 Exposure Control Plan](#) measures first adopted by the District in April 2020 and updated in November 2020 continue to be updated as needed in response to local and State mandates. These measures remain in place and are adhered to throughout construction on the District's projects, as well as in our daily operations and maintenance practices.

Additional information about COVID-19 can be found at the links provided below:

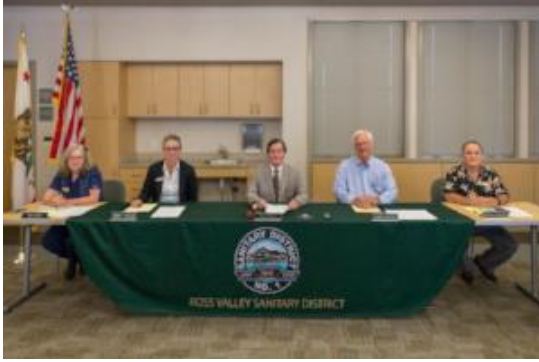
- [Marin County Health and Human Services](#) - FAQ for COVID-19
- [The Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) - COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

Due to current COVID-19 conditions, members of the public are invited to attend RVSD Regular Board Meetings safely and remotely from a computer, tablet or smartphone.

Ross Valley Sanitary District Board Meetings are typically

held the third Wednesday of each month at 5:00 PM.

The RVSD Regular Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 17, 2021, at 5:00 PM via GoToMeeting.



[Click here](#) for updated meeting access information 24 hours before the meeting. [Check the agenda posting here](#) 72 hours before each meeting for open session time.

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