

125 Years of Service

Ross Valley Sanitary District

General Manager's Monthly Bulletin

January 2025



Snowy Egret in Corte Madera Creek

As we move through January and the wet weather season, the District remains committed to protecting both our infrastructure and the environment while ensuring reliable service to Marin County. This month, we highlight the District's receipt of a prestigious award, a briefing to the Board on the impacts of rainfall on wastewater flows, and a collaboration with MMWD, all while continuing our commitment to reliable service and environmental protection during the wet weather season.

Our headquarters are located at 1111 Andersen Drive in San Rafael. Our regular public lobby office hours are Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to Noon and 1p.m. to 4 p.m. Our dedicated staff are here to assist you via phone, email or in person.

We are available for emergency calls 24/7. If you see a public sewer emergency such as a manhole overflow, leaking pipe, or sewage on the ground, **please call the RVSD Emergency Line at 415-259-2949 as soon as possible.** Every minute counts to help avoid a public health or environmental hazard. Thank you!

Accomplishments

2024 CWEA Redwood Empire Section – Small Collection System of the Year Award

We are thrilled to announce that we have been honored with the Small Collection System of the Year Award by the California Water Environment Association (CWEA) Redwood Empire Section for 2024. This prestigious award recognizes the outstanding efforts and commitment to excellence in wastewater collection system management.

This achievement is a testament to the hard work, dedication, and expertise of our team members who consistently go above and beyond to ensure the system's reliability and efficiency. The award highlights our proactive approach to improving infrastructure, enhancing operational practices, and providing a high standard of service to the community.

We are incredibly proud of this accomplishment and grateful to everyone who contributed to this success. This recognition strengthens our commitment to RVSD's mission to provide our customers with highest quality wastewater collection service at the lowest sustainable cost.



*RVSD Staff Accepting Small Collection System of the Year Award
Left to right: Cristina Velazquez, Josh Hill, Manny Vigil, Rafael Zarco*

Supporting Our Partners: Mutual Aid to MMWD

RVSD staff recently provided mutual aid to the Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD) at their San Geronimo Treatment Plant in Woodacre. Staff assisted MMWD by helping to dewater a tank from a rotary press used in their water treatment activities.

Using our vacuum truck, staff efficiently removed the water and safely decanted it to the RVSD sewer system for treatment. This teamwork showcases the strong partnership between local water agencies and our commitment to supporting one another in maintaining the integrity of our shared water resources.



Staff Utilizing RVSD's VacCon Hydro Jetter

Education and Information

Impact of Rainfall on Wastewater Flow

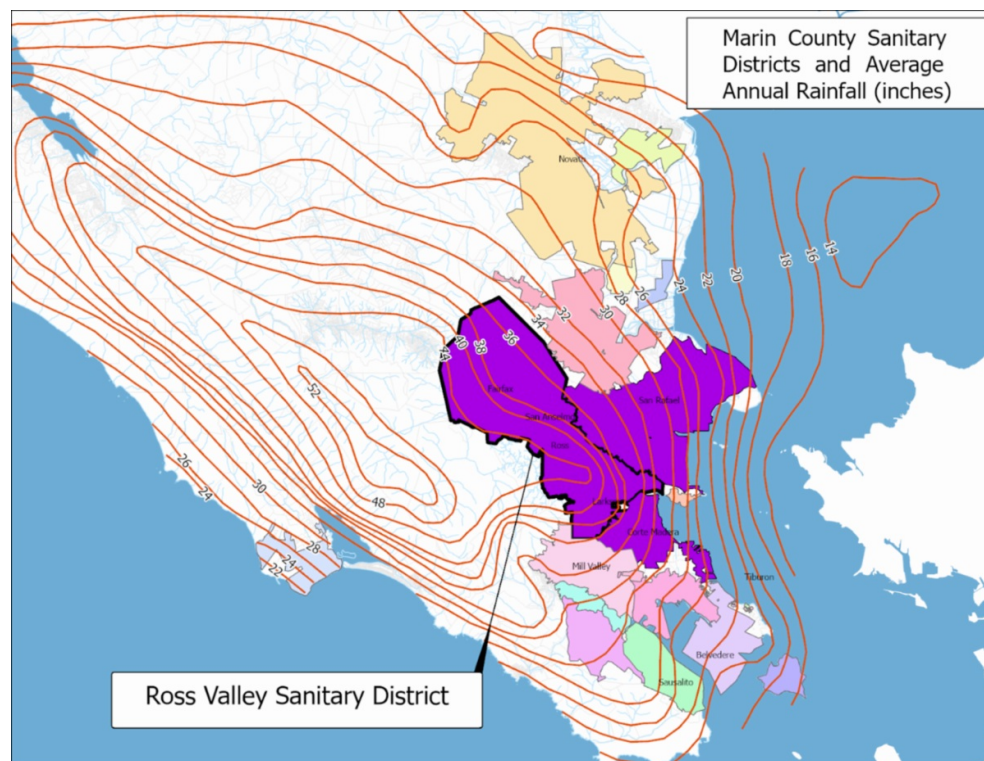


Figure 1

This month, we briefed our Board of Directors on how rainfall impacts wastewater flows within the District. The average rainfall within the RVSD jurisdictional boundary is about 30% higher than neighboring sanitary districts due to our proximity to Mount Tamalpais which experiences the highest average rainfall in the San Francisco Bay Area. This higher rainfall directly correlates with increased wastewater flows during the wet season.

Figure 1 (shown above) is an isohyetal map that shows the contours of average annual rainfall in Marin County based on 50 years of data (1906-1956). The map shows the service area boundaries of RVSD, outlined in black, and the two other wastewater agencies in central Marin (San Rafael and Corte Madera, also shown in purple). Our service areas in Kentfield, Ross, and Larkspur receive up to 44 inches of rain annually, while neighboring areas receive much less, averaging between 24 and 32 inches per year.

The elevated rainfall in RVSD leads to higher wastewater flows during the wet season due to infiltration and inflow (I&I)

where groundwater and stormwater enter the sewer system. In wet months (January-April 2024), RVSD contributed 48-49% of the total wastewater flow to the treatment plant, compared to 40-42% during the dry season. This seasonal variability highlights why RVSD's wet weather peaking factors are among the highest in Marin County, reaching 13-17 times dry weather flow.

The influence of rainfall is further emphasized in our Pump Station data. Our Kentfield Pump Station (PS15), which serves areas with the heaviest rainfall, accounted for 72% of RVSD's total flow during February 2024, compared to just 61.3% in the dry season (October 2024). This dramatic shift underscores the strong connection between rainfall and wastewater flow in RVSD.

In summary, RVSD's higher rainfall, especially in the wet season, results in increased wastewater flow due to I&I. This seasonal variation is a key factor in our strategic planning efforts and why we invest in innovative solutions for wastewater management services.

Easement Initiative and Resident Collaboration

As part of our ongoing communication outreach to better coordinate access to our infrastructure on private property, RVSD staff have been working closely with residents in our service area to update their property contact information. Resident contact information is kept confidential in our maintenance management software system. This information allows staff to quickly and efficiently contact residents in advance of maintenance activities, ensuring the best coordination for any necessary access to our infrastructure.

Additionally, ensuring that infrastructure remains easily accessible and free from obstructions is a priority, allowing for timely maintenance and quick response when needed. Please help us maintain access to these areas. When we cannot access our infrastructure for routine maintenance, such as in the example photo above where a fence has been built over a manhole, your property is at risk of a sewer spill or backup.

To learn more about easements or to update your contact information, please visit our website by clicking [here](#).



Fence Obstructing Manhole

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Project Updates

Fairfax Capacity and Creek Crossings Project

We are preparing for the Fairfax Capacity and Creek Crossings Project, which will improve the capacity of the sanitary sewer system and address critical creek crossings in the Town of Fairfax. The project will involve replacing approximately 3,259 linear feet of existing sewer main and installing 2,500 linear feet of new relief sewer to address capacity issues and prevent the flooding of downtown Fairfax with raw wastewater.

In November 2024, the Board approved Task Order No. 7 with Harris & Associates for Design and Engineering Services During Construction (ESDC), valued at \$535,492. Final design work is underway, and the project is on track to go out to bid by September 5, 2025, with construction scheduled to begin by October 2025.

We are coordinating closely with the Town of Fairfax on this project. Residents may begin to see utility markings in the streets as we assess and plan for necessary infrastructure work. These markings will indicate utilities from both the District and other agencies involved in the project.

Visit the project [webpage](#) for more information and updates.



Creek Crossings Project

Heatherwood & Heather Gardens Pump Station Rehabilitation Project

This month, we are continuing preparations for the Heatherwood & Heather Gardens Pump Station Rehabilitation Project. Our current focus is on mobilizing for full-scale construction, which is set to begin this summer.

In collaboration with the City of Larkspur, this project will upgrade and enhance the infrastructure serving the Heather Gardens Lift Station (LS30) and the City of Larkspur's adjacent Heatherwood Stormwater Pump Station. The project involves demolishing the existing combined facilities and constructing separate pumping stations for sanitary sewer and stormwater management. This separation will prevent the occasional inflow of storm water into the sanitary sewer that has occurred at this location over the years.

Key improvements include elevating critical electrical equipment above the FEMA 100-year flood elevation and installing new concrete wet wells, valve vaults, submersible pumps, backup power generators, and upgraded electrical controls and alarms that meet both District and City standards. The project will also address the issue of stormwater inflow into the sanitary sewer wet well, described above. This project adapts to climate change by elevating system components above projected sea level rise elevations.

Currently, sandbags are used as a temporary measure to minimize inflow during large storm events. By separating the two functions and upgrading the equipment, this project will also reduce the risk of sanitary sewer spills, improve system reliability, and enhance overall efficiency. We look forward to the successful completion of this critical initiative.

Visit the project [webpage](#) for more information and updates.



Heatherwood Storm Water Pump Station & Heather Gardens Lift Station 30

FY 23/24 Gravity Sewer Improvements Project

This capital project continues to progress smoothly and is nearing completion, with just a few punch list items remaining. We expect to finalize the project and complete the closeout by the end of February.

Visit the project [webpage](#) for more information and updates.



FY 23/24 Gravity Sewer Improvements Project Pipe Bursting

Lift Stations 20, 31 & 32 Improvements

This month, we began work on underground utilities at LS20, and in February we expect delivery and installation of electrical control panels at LS31 and LS32.

LS31 and LS32 are on Riviera Circle at Via La Brisa and Corte Del Bayo, respectively, in the Larkspur Marina neighborhood. LS20 is in Larkspur Landing next to East Sir Francis Drake Blvd, and near the northbound 101 on-ramp.

The project will convert the lift stations to submersible pump configurations, saving maintenance and energy costs. The project also includes rehabilitating the two small force mains for the LS31 and LS32 lift stations (completed), new electrical control panels, communications equipment, and flow meters will improve the reliability of the lift stations and allow for faster response times to issues at each station.

Visit the project [webpage](#) for more information and updates.



Pump Station 32

Please remember, if you see a public sewer emergency such as a manhole overflow, leaking pipe, or sewage on the ground, **please call the RVSD Emergency Line 24/7 at 415-259-2949 as soon as possible**. When making an emergency call, be prepared to provide your name, phone number, and address where the incident occurs. After-hours calls will route to our on-call staff for immediate assistance.

Sincerely,

Steve Moore, General Manager

Stay Connected



RVSD is on Nextdoor. Subscribe to our page [here](#) as one of the ways you can find out if there will be construction in your neighborhood.



We are also on LinkedIn! Follow our page [here](#) to stay up to date on current job announcements and other news about the District.

Public Meetings

The Ross Valley Sanitary District Board of Directors conducts monthly public meetings. The public is invited to attend these in-person meetings, held at our new Board Assembly Room:

Ross Valley Sanitary District
1111 Andersen Drive
San Rafael, 94901

The public can also attend the meeting remotely from a computer, tablet, or smartphone.

Ross Valley Sanitary District Board Meetings are typically held on the third Wednesday of each month at 5 p.m. For more information, please click [here](#) or contact the District's Board Clerk at 415-259-2949 or clerk@rvsd.org.

The next RVSD Regular Board Meeting is scheduled

[Meeting Access](#)

[Agenda Posting](#)

Want an alert when the next Board Meeting agenda is available?
Please write to our [Clerk of the Board](#) to request upcoming agenda alerts.

Sewer FAQs

Review our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that explain sewer overflows, what to do if you see one, and other commonly asked questions about the sewer system.

[Review FAQs](#)

Before Hiring a Plumbing Contractor

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.

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Contact Us

Phone & Email

[415-259-2949](tel:415-259-2949) (24/7)
Email: info@rvsd.org

Hours

Mon - Fri
7:30 a.m. - noon
1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

New Address

1111 Andersen Dr
San Rafael, CA 94901

Ross Valley Sanitary District | 1111 Andersen Drive | San Rafael, CA 94901 US

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