



125 Years of Service

# Ross Valley Sanitary District

## General Manager's Monthly Bulletin

November 2024



*RVSD Staff Geared Up for Wet Weather*

As we approach the end of November and the official start of the wet weather season, the District remains dedicated to protecting both our infrastructure and the environment, while continuing to provide reliable service to Marin County. This month's bulletin highlights key initiatives, including creek crossing inspections, managing peak wet weather flows, maintaining high-frequency cleaning schedules, and preventing Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) buildup. These proactive measures are essential for preventing sewer backups and spills during heavy rain. We remain committed to enhancing our services and supporting a cleaner, healthier environment for all. ***Wishing you a safe and enjoyable holiday season!***

Our headquarters are located at 1111 Andersen Drive in San Rafael. The District office will be closed from 11/28 to 11/29 in observance of the holiday. After the holiday, RVSD will resume regular public lobby office hours, Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to Noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Our dedicated staff is here to assist you via phone, email or in person.

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.***

## Accomplishments

**Creek Crossing Inspections: Maintaining System Integrity and Environmental**

## Stewardship

Our CCTV crew recently completed 65 inspections of creek crossings, which are critical points in our system that run along or across creeks, storm drains and other waterways. These inspections, conducted every two years in areas both vital to the system and sensitive to environmental impacts, are essential to maintaining the integrity of our infrastructure and ensuring its reliable operation.

Creek crossings are particularly sensitive areas of our infrastructure. Not only do they house vital components of the collection system, such as pipelines that transport wastewater, but they also pass through environmentally sensitive zones that require special attention to preserve water quality and protect the surrounding ecosystem.

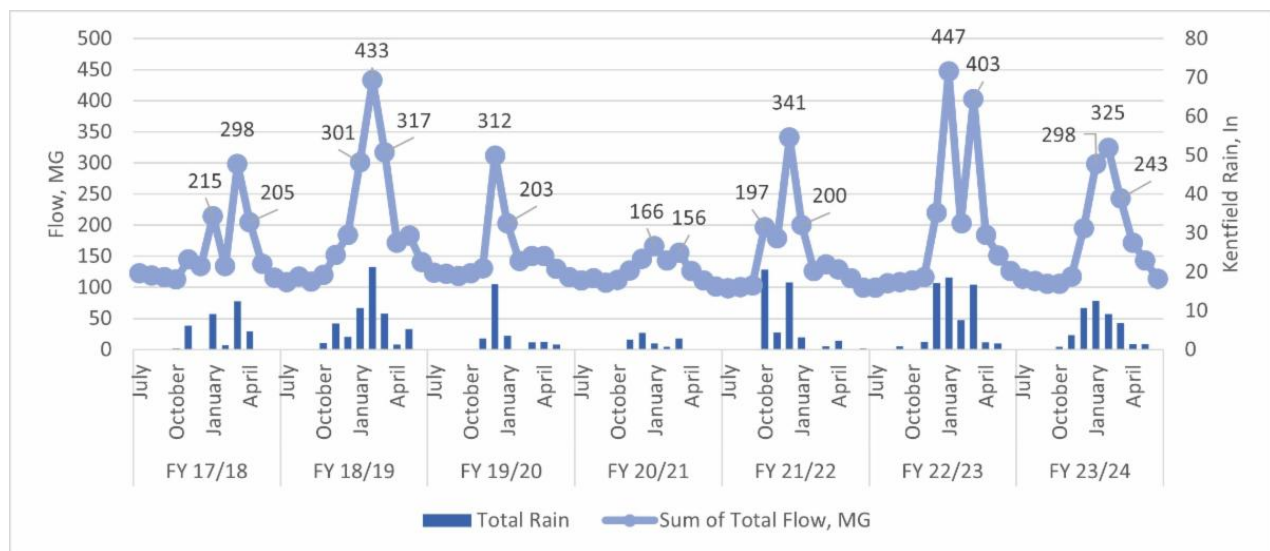
As outlined in the 2021 Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (IAMP), the District is responsible for completing a total of 294 creek crossing inspections. The data collected from these inspections is invaluable, allowing us to monitor the condition of each creek crossing and identify potential issues such as pipe damage, erosion, or other environmental risks. By conducting these inspections, we can proactively address any problems before they escalate into major concerns, helping to avoid costly repairs and service disruptions.

This information also helps us plan for future infrastructure upgrades by prioritizing areas that need attention. Additionally, these inspections ensure that we remain in compliance with environmental regulations, helping to prevent potential impacts such as water contamination.



*Ross Creek at Shady Lane*

## Managing Peak Wet Weather Flows



*Flow and Rain in Kentfield (7 Years)*

During peak wet weather, the amount of water flowing through the RVSD system can increase significantly—sometimes as much as 10 to 17 times more than the average dry weather flow. This surge, known as the "wet weather peaking factor" (WWPF), can fluctuate each year depending on rainfall patterns and storm intensity.

The image shows the monthly rainfall in inches for Kentfield (the District's highest wet weather location) over the past seven years, alongside the corresponding flow in millions of gallons to CMSA. This graph demonstrates the direct relationship between rainfall and the total flow from RVSD. Notably, the winter of 2022/23 saw the heaviest wet weather period in the past seven years, marked by a series of intense storms and localized flooding. As RVSD system



improvements are made, the WWPF is expected to come down over time. RVSD peaking factors in the 20th century sometimes exceeded 20 times the dry weather flow.

Understanding this variation in flow is crucial for managing and maintaining the system, particularly during heavy rain events. These fluctuations require careful monitoring and planning to ensure the system can handle the surge in flow without risking spills or damage to infrastructure.

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## High Frequency Cleaning (HFC) Maintenance Schedules

As part of our ongoing effort to maintain and improve the reliability of our sewer system, staff have been performing 3-month and 6-month High-Frequency Cleaning (HFC) in areas commonly referred to as "hot spots." These are about 400 locations in the system that require more frequent cleaning due to factors such as heavy usage, tree root intrusion, or pipe defects. Recently, staff successfully completed all scheduled HFC in Fairfax, San Anselmo, Ross, Kentfield, and parts of Larkspur.

Additionally, as part of the FY 23/24 Gravity Sewer Improvements capital project, several 6-month lines were replaced due to defects that contributed to the need for frequent cleaning. Notable line replacements took place on Almenar Dr., Los Cerros Dr., and Manor Rd. in Greenbrae. By addressing these defective lines, we've reduced the need for regular HFC in these areas, which has freed up staff time to focus on other critical tasks.

The cleaning schedules for these lines are updated to reflect the improved condition of the system. The system then generates automated work orders for routine maintenance, including 3-month and 6-month cleaning schedules, based on historical data. This fosters a more proactive, data-driven approach to managing the condition and maintenance of our sewer lines.

Recognizing the benefits of reducing the number of HFC lines, we developed a program this year that targeted these lines with various management tasks, including capital replacement described above. We are excited to share that a presentation on our HFC reduction program has been accepted for the annual CWEA conference in April 2025. We look forward to sharing our successes and insights with the wider industry.



*Staff Performing Scheduled High Frequency Cleaning*

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## Prevent Sewer Backups This Wet Weather and Holiday Season:Keep Fats, Oils & Grease Out of Your Plumbing

As we prepare for the winter and holiday season, it's important to ensure that your home's plumbing and drainage systems are ready for increased usage and potential rainfall. The holiday season often leads to higher water usage from activities like cooking, cleaning, and hosting gatherings, which can elevate the risk of sewer backups. Heavy rainfall can also exacerbate drainage issues, increasing the likelihood of both private and

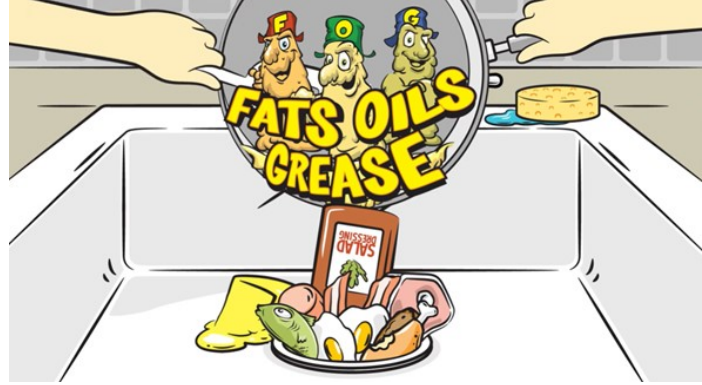
public sewer spills.

One of the most common culprits causing these sewer spills is Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG). When poured down the drain, these substances can quickly solidify and create blockages in your plumbing, leading to costly repairs.

You can help prevent sewer backups and spills by disposing of FOG properly. Never pour FOG down the drain. Instead, wipe cooking utensils, pots, and dishes with a paper towel to remove excess grease and dispose of the towel in the trash or compost bin. Also, keep food scraps such as coffee grounds, potato peels, eggshells, fruit pits, and fibrous vegetables out of the garbage disposal, as these items don't break down properly and can cause blockages. Spread the word and share these tips with family and friends to help raise awareness and prevent unnecessary plumbing issues.

By taking just a few extra minutes to properly dispose of FOG, you can reduce the risk of clogs and sewer spills, ensuring a smoother holiday season for both your household and the community's wastewater system. To learn more about FOG and how to properly dispose of it, visit our website and watch our educational video [here](#).

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation in keeping our sewer system running efficiently. We wish you a safe and warm holiday season!



*Keep Fats, Oils & Grease Out of Your Plumbing*

## Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Project Updates

### FY 23/24 Gravity Sewer Improvements Project

This capital project is progressing smoothly and is nearing completion, with just a few punch list items remaining. We expect to finalize the project and complete the closeout before the end of the calendar year.

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





*Removing Old Pipe*

## Lift Stations 20, 31 & 32 Improvements

Concrete work is ongoing for the wet wells and valve vaults at LS31 and LS32. Delays in the procurement of electrical equipment are causing the project completion to extend into the next calendar year. LS20 work initiation has been postponed past the wet season in part due to these delays.

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 replacing the two small force mains for the LS31 and LS32 lift stations. 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 Wet Well Installation*

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.

**We wish you a safe and warm holiday season!**

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](mailto:clerk@rvsd.org).

**The next RVSD Regular Board Meeting is scheduled  
for Wednesday, December 18, 2024.**

[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.

[Learn More](#)

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### Contact Us

#### Phone & Email

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

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