



125 Years of Service

Ross Valley Sanitary District

General Manager's Monthly Bulletin

October 2024



Mid-October Double Rainbow Over RVSD Facilities – Photo Courtesy of John Vogel

As we conclude October and gear up for the wet weather season, the District remains dedicated to safeguarding our infrastructure and the environment while providing exceptional service to Marin County. This month's bulletin showcases our collaborative overnight force main shutdown with JPA members, essential early morning maintenance to reduce traffic disruptions, and a successful in-house slip line repair. These proactive measures are vital in preventing sewer backups and spills during wet weather and ensuring a reliable system. We remain dedicated to continuously enhancing our services and fostering a cleaner, healthier environment for all.

Our headquarters are located at 1111 Andersen Drive in San Rafael. As always, the RVSD public lobby is open 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

Successful Force Main Shutdown and Flange Replacement

We are pleased to report that RVSD successfully completed the monumental task of a total force main shutdown and flange replacement overnight this month, in collaboration with our Joint Powers Agency (JPA) partners: Central Marin Sanitation Agency (CMSA) and Sanitary District No. 2 (SD2). The total shutdown included all 19 pump stations in the RVSD service area, requiring teams of RVSD staff to carefully manage water levels in five discrete areas of the collection system.

The work focused on the force main located at the San Quentin Gun Range, which is proposed to become the Oak Hill Apartments Complex. This 54-inch diameter force main conveys all of the wastewater from RVSD, SD2, San Quentin Prison, and San Quentin Village to the CMSA treatment plant. De-pressurizing and dewatering of the force main was required to replace a corroding access flange inside a junction box vault. This asset is essential for maintenance access and system functionality.

The plan involved removing excess water from the wet wells and collection systems. The force main was isolated at CMSA's headworks, and with the SD2 and San Quentin pump stations isolated, 150,000 gallons were drained back into the RVSD collection system. This dewatering process enabled CMSA staff to safely remove and replace the bolts on the flange.

To streamline the process, the pump stations were grouped into five defined areas. Prior to the shutdown, the wet wells at stations PS15 - Kentfield, PS12 - Bon Air, and PS13 - Greenbrae were pre-lowered by approximately two feet. At the designated start time, team members from all five areas began pumping down their assigned stations, ensuring continuous monitoring and communication throughout the operation.

Once all stations were fully pumped down, the focus shifted to PS13 - Greenbrae, located by the Bank of America in Bon Air Center, where two RVSD staff remained on-site to monitor and open the valve to drain the force main back into PS13. After the flange was replaced in only 13 minutes, the system startup proceeded in reverse order, ensuring a safe and efficient transition back to normal operations. While the team was prepared for a six-hour shutdown if necessary, the overall procedure took 3 hours and 40 minutes.

This operation was a significant undertaking, and its successful execution showcases the power of collaboration and teamwork among our agencies and staff. A heartfelt thank you to everyone involved for your hard work and dedication!



Before and After: Replacement of the Rusted 2-Foot Blind Flange

Early Morning Line Maintenance

In our ongoing commitment to maintaining a reliable system, our staff is always working day and night. Recently, we conducted essential line maintenance during the early hours of the morning, beginning work at 3:30 AM on Sir Francis Drake Blvd. and Broadmoor Ave in San Anselmo.

This early start was necessary due to ongoing construction on Sir Francis Drake Blvd., which would have restricted equipment access and caused major traffic disruptions. To prioritize the safety of both our staff and the public, we routinely perform field observations of work sites. After assessing the construction and traffic control challenges in the area, our team determined that an early start was the best course of action to safely

complete the line maintenance.

This proactive approach mirrors our recent overnight efforts during the force main shutdown, demonstrating our dedication to addressing infrastructure needs at all hours. Whether it's early morning maintenance or critical repairs overnight, our team is committed to keeping our systems reliable and effective for the community.



RVSD Staff Conducting Early Morning Maintenance

Repair Crew Reduces Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) Through Sliplining

In September, we successfully implemented a slip line repair in the Heatherwood Park area of Larkspur, significantly reducing inflow and infiltration (I&I) in our sewer system. While we typically contract this work out, we are proud to have completed the work in-house.

Our staff identified a 343-foot section of 8-inch sewer main that only served one private lateral connection and was allowing debris and infiltration into the system. We converted this former sewer main into a new lateral connection by inserting a 4-inch HDPE pipe inside the 8-inch pipe and directly connecting it to the resident's line, a process known as sliplining. Sliplining is a technique for repairing leaks or restoring structural stability to an existing pipeline. It involves installing a smaller, "carrier pipe" into a larger "host pipe", grouting the annular space between the two pipes, and sealing the ends. Sliplining has been used since the 1940s.

This work not only eliminated a source of debris and infiltration entering our collection system but also reduces the risk of backups, spills, and any other challenges that may arise during the wet weather season. Abandoned lines like this one are commonly found throughout the Larkspur area that was annexed in 1993, and RVSD is committed to diligently removing these sources of debris and I&I to prevent spills – all while being cost-effective.



Slip Line Replacement

Community Outreach on Proper Waste Disposal

In response to our staff's recent discovery of latex gloves in the public sewer system, we have launched an outreach initiative aimed at educating the community on proper waste disposal practices at the workplace. Our team has developed various

initiatives over the years to raise awareness about items like grease and "flushable" wipes that should not be disposed of in the sewer. RVSD has received statewide recognition for these outreach initiatives.

Most recently, we have implemented targeted advertising in both English and Spanish in areas with high concentrations of medical facilities and hotels to address the issue of improperly discarded latex gloves and cleaning rags. Although a less common occurrence, gloves flushed down toilets can contribute to backups and spills, particularly in high-traffic commercial areas like these.



New Latex Gloves Outreach Animation

Sewer blockages from these items can lead to costly repairs and disruptions to daily business operations. They can also cause public sewer spills that can contaminate local waterways, harm local wildlife, and negatively impact community health and the business's reputation.

By ensuring proper waste disposal, we all can help prevent sewer spills, avoid expensive repairs, and demonstrate a commitment to environmental responsibility. Remember: When in doubt, trash it —don't flush it!

Thank you for your cooperation and support in keeping our sanitary systems running efficiently! To learn more about proper disposal practices, visit our website and watch our new "Don't Flush Gloves" videos [here](#).

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Project Updates

Heatherwood & Heather Gardens Pump Station Rehabilitation Project



This month the contract for the Heatherwood & Heather Gardens Pump Station Rehabilitation Project was awarded to Disney Construction, the low bidder, for a total of \$3,930,333. This project will rehabilitate the Heather Gardens Lift Station (LS30) in Larkspur, while also upgrading the City of Larkspur's Heatherwood Storm Water pump station.

As part of our collaboration with the City of Larkspur, we have established a reimbursement agreement in which RVSD will initially cover the expenses, and the City will reimburse RVSD about half the cost. This partnership allows us to leverage our expertise in managing pump station rehabilitation projects while working closely with the City to co-manage the project. The total financial commitment for RVSD is \$1,980,300, and the City of Larkspur will contribute \$1,950,033. These costs are less than if the project were constructed under separate contracts at separate times.

Originally designed by the City of Larkspur for combined service, LS30 shares its building with the stormwater pump station. This project will involve demolishing the existing facilities and constructing separate pumping stations for sanitary sewer and stormwater. Co-habitation of these facilities has an ongoing risk of storm water overflowing into the sanitary sewer wet well, a form of storm water inflow that RVSD needs to avoid to meet its mission. Sandbags are stored in this existing building as a measure to minimize inflow during large storm events.

The new infrastructure will feature a shared concrete platform designed to elevate critical electrical equipment above the FEMA 100-year flood elevation, addressing the impacts of sea level rise caused by climate change. The project includes new concrete wet wells and valve vaults, submersible pumps, backup power generators, and upgraded electrical controls and alarms that meet both District and City standards.

The need for this project was highlighted in the 2021 Update of the Infrastructure Asset Management Plan, which identified LS30 as a high priority due to its high-risk score. This project marks the fourth RVSD pump station currently under construction. Six other pump stations have been fully rehabilitated since 2018.

Bids for the project were publicly noticed starting August 22, 2024, with sealed bids opened on October 3, 2024. The contract documents were available for public review, and a limited notice to proceed has now been issued.

We look forward to the successful completion of this important initiative in collaboration with the City of Larkspur's Department of Public Works. It will enhance our infrastructure and service capabilities while also strengthening our resilience against the impacts of climate change.

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



Driveway Lateral Connection in Greenbrae

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 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 31 Valve Vault Construction

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

nextdoor

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.

LinkedIn

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
for Wednesday, November 20, 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.

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Contact Us

Phone & Email

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

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