

## General Manager's Monthly Bulletin

December 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](http://www.RVSD.org).

**As 2019 and the decade come to an end**, we want to thank our customers for your patience and support as we wrapped up \$30 million in bond-funded capital projects this year to meet regulatory requirements and protect public health and the environment. We have had no spills in the first wave of winter storms, and with your help, we hope that this is the pattern of things to come!

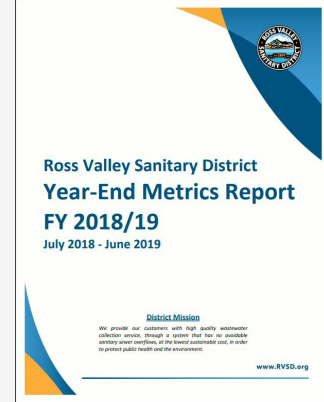


**Public Service Announcements (PSAs) are currently airing on TV.** Each was developed by RVSD and sponsored by other northern Marin County sanitary agencies to educate viewers about the importance of keeping items, including "Flushable" and all other types of Wipes, Fats, Oils and Grease (aka FOG), Sump Pump discharges and Unused Medications, out of our sewers.

Clogs caused by ["flushable" wipes](#) and [FOG](#) can lead to spills from our sewer mains, in violation of regulatory requirements.

These helpful reminders are especially important during the winter/holiday season! A message about our [Sewer Lateral Replacement grant and loan programs](#) is also airing. [Click here](#) to view all of these PSAs online.

The [Year-End Metrics Report](#) for Fiscal Year 2018-19 is available and provides a digestible summary of Ross Valley Sanitary District work. Our report findings show significant improvement in overall pipe conditions, with associated problems and/or defects measurably decreasing. Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO) numbers have also gone down over the last three years as we continue programs to repair and replace pipes and refine methods used for pipeline cleaning and removal of soft blockages.



The [Year-End Capital Report](#) for Fiscal Year 2018-19 provides month-by-month expenditure details and an overall summary of the many capital projects undertaken by the District to comply with regulatory requirements and protect public health and the environment.

And special thanks to you - our District customers! Through your efforts, approximately 25 percent of all laterals within the District have been, or are currently being replaced. Your work, in addition to the diligent work of our line maintenance, repair, condition assessment, inspections and pump station crews and administrative staff make all of this possible.

Happy Holidays to All!

*Steve Moore, General Manager*

## **RVSD Condition Assessment Crew's Manhole Initiative**

*By Steve Moore and John Vogel*



The condition assessment crew uses closed-circuit television cameras (CCTV) to continually monitor and assess the condition of the pipes and nodes (i.e., manholes, rod holes and lamp holes) in the wastewater collection system. We research and deploy the latest technology to improve the accuracy of these assessments - which are vital as they provide the foundation for our decisions about investments of time and money for capital, maintenance and repair programs.

The crew is currently inventorying all of the District's nodes, or access points. Nodes provide the only point of entry to the 196-mile gravity sewer system to conduct necessary cleaning and repair tasks, as well as CCTV monitoring. Nodes are windows into the health of the system, illuminating maintenance, repair, and storm water inflow & infiltration (I&I) issues. Crews are assessing these locations utilizing wireless cameras and geographic information system (GIS) phone apps to capture the necessary imaging and data required to evaluate these assets. This information is uploaded into the computer maintenance and management system (CMMS) to be used in data-driven decisions in our maintenance, repair and capital programs. Crews are also collecting survey grade GPS information for location accuracy and effective mapping.

RVSD maintains 5,528 access points, of which 1,711 (31 percent) are on private property.



Manholes and rod holes located on private property pose a challenge for the maintenance crews and the property owners alike. Effective operations and maintenance rely on reasonable access to all manhole locations. Without this access the sewer system is at greater risk of failure, which could adversely affect public health and the environment.



As part of the inventory, we are documenting access needs at each of our manholes and sewers on private property. We are also developing public outreach materials and strategies to ensure a smooth partnership with our ratepayers.



About 35 percent of the sewer system is on private property, which is unusually high compared to other collection systems around the state. For this reason, we need the help of hundreds of property owners to effectively manage our sewer system.

Reliable access to manholes by our crews is vital to achieve necessary maintenance, repair and I&I reduction as required by the CMSA NPDES permit to reduce blending and improve water quality of discharge into the Bay.

Manhole access is also needed to prevent sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) and associated environmental damage and fines. We sincerely appreciate all of the assistance and cooperation we receive from our citizens and always welcome input and suggestions on how we can be the least intrusive and most neighborly as we conduct our maintenance work on your behalf.

RVSD has 4,107 documented manholes, of which 2,420 have been surveyed. The average depth of a manhole in the RVSD system is 65 inches (5 feet, 5 inches), which equals about 93 square feet of surface area. This is roughly the same surface area as 59 feet of 6-inch pipe. Therefore, RVSD manholes have the same surface area as about 46 miles of 6-inch sewer pipe, which is about 24 percent of our 196-mile gravity sewer system.



Hence, the surface area of manholes, as a potential area of I&I, is comparable to the pipes that connect them. Their rehabilitation is a central part of RVSD's efforts to keep rain water and groundwater out of the sewer system.

An effective assessment program increases the viability and longevity of the sewer system and helps meet the goal of transporting uninterrupted sewer at the lowest cost possible. Effective assessments



identify structural and maintenance issues as well as I&I locations. Finding these problems early allows for low cost rehabilitation methods to be used instead of high cost full-replacement.

Great work, condition assessment crew!

## RVSD Reminders

[Click here](#) for more information about how to properly dispose of Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) during the holidays and throughout the year!

[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 of the year, 24 hours a day, seven days per week!

**If you experience an overflow in your home or have a similar problem, please visit our website 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 "EMERGENCY" on our website [homepage](#).

**Construction Updates** - RVSD Capital Improvement Program (CIP) construction projects to rehabilitate underground sewer pipes and associated structures throughout our service area are wrapping up for the year. These sewer line repairs and rehabilitation projects are critical to protect public health and the environment by reducing the risk of sewer overflows.

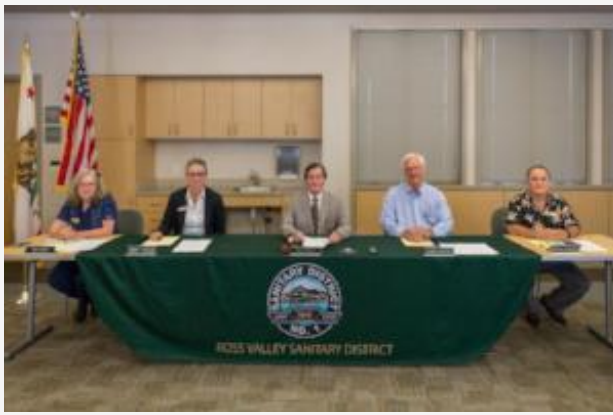


[Click here](#) for details on work in your neighborhood or streets of interest, or on each of the individual projects listed below. You can also visit our [Capitol Improvement Program](#) (CIP) page on our website for the latest project information and updates.

1. [Fairfax, Larkspur, San Anselmo Sewer Projects](#)
2. [Kentfield Pump Station 15 Improvements](#)
3. [Lower Shady Lane / Poplar Avenue Sewer Improvements](#)
4. [San Anselmo Sewer Improvements - Butterfield](#)

Want to receive timely construction updates? [Click here](#) to select the project you want updates for 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.



**Next Board Meeting:** Ross Valley Sanitary District Board Meetings are typically held the third Wednesday of each month at 5pm at the Central Marin Police Authority's Community Room, located at 250 Doherty Drive in Larkspur.

**The next Regular Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2020, at 5pm in Larkspur.**

[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](http://RVSD.org)*