

## General Manager's Monthly Bulletin

September 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.*

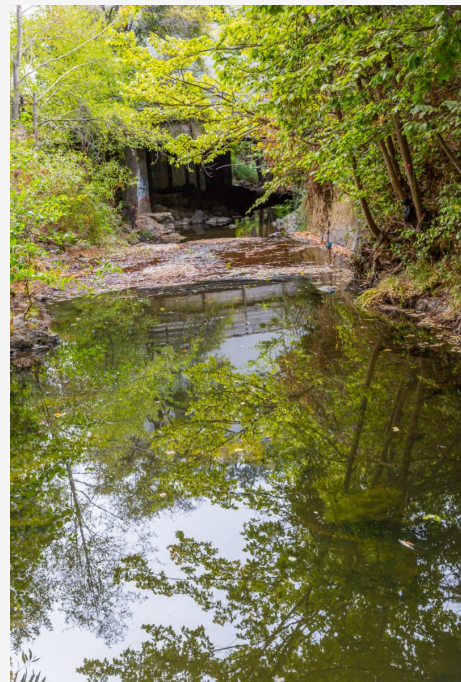
For more information, visit [www.RVSD.org](http://www.RVSD.org).

As we head into fall, you will continue to see our work crews and trucks out in the community. [Click here](#) to view our interactive project map for details about work in your neighborhood or on streets of interest.

You can also [click here](#) to visit the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) page on our website.

We are wrapping up [work on sewer rehabilitation projects in Fairfax, Larkspur and San Anselmo](#) to be complete in October, and [improvements to the Kentfield Pump Station 15](#).

[Butterfield/Meadowcroft-Arroyo sewer improvements in San Anselmo](#) include Phase One work on Butterfield (recently completed) and Phase Two work that began this week along Meadowcroft and Willow Way.



[Lower Shady Lane/Poplar Ave sewer improvements](#) began over the summer and are anticipated to be complete in spring/summer 2020.

[Cleanup at our Larkspur Landing site](#) began in July. Two-thirds of the overall project will be complete by the end of the dry season. All of the hazardous material has been removed from the site. We plan to complete the remaining one-third of the project by summer 2020.

Steve Moore, General Manager

## Three Nights for Three Air Release Valves: RVSD Crews Join the Multi-Agency Effort to Assist Neighbor SD2 (Corte Madera) with Capping Three Air Release Valves (ARVs) on their Force Main

*By Steve Moore and Stephen Miksis*

When is the best time to do emergency work on sanitary sewer force mains, the pipes that operate under pressure downstream of pump stations? Nighttime, of course, when the wastewater flows from residences and businesses are at their lowest, and when the force mains are at their lowest pressure. That way, if pressures are higher than expected, the amount of wastewater to manage is at a minimum. However, there needs to be plenty of contingencies in case there is more pressure inside the pipes to deal with than anticipated. This is because force mains are not equipped with pressure meters. And to manage the risk of high-volume sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs), it's a good idea to approach it as a team and not go it alone.

Ross Valley Sanitary District manages its collection system, including gravity sewers, pump stations and force mains alongside two partner agencies: Sanitary District No. 2 of Marin County (SD2 in Corte Madera) and San Rafael Sanitation District (SRSD). The three agencies are connected by a Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (JPA) that forms the Central Marin Sanitation Agency (CMSA). CMSA runs the treatment facility. The force main system of RVSD and SD2 are interconnected, coming together at the intersection of Sir Francis Drake Blvd. and Highway 101. The combined flows continue under the hill to be treated at CMSA before discharge to the Bay.

Force mains have Air Release Valves (ARVs) at high elevation points, housed in manholes, to allow gases to escape to the atmosphere and not build up pressure within the pipe. If gases are not allowed to escape via functioning ARVs, they can result in corrosion of metallic or concrete pipe and reduction in the flow capacity of the pipe. Some air release valves also admit air when the flow stops in the pipe to prevent a vacuum condition which could damage the pipe. Flow capacity reduction can lead to overflows in wet weather.



The JPA entities converged on the nights of September 3, 4 and 5 to cooperatively solve a long-known ARV issue in three locations along the SD2 force main. We were joined by private contractors, Maggiora and Ghilotti, Roto Rooter, and Roy's Sewer Service. This unique gathering was an opportunity for our agencies to pool resources, learn how to implement emergency procedures together, avoid a significant SSO threat, and learn how to effectively address inoperable, corroded ARVs plugged with grease, which is something most wastewater collection systems with force mains must address.

Corroded and plugged ARVs pose a risk of SSOs, which are risks to public health, the environment, and can trigger large fines from the state. ARVs need to be maintained and exercised or they can get clogged with grease and become inoperable.

The photo above shows a corroded, inoperable ARV on SD2 Force Main that was removed during the nighttime force main work.



Now that corroded and plugged ARVs have been cut off, capped and sealed, we have removed a significant SSO risk. Based on preliminary measurements, the gas that escaped during these procedures suggests as much as one third of pipe capacity had been blocked by gas.

Not only was a major SSO risk abated, but force main capacity was restored equivalent to another smaller pipeline. And once the new valves are installed, the force main will be able to be brought back to full design capacity for the winter in these locations.

Our JPA partner, SD2, can now proceed to use a more methodical approach to investigate, exercise and plan repairs where needed for the remaining system valves. The exercise was a success and demonstrates a good cooperative model for when RVSD must make similar repairs on our system in the coming months and years.

A stainless steel full circle clamp, shown in the photo (above right) was placed on a force main where an inoperable ARV was removed. The blind flange at the top will allow for future ARV to be installed and operated.



The JPA agencies are part of a countywide Mutual Aid Agreement among water and wastewater agencies to share personnel and equipment in emergency situations. This collaborative exercise demonstrates how CMSA member agencies effectively pool their resources for planned and unplanned emergencies, enhancing community resiliency in Central Marin County.

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

**Call the RVSD Emergency Line 24/7 at 415-259-2949** if you have a public sewer emergency, such as a manhole overflow, leaking pipe, smell odors, or see sewage on the ground. Emergency crews are available 365 days of the year, 24 hours a day, 7 days per week!

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

**RVSD CIP Construction Updates** - RVSD Capital Improvement Program (CIP) construction projects are taking place now to rehabilitate underground sewer pipes and associated structures throughout our service area.

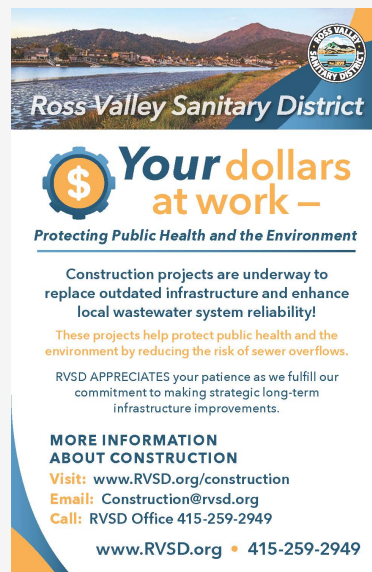
These sewer line repairs and rehabilitation projects are critical to protect public health and the environment by reducing the risk of sewer overflows.

Look for construction projects taking place near you. Click on each of the CIP construction projects listed below for the latest project information and updates.

1. [Fairfax, Larkspur, San Anselmo Sewer Projects](#)
2. [Kentfield PS 15 Improvements](#)
3. [Ross Common / Upper Shady Lane Sewer Improvements](#)
4. [San Anselmo Sewer Improvements - Butterfield](#)
5. [San Anselmo Sewer Improvements - Nokomis](#)

[Click here](#) to select and receive timely construction updates 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, October 16, 2019, 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](#)