



## CCCSD Wins Legal Battle to Recover Funds for Former Garbage Customers

**A**fter a 10-year battle fraught with complicated legal maneuvers, intense detective work and dogged perseverance, Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (CCCSD) with direction of our Board, finally obtained justice—and financial compensation—for thousands of garbage service customers in Orinda and Moraga. These customers had been deliberately overcharged by the president of the former Orinda-Moraga Disposal Service, William D. Lomow, and his partner Robert Slieпка, in the mid-1990s.

At that time, CCCSD was not only a wastewater collection and treatment agency, but also the franchiser for garbage collection service for much of central Contra Costa County. Orinda-Moraga Disposal Service (OMDS) was one of the District's franchised waste haulers who provided garbage service for residents and businesses in the Orinda-Moraga area.

Just as CCCSD was turning over its garbage franchising responsibility to the newly formed Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority in 1995, District officials learned of suspicious activities and financial inconsistencies at OMDS.

CCCSD launched an investigation and hired an independent forensic auditor to review OMDS records. The auditor uncovered evidence of financial

mismanagement and money laundering by the president of OMDS and his partner. As part of the fraud, garbage rates for residential and commercial garbage customers had been artificially inflated by OMDS. At the same time, OMDS was failing to make payments into their employees' health and pension plans and laying off workers.

Consequently, CCCSD filed a lawsuit against OMDS on behalf of its ratepayers. A judgment was obtained against OMDS in 1997. A court-appointed receiver was assigned to locate and liquidate any remaining assets. This was no easy task. The trail led to several sham corporations, complicated legal trusts, off-shore accounts, questionable land deals in other

states, and equipment that had been relocated and neglected.

In 1998, federal authorities charged Lomow and Slieпка with 49 counts of money laundering, mail fraud and interstate transportation of stolen property. The charges stated that, "Each year OMDS requested rate increases, it omitted hundreds of thousands of dollars of revenues and included hundreds of

*(continued on page 2)*



## CCCSD Wins Legal Battle... *(continued from front)*

thousands of dollars of fraudulent expenses; the ratepayers were required to pay more for the services provided by OMDS than they would have paid in the absence of the fraud and deception.”

As money was slowly recovered during the years that followed, the medical insurance premiums, pension payments and other obligations owed to more than 20 OMDS employees were paid; the court-appointed receiver’s expenses and fees were paid; and CCCSD’s franchise fees, legal fees and other expenses were paid.

The OMDS case was finally closed in June 2005.

After payment of all expenses, about \$462,000 of the recovered funds were left. The CCCSD Board directed that this money be used to compensate former OMDS customers who had been overcharged. This compensation will be in the form of a one-time credit of about \$40 on their garbage bill.

“This was a very long and difficult process, but our Board of Directors felt we owed it to our customers to pursue it,” said CCCSD General Manager Chuck Batts. “We’re very pleased to finally put things straight.” ❖

Because of the lapsed time since OMDS was in business and the impossibility of tracking customers from the now-defunct OMDS billing system, CCCSD elected to provide the service credit to existing residents and businesses through the current Allied Waste Service billing system. The CCCSD Board feels this approach is the most manageable in the long run and will return the money back into the communities from which it was taken.

## Holiday Cooking: Good Meals for You; Bad News for Your Sewers!



**F**ats, oils and grease. They’re the major cause of sewer clogs and overflows, and they’re coming from your kitchen!

Even if you don’t dump used cooking oil and excess grease down the drain (and we hope you don’t!), some of the fatty foods that get sent through your garbage disposal may cause problems.

All year long, cooking byproducts from thousands of homes and restaurants in your area get washed down kitchen drains. The fats, oil and grease build up in sewer pipes over time and create blockages. Those blockages can cause backups and overflows inside homes or on public streets.

During the holiday season—when more people are cooking higher-fat-content foods, deep-fat-frying their turkeys, and enjoying large family meals—the amount of fats, oils and grease entering the sewer system can increase the potential for a problem.

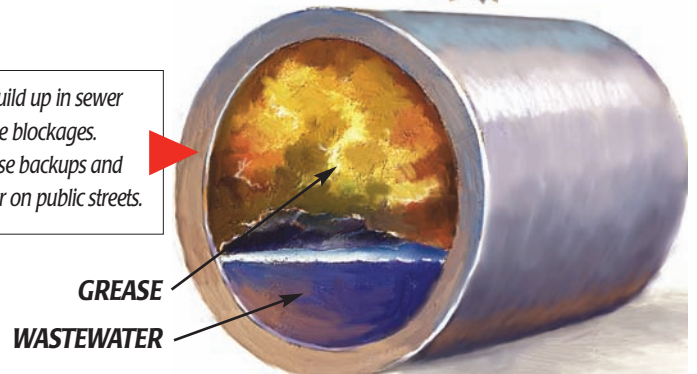
Here are steps you can take to help prevent a clog from ruining your holidays:

- Keep dairy products, fats, oil, grease or greasy foods out of the sink and the garbage disposal.

- Freeze small amounts of fats, oils and grease in a container with a tight-sealing lid and dispose of it in a trash receptacle.
- Mix cooking oil with an absorbent material such as cat litter or coffee grounds, place it in a lidded container and dispose of it in a trash receptacle.
- For greasy pans that need to be soaked, first pour off the grease into a container as mentioned above. Then place a paper towel over the drain basket to catch grease and food particles as you pour the soaking water down the drain.
- Bring large quantities of cooking oil and other fats to the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility for disposal. (See page 5 for hours, directions, and transport limits.) ❖



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## Sewer Renovation Project Nearing Completion

A complex and much-needed sewer renovation project is underway in Pleasant Hill. The Central Contra Costa Sanitary District's (CCCSD) Vessing Sewer Renovation Project, which began in June, is replacing or repairing about 16,000 feet of 6- and 8-inch pipe with new 8- and 15-inch sewer lines between Oak Park Blvd. and Del Oceano Drive.

The sewer lines in this area require excessive maintenance due to grease build-up and tree root infiltration. The pipes are starting to deteriorate, and there are some wet-weather capacity issues. As part of this project, CCCSD will repair a hill slide in the vicinity of Hoover Court funded by the City of Pleasant Hill.

Several factors make this a challenging project:

- About 7,000 feet of the sewer lines being repaired and replaced go through private property.
- The pipeline requires six creek crossings.

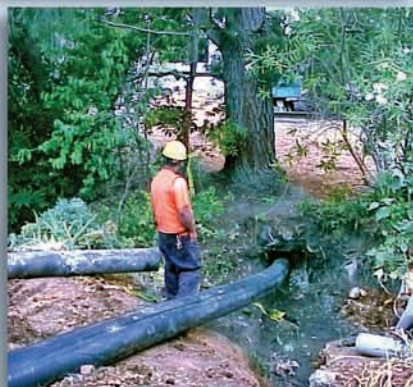
- There are many large trees along the construction route that need to be protected.

Extensive use of trenchless technologies is lessening the impact of construction. Trenchless technology such as pipe bursting and guided horizontal boring reduces the amount of surface disruption that occurs with pipeline replacement, and is especially useful in high-density areas where there are many backyard easements.

Although some of these trenchless technologies may be expensive, CCCSD feels the preservation of majestic oak trees, creek settings and private property is well worth the cost.

Even with state-of-the-art technology, construction can be very disruptive. We're doing our best to minimize the inconvenience this project is causing, and appreciate the patience of the residents in Pleasant Hill.

The project is expected to cost about \$3.4 million and should be complete by the end of this year, three months ahead of schedule. ❖



## Law Bans Placing All Mercury-Containing Lamps and Batteries in Trash



### High-Intensity Discharge (HID) Lamps:

- Metal halide lamps, such as floodlights for large indoor and outdoor areas and gymnasiums
- Sodium lamps, such as those used as security lighting and outdoor floodlights
- Mercury vapor lamps, such as those used for street lighting

When mercury-containing lamps or tubes are placed in the trash and collected for disposal, they break. This causes the mercury to be released into the environment where it might be washed by rainwater into waterways, or seep into groundwater.

To prevent further mercury contamination of our environment, California passed a law making it illegal after February 8, 2006, to dispose of mercury-containing lamps by placing them in the trash.

### Do Not Place Batteries in Trash

This law places the same restriction on placing batteries in the trash. This includes AAA, AA, C, D, button cell, 9 volt, and all other batteries, both rechargeable and single use. Batteries are considered hazardous because of the metals and other toxic or corrosive materials they contain.

Please bring all HID, fluorescent lamps/tubes and batteries to our Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility for safe and proper disposal.

### Take Care When Storing & Transporting Fluorescent Lamps or Tubes

Package fluorescent lamps/tubes carefully when storing and transporting them, preferably in their original protective container. Taping tubes together can reduce the risk of breakage. Store them away from rain so if they break, the mercury won't be washed by rain into waterways.

### What to Do If You Break a Fluorescent Lamp/Tube

If you break a fluorescent lamp/tube, keep people and pets away from the area so

that mercury-containing pieces and powder are not tracked into other areas. Keep the area well ventilated to disperse any escaping vapor. Do not use a vacuum cleaner. Instead, wear latex gloves and clean up the fragments with a broom. Wipe the area with a damp paper towel to remove all glass fragments and mercury. After clean-up is complete, place fragments and cleaning materials into a sealable plastic bag. Wash your hands. Take the bag and its contents to the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility.

For more information, visit the California Integrated Waste Management Board website at <http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov> or call our Collection Facility at 1-800-646-1431. ❖



## Do You Use Cleansers, Paint, Motor Oil, Batteries, Fluorescent Lamps or Pesticides?

These are just a few of the household items that would harm the environment if poured down drains or tossed into the trash. We offer a safer disposal solution.

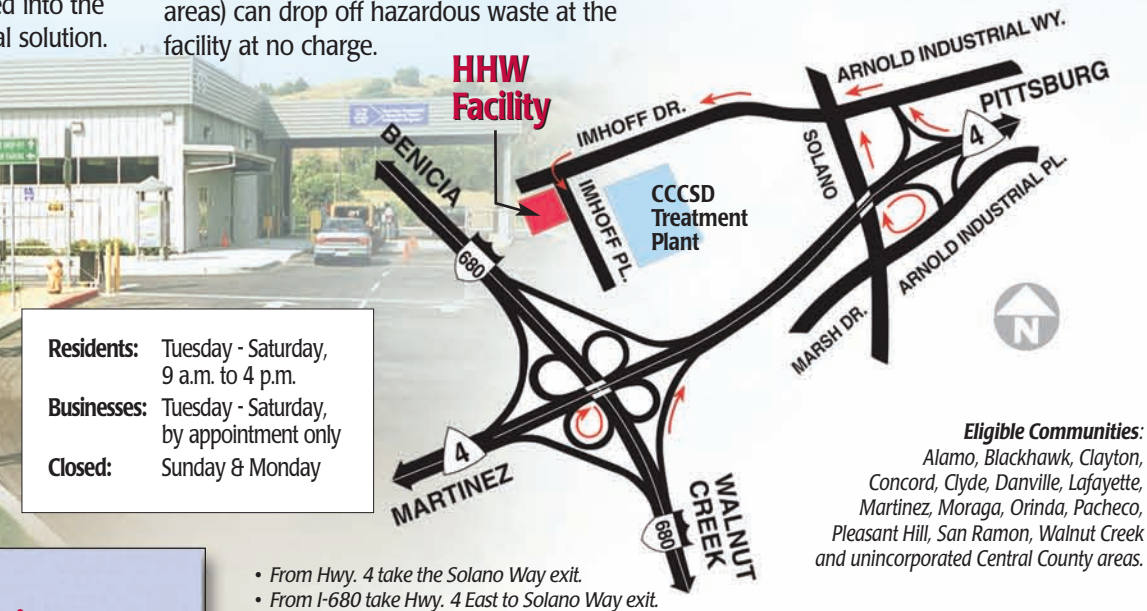
The Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility, located near the junction of I-680 and Highway 4 in Martinez, is just 5 minutes away from Sun Valley Mall.

Residents of central Contra Costa County (Alamo, Blackhawk, Clayton, Clyde, Concord, Danville, Lafayette, Martinez, Moraga, Orinda, Pacheco, Pleasant Hill, San Ramon, Walnut Creek and unincorporated Central County areas) can drop off hazardous waste at the facility at no charge.

Small businesses are charged a nominal fee and need to call for an appointment.

Please note that State transportation regulations limit the amount of hazardous waste you can carry in your vehicle to 15 gallons or 125 pounds.

Please call 1-800-646-1431 or visit [www.centrialsan.org](http://www.centrialsan.org) for more information.



**Residents:** Tuesday - Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
**Businesses:** Tuesday - Saturday, by appointment only  
**Closed:** Sunday & Monday

**Eligible Communities:** Alamo, Blackhawk, Clayton, Concord, Clyde, Danville, Lafayette, Martinez, Moraga, Orinda, Pacheco, Pleasant Hill, San Ramon, Walnut Creek and unincorporated Central County areas.

- From Hwy. 4 take the Solano Way exit.
- From I-680 take Hwy. 4 East to Solano Way exit.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility – 4797 Imhoff Place, Martinez, CA 94553-4392

## Collection Facility No Longer Accepting Medications

The Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility in Martinez is no longer accepting medications for disposal.

The Federal Drug Enforcement Agency prohibits household hazardous waste collection facilities from accepting controlled substances. Many prescription medications are classified as controlled substances, but there is no indication of this on the container label. Therefore, to preclude accidentally violating this restriction on controlled substances, the facility will no longer be accepting medications of any kind.

### DISPOSAL OF HOUSEHOLD MEDICATIONS

To dispose of your unwanted or expired medications, please mix them with garbage, put them in an unlabeled sealed container, and put them in the trash. Mixing them with garbage will prevent anyone from finding them in usable condition. Placing them in a sealed container will prevent loose medications from

spilling out of trash containers during collection and becoming accessible to passers-by, children or pets.

You can also check with your local pharmacy to see if they take back expired drugs.

Chemotherapy drugs should be returned to the clinic that dispensed them.

**Never flush medications down the drain!** When drugs are flushed down the drain, they are carried to a wastewater treatment plant designed to remove biological contaminants. The plant cannot eliminate all traces of chemicals from the wastewater before it is released into the bay. Recent studies indicate some chemicals used in medications may harm fish and animals.

**Businesses** with medical waste should contact the Contra Costa County Department of Health Services at (925) 646-5225 for disposal options. ❖

## Free Paint and Other Items!

One of our goals is to recycle as many of the items brought to the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility as possible. That's why we have a "Reuse Room" full of products brought in for disposal that are still in useable condition. These products are free for the taking!

Because we don't inventory the products that come and go on a daily basis, we can't respond to phone calls asking what's available. But the selection often includes items such as paint, wood stain, gardening products and a wide variety of household cleansers.

The Reuse Room is open Tuesday - Saturday, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

So the next time you're at the facility, check out the Reuse Room. You may find just what you need! ❖



# Environmental Educational Programs Help Protect Our Future

Promoting pollution prevention is a key component of the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District's (CCCSD) mission. Because one of the best ways to prevent pollution is to raise people's awareness about the impact of their actions on the environment, CCCSD has developed several programs to do just that.

## We Turn Grade-Schoolers Into Water Wizards!

Thousands of 3rd and 5th grade students at more than 20 elementary schools in central Contra Costa County have learned about wastewater treatment and pollution prevention thanks to CCCSD's innovative



and award-winning Water Wizards program. Through a variety of entertaining, interactive and educational activities, students learn how they can help protect our limited water resources and delicate environment.



## We Show High-Schoolers the Wonders of Sewer Science!

This fascinating week-long program gives high school science students a hands-on experience of discovering how wastewater becomes clean water. Laboratory experiments integrate biology, chemistry, physics and math. Thousands of teenagers at nine high schools have completed the class and learned all about wastewater, stormwater and water quality concepts.

## Follow the Flow on one of Our Treatment Plant Tours!

Ever wonder what goes on behind the scenes at a state-of-the-art wastewater treatment plant? Hundreds of curious young people and adults find out each year by taking our free one-hour tour (for ages 12 and up).

**For More Information...** call (925) 229-7316 or visit [www.centalsan.org](http://www.centalsan.org) ❖

## Sniffing Out the Best Ways to Control Odors

It's no secret that wastewater emits odors. Being a good neighbor is extremely important to the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (CCCSD). Because residential and commercial developments are located near our treatment plant and pumping station facilities, controlling odors is a high priority, and one in which CCCSD invests considerable dollars.

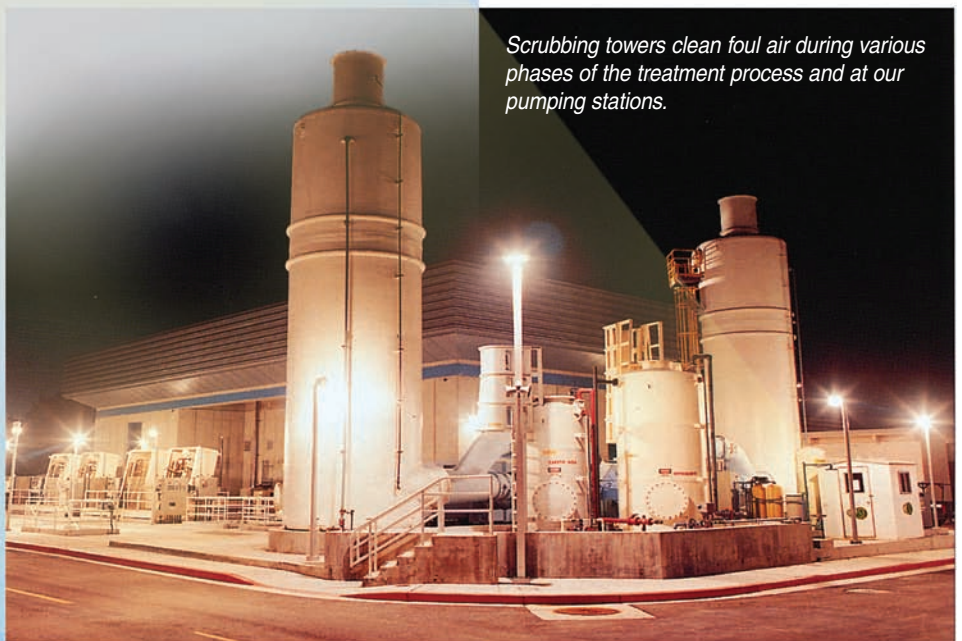
That's why CCCSD implements, monitors, and tests innovative methods of capturing and cleaning foul air before it affects our community.

A comprehensive study is currently underway at the treatment plant in Martinez to measure the effectiveness of our odor control measures.

This study involves taking many air samples at various locations around the plant, then using high-tech laboratory "sniffing" equipment to measure odor concentrations. Variables such as exhaust location, odor emission rates, and meteorological conditions are used in a computer model to predict off-site odors. The results will be compared to historic readings and allowable

regulatory levels. If warranted, additional control measures may be implemented to further minimize odors that may impact our neighbors.

Despite these efforts, sometimes odors may still be noticeable to our closest neighbors. We need to know when this happens, so we encourage people to call our "odor control hotline" at (925) 335-7703. ❖



*Scrubbing towers clean foul air during various phases of the treatment process and at our pumping stations.*

## CCCSD Rewards Local Businesses for Pollution Prevention Activities

As part of our Pollution Prevention Program, Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (CCCSD) has presented Pollution Prevention Awards to local businesses that go beyond permit compliance and take extra steps to protect the local water environment. We've been doing this for the past 14 years.

This year CCCSD recognized two public agencies, five businesses and eight dental practices:

- Central Contra Costa Transit Authority (Concord)
- Alldura (mobile surface cleaner) (various locations)
- Environmental Surface Cleaning (mobile surface cleaner) (various locations)
- Parker West International (mobile surface cleaner) (various locations)
- Custom Care Cleaners (dry cleaner) (Pleasant Hill)
- Dr. Richard Bellagamba (Concord)
- Dr. Gary Cappelletti (Danville)
- Dr. William Clements (Danville)
- Diablo Dental Specialists – Endodontics (Danville)
- Diablo Valley Dental Care (Pleasant Hill)
- Dr. Robert Morrish (Danville)
- Dr. Kenneth Tittle (Pleasant Hill)
- Dr. Randall Wiley & Dr. Donald Schmitt (Danville)
- Contra Costa County Environmental Health ServSafe Program – Special Commendation (Concord)
- Roussell's Auto Service – Honorable Mention (Walnut Creek)

We commend these businesses for their outstanding efforts in preventing pollution and applaud their commitment to protecting our communities!

For more information on what these businesses did to receive an award, see our website at [www.centrsan.org](http://www.centrsan.org) . ❖

## CCCSD Receives National Recognition for Pollution Prevention Efforts

The Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (CCCSD) has recently received two awards that demonstrate we're among the best in the nation at what we do.

- The National Association of Clean Water Agencies bestowed its **2004 Peak Performance Gold Award** on CCCSD this summer in recognition of the District's processing of more than 17 billion gallons of wastewater (enough to fill more than 1.2 million backyard swimming pools) last year without a single permit violation. The permit demands strict adherence to stringent Federal, Regional and State water quality requirements. Achieving 100% compliance means CCCSD is achieving its ultimate goals of protecting the environment and keeping pollutants out of the Bay. This marks the seventh consecutive year that CCCSD has received this award.

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency named CCCSD the first-place winner of the **2005 National Clean Water Act's Pretreatment Excellence Award**. This award recognizes public wastewater treatment agencies for outstanding efforts in controlling pollutants from industrial and commercial users and in heightening overall public awareness of and support for local wastewater treatment-related programs. These programs reduce the risk of toxic pollutants entering the water environment and also reduce risks to collection system and treatment plant worker health and safety. This marks the third time CCCSD has received this award.

While winning awards is not our focus, such accomplishments represent a conscious effort on our part to continually improve our overall performance and provide added value to our customers. ❖



# About CCCSD

Our mission is to protect public health and the environment. We do this by collecting and treating wastewater, providing high-quality recycled water, and promoting pollution prevention.

Our treatment plant in Martinez collects and treats an average of 45 million gallons of wastewater every day. Some highly treated wastewater is recycled for irrigation use on golf courses and parks, and the rest is safely released into Suisun Bay. We also operate a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility that allows our customers to safely dispose of hazardous materials. ❖



- Sewage collection and wastewater treatment (and HHW collection service) for 308,400 people
- Wastewater treatment for 135,800 residents in Concord and Clayton by contract and HHW collection service
- HHW collection service only
- CCCSD's Headquarters, treatment plant, and HHW Collection Facility are located in Martinez
- CCCSD's Collection System Operations Division (sewer maintenance) is based in Walnut Creek

## Where to Call...

General information	(925) 228-9500 or <a href="http://www.centralsan.org">www.centralsan.org</a>
Sewer overflows <i>(When there's an overflow in the street or a backup in your home, call this number and in most cases, a crew will be there within an hour.)</i>	(925) 933-0955 or 933-0990
Treatment Plant InfoLine (Report Odors)	(925) 335-7703
Household Hazardous Waste InfoLine	(800) 646-1431
Sewer connection permits	(925) 229-7371
To report illegal discharges into sewer system	(925) 229-7288 (during business hours) (925) 229-7214 (after hours)
Job Hotline	(925) 229-7109 or <a href="http://www.centralsan.org">www.centralsan.org</a>
Student Education Programs	(925) 229-7310 or <a href="http://www.centralsan.org">www.centralsan.org</a>
Public InfoLine	(925) 335-7702 or <a href="http://www.centralsan.org">www.centralsan.org</a>

Past issues of the "Pipeline" are available on our web site: [www.centralsan.org](http://www.centralsan.org)

CCCSD Pipeline is brought to you by:

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**Gerald R. Lucey**, Board Director • **James A. Nejedly**, Board Director

Board meetings are open to the public and are held the 1st and 3rd Thursday each month at 2 p.m. in the CCCSD Board Room, 5019 Imhoff Place, Martinez

**Charles W. Batts**, General Manager

## The Central Contra Costa Sanitary District PIPELINE

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