

## One-of-a-Kind Computer System: the “Brains” of our Treatment Plant

**B**ack in 1978, the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District was the proud owner of one of the first computer-controlled treatment plants in the country. It utilized the latest automated systems to help our operators monitor and adjust the complex treatment processes.

But even the best computer system can only be maintained and upgraded for so long. Eventually the availability of spare parts dwindles and the technology becomes obsolete. So in 2001, steps were taken to replace the old system with a new, state-of-the-art computerized plant control system.

This was not a simple process of pulling out an old mainframe computer and installing new ones. The replacement project was quite complicated because of the District's unique requirements. The new

*(continued on page 2)*



*Operators monitor multiple systems 24 hours a day to ensure all treatment processes are functioning correctly.*

### FEATURES

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## the “Brains”... *(continued from front)*

system had to be able to integrate a complex network of servers, central processing units, remote interface terminals, power supplies, workstations, network switches, programmable logic controllers—along with a powerful, customized software application—all designed to work efficiently with our treatment plant’s existing processes and equipment.

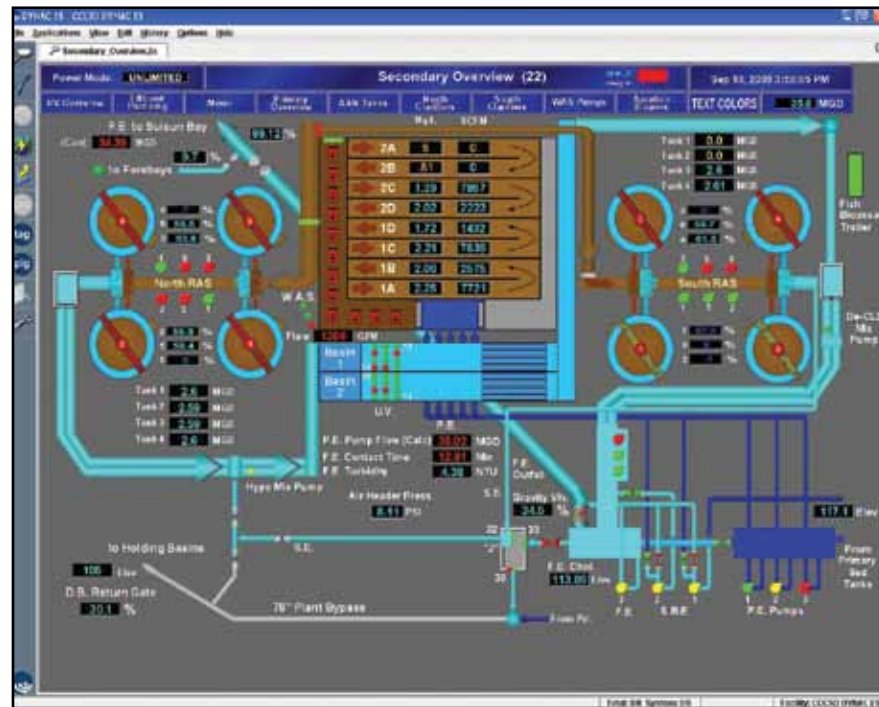
Think of it as a brain transplant for the treatment plant. If one little element went wrong, the result could have been disastrous.

This was a six-year, three million dollar project. It incorporated a one-of-a-kind intuitive interface that is easy for plant operators to learn and use. Computerized graphics for the system were designed by operations staff. They enable operators to see realistic representations of the equipment and processes they’re

monitoring and controlling. What they see on the screen is a real-time, virtual image of what’s happening in the treatment plant.

The “brain transplant” wasn’t fast, but it was very effective. The system changeover was done while plant operations continued without interruption and without permit violations. The District now has a state-of-the-art plant control system that is more powerful, more reliable, and more efficient.

*The District now has a state-of-the-art plant control system that is more powerful, more reliable, and more efficient.*



The new Plant Control System uses graphics that clearly represent the plant’s equipment and processes. This screenshot shows elements of the secondary treatment process, including clarifier tanks, aeration basins, effluent pumps, and final effluent flow to Suisun Bay.

## Four Local Businesses Receive Pollution Prevention Awards

Four local businesses were recently recognized with Pollution Prevention Awards by the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District:

- **Aquarius Pool & Spa Service** (1822 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Walnut Creek): Recognized for reducing chemical use and implementing environmentally friendly equipment cleaning techniques; for actively preventing water pollution; and for advising customers on proper pool-draining practices.
- **Costco Wholesale** (3150 Fostoria Way, Danville): Recognized for offering its free pharmaceutical take-back program that ensures drugs are kept out of the environment and disposed of properly; for decreasing the concentration of silver released to the sewer by the photo lab; for providing an inkjet refill program that reduces waste; and for recycling ink cartridges, disposable cameras, and batteries.
- **John Muir Rossmoor Pharmacy** (1220 Rossmoor Parkway, Walnut Creek): Recognized for its medical sharps take-back program that ensures needles, syringes, and lancets are properly collected in certified containers and disposed of safely; for promoting local pharmaceutical take-back programs and encouraging patrons to properly dispose of medications; and for recycling of paper, plastics and aluminum.
- **U.S. Postal Service Vehicle Maintenance Facility** (2070 N. Broadway, Walnut Creek): Recognized for extensive employee training that emphasizes proper disposal of hazardous wastes; for keeping contaminants from going into storm drains; for eliminating the use of lead wheel weights; and for recycling of tires, coolants, and other automotive items.

“These businesses deserve special recognition for the extraordinary steps they take to protect the water environment,” said CCCSD General Manager Jim Kelly. “They do more than just comply with water quality regulations. They promote recycling and waste minimization; use equipment, practices and procedures designed to prevent pollutants and hazardous wastes from entering the sewer or storm drains; educate their employees and/or customers about the importance of water quality issues; and demonstrate a proactive approach to protecting the environment.”

CCCSD conducts the awards program each year in conjunction with National Pollution Prevention Week, the third week of September. The goals of the program are to raise awareness of pollution prevention practices and encourage activities that protect the environment.

Since the District developed its Pollution Prevention Awards program in 1992, 89 local businesses have been recognized for their outstanding efforts to keep pollutants out of area waterways.



**CENTRAL CONTRA COSTA SANITARY DISTRICT**  
presents

**The 18<sup>th</sup> Annual POLLUTION PREVENTION AWARD WINNERS**

**Costco Wholesale** Danville

Recognized for offering its free pharmaceutical take-back program that ensures drugs are kept out of the environment and disposed of properly; for decreasing the concentration of silver released to the sewer by the photo lab; for providing an inkjet refill program that reduces waste; and for recycling ink cartridges, disposable cameras, and batteries.

**John Muir Rossmoor Pharmacy** Walnut Creek

Recognized for its medical sharps take-back program that ensures needles, syringes, and lancets are properly collected in certified containers and disposed of safely; for promoting local pharmaceutical take-back programs and encouraging patrons to properly dispose of medications; and for recycling of paper, plastics and aluminum.

*Our congratulations and thanks to these winners for helping to prevent water pollution in central county’s sewer and storm drain systems!*

**U.S. Postal Service Vehicle Maintenance Facility** Walnut Creek

Recognized for extensive employee training that emphasizes proper disposal of hazardous wastes; for keeping contaminants from going into storm drains; for eliminating the use of lead-containing wheel weights; and for recycling of tires, coolants, and other automotive items.

**Aquarius Pool & Spa Service** Walnut Creek

Recognized for reducing chemical use and implementing environmentally friendly equipment cleaning techniques; for actively preventing water pollution; and for advising customers on proper pool-draining practices.

**Protecting Public Health and the Environment**  
Visit our website at [www.centalsan.org](http://www.centalsan.org)

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



Fats, oils, and grease are a major cause of sewer clogs and overflows.

All year long, cooking byproducts from thousands of homes and restaurants in your area are washed down kitchen drains. The fats, oil, and grease build up in sewer pipes over time and can cause backups and overflows.

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 increases, and so does the potential for a problem.

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

1. Keep fats, oil, grease, dairy products and fatty, greasy, or oily foods (such as salad dressings, gravies, and soups) out of the sink and the garbage disposal.
2. Collect small amounts of fats, oils, and grease (along with meat trimmings and skin) in a nonrecyclable container with a tight-sealing lid, keep it in the freezer until full, then put it in the trash.
3. For greasy pans that need to be soaked, first pour the grease into a container as mentioned above. Soak the pan. Then place a paper towel over the drain basket to catch grease and food particles as you pour the soaking water down the drain.
4. Bring large quantities of cooking oil (e.g., from a turkey fryer) to the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility. The collected oils will go to a biofuels company for recycling. Call 800-646-1431 for more information.

## Three Helpful Garbage Disposal Tips

While many people save and recycle food scraps for compost, not everyone does this. Some people put food scraps in the trash. But a lot of people still allow scraps to go down garbage disposals and into the sewer system.

While we'd prefer that you minimize the use of your garbage disposal, here are some "sewer friendly" tips:

1. Never allow grease, greasy food, fat, or fatty foods to go down the disposal or drain. Grease is the second-leading cause of sewer clogs and overflows in the nation.
2. Feed food into the disposal a little at a time. If you're peeling potatoes, for example, run the water and feed them into the disposal as you're peeling them, rather

than allowing them to accumulate and then forcing them all into the disposal at once. This isn't related to the power of your disposal—it may have no problem chewing through as much food as you can jam into it. The problem is the small sewer pipe through which all that food has to travel afterwards. Large masses of even finely chopped food can easily clog a small pipe, especially if that pipe has been infiltrated by tree roots (the number-one cause of sewer clogs and overflows).

3. If your sink drain gets clogged, please use a plunger or sewer "snake" to clear it, rather than chemical products—they're bad for the environment and are not always effective.

## Getting a Home Inspection? Remember to Check the Sewer Pipe!

When buying a home, your offer should always be contingent on the results of a professional inspection of the property. If the inspection turns up something like termite infestation or cracks in the foundation, you can back out of the contract, or you can have the seller repair the problem to your satisfaction.

A professional home inspection will cover the interior and exterior of the house, but it will rarely include an inspection of the building's sewer (known as the private sewer lateral or side sewer).

The private sewer lateral is the part of the sewer that runs from the house to the public sewer main which is located under the street, alley, or in an easement behind the house.

The maintenance and repair of the private sewer lateral is the responsibility of the property owner. But most owners don't give much thought to the private sewer lateral until a sewage backup occurs, usually due to a damaged or root-clogged pipe or an offset joint. Repairing damages caused by a sewage backup can cost thousands of dollars, an expense not always covered by homeowners insurance policies.

For only a few hundred dollars, a licensed plumber can do a video



inspection of the private sewer lateral. The video will show if there are cracks or breaks in the pipe, offsets, and any root intrusion (the leading cause of sewer backups). If the private sewer lateral needs to be repaired, costs can be several hundreds of dollars. Replacement costs can run \$5,000 or more.

If a private sewer lateral problem is discovered as part of the home inspection prior to close of escrow, the buyer has the opportunity to negotiate with the seller to cover the cost of cleaning or repairs.

### A Simple Device Can Protect Your Home From Sewage Backups

Two other things you'll know with a private sewer lateral inspection are: (1) whether or not the lateral has a cleanout; and (2) if that cleanout is fitted with an Overflow Protection Device.

If you don't have a cleanout, you should have one installed. It will give you and your plumber easy access to your private sewer lateral for cleaning and maintenance.

And the best way to prevent sewage from backing up into your home—from a blockage in your private sewer lateral or from the public sewer main—is to have an Overflow Protection Device. This inexpensive device allows backing up sewage to spill outside, rather than from a drain inside your house.

The Central Contra Costa Sanitary District requires that all homes and businesses have an Overflow Protection Device. New construction, and construction where sewers are being repaired or replaced, are required by District Code to install the devices.

Installation of the device (which is available at many plumbing supply stores) is relatively simple, but must be done according to District specifications. We recommend that a licensed plumber install the device since elevation and location are critical for the device to function properly. If you have any questions, please call a member of the District staff at (925) 229-7371 or visit our website, [www.centalsan.org](http://www.centalsan.org), for more information.

## Sewers and Storm Drains: Two Different Systems

### The Sewer System — Flows to Treatment Plant

Every time you flush a toilet or send water down an inside drain, it ends up in the sewer system. The public sewer main pipes are owned and maintained by the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District. The private sewer lateral pipes that connect houses or businesses to the public sewer main are owned and maintained by the property owners. The sewer system carries wastewater through this network of pipes to the wastewater treatment facility in Martinez, where it is treated and disinfected before being released into Suisun Bay or recycled for irrigation and other nonpotable purposes.

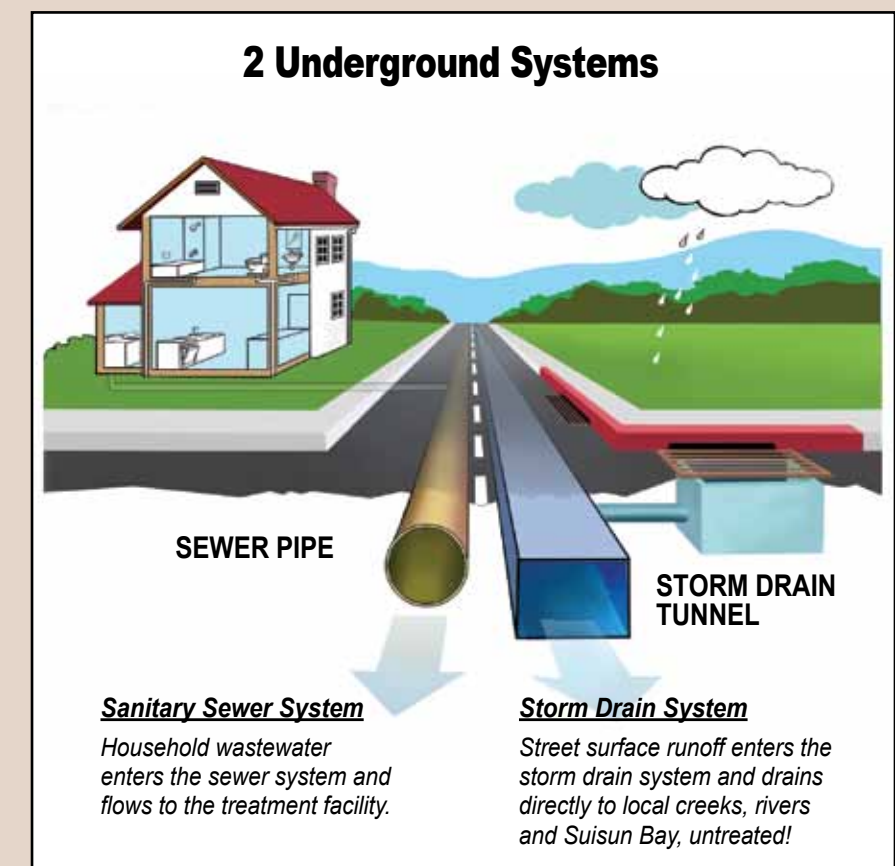
Contrary to popular belief, the grated hole on the street corner does not lead to the sewer; it leads to the storm drain.

### The Storm Drain System — Flows to Bay Without Treatment

The storm drain system is a network of pipes, catch basins, and natural drainage ditches (maintained by cities or the county). This system collects runoff from rain, irrigation, sprinklers, etc., and transports the water—**untreated**—to Suisun Bay or other natural waterways.

### Both Systems Affect the Environment

Water is our most precious resource. Please help us to protect the environment by keeping pollutants out of both systems.



**A Drive-Through That's Good for Your Waste!**

Fast-food restaurants perfected the drive-through concept. But they're not the only ones to offer this convenient customer service.

When you need to get rid of old paint, batteries, oil, pesticides, chemicals, or cleaning solvents, think drive-through and visit the Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Facility in Martinez.

Just pull in and stay comfortably in your car while a friendly technician unloads your HHW items. It only takes a few minutes, then you can be on your way, knowing you helped to keep pollutants out of the environment.

For residents of central Contra Costa County, no appointment is needed for this convenient full-service drive-through experience, and there's no drop-off charge! (Businesses need an appointment and must pay a nominal fee.

**Please Note Transportation Requirements**

Materials must be packaged in sturdy, non-leaking containers (ideally, the originals) no larger than five gallons in size. For transportation safety reasons, the quantity for each visit is limited to 125 pounds or 15 gallons. However, you can make as many trips to the facility in one day as you like.

**Rechargeable Batteries Require Special Care**

Did you know that storing or transporting rechargeable batteries together can potentially trigger a reaction like an electrical short circuit and possibly start a fire? The risk is small, but it can be easily prevented by putting duct tape or electrical tape over the battery terminal contacts to insulate them from one another.

**Facility Now Open on Mondays**

Using the HHW Facility is now more convenient than ever! The operating

hours have been expanded to include Mondays.

During a three-month test of the Monday hours conducted during the summer, more than 825 cars were served on Mondays, which was higher than expected (even with limited public outreach). In addition, there were no incidents of hazardous waste materials being illegally left on or near District property, as has been an occasional problem on Mondays when the facility was closed.

The facility is now open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Reuse Room closes at 3:30 p.m.

**Bring Some, Take Some – or Just Take Some (Free)!**

Speaking of the Reuse Room, did you know it's stocked with items brought in for disposal that are still in useable condition, and they are free for the taking?

Why? Because our goal is to reuse and recycle as many of the items brought to

the facility as possible. It makes good environmental and economical sense to use up products before more are purchased.

The reuse inventory often includes items such as paint, wood stain, garden products, and a wide variety of cleansers and automotive products. The items and quantities vary depending on what people bring in, but our shelves are rarely bare.

The next time you bring your household hazardous waste items to the facility for disposal, check out the FREE products in the Reuse Room. Don't have any items to drop off right now? You can still "shop" at the Reuse Room from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

**HHW Facility Improvements Planned**

If you use the HHW Facility in December thru March, you may notice some construction. A project will be starting soon to enhance public accessibility of the Reuse Room and make seismic upgrades to the facility.

We don't anticipate any disruption of services. Part of the Reuse Room will be closed off while work there is underway, but the room will remain open. Some of the seismic improvements will involve removing sheeting and installing new bracing on the drive-through side of the building. If necessary, customer traffic may be rerouted. But we don't plan to close the facility during construction.

For more information about the HHW Facility, please call 800-646-1431 or visit [www.centalsan.org](http://www.centalsan.org).

**Please Don't Stick Us With Your Sharps!**

*"Today another bag of batteries came in from the public that contained unprotected sharps; in this case, "finger-prickers" commonly used by people with diabetes. We've gotten sharps with batteries in the past, but for the most part they've been sheathed or covered. This time sharps were tossed with batteries into a plastic sandwich bag, and some of the prickers were poking through the bag. If it wasn't for one of the guys catching it, someone could have been stuck, potentially exposing them to any number of infectious diseases." (HHW Facility Supervisor)*

People who are stuck by used sharps are exposed to the risk of Hepatitis-B, HIV, and a number of other life-threatening diseases.

Medical sharps are considered medical waste and disposal of such material is highly restricted by health agencies. That's one of the reasons we cannot accept sharps at the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility.

Please don't put other people at risk of being stuck. To safely dispose of your used sharps, please:

1. Package them into an approved sharps container (available at pharmacies)
2. Store the container away from children and pets
3. Seal the container once it's full
4. Dispose of your full containers by:

- Asking your medical care provider to accept and dispose of them.

- Taking them to the John Muir Rossmoor Pharmacy, 1220 Rossmoor Parkway in Walnut Creek, (925) 988-7510.

- Depositing them into the collection bin outside the San Ramon Regional Medical Center's south building, 7777 Norris Canyon Rd., San Ramon.

- Using one of the mail-back options available through these websites:

- **Stericycle:** [www.stericycle.com/mailback\\_programs/sharps.html](http://www.stericycle.com/mailback_programs/sharps.html) or call 866-STERI-CALL

- **Biomedical Waste Solutions:** [www.biomedicalwastesolutions.com/sharps-mail-back.php](http://www.biomedicalwastesolutions.com/sharps-mail-back.php) or 877-974-1300

- **Sharps, Inc.:** [www.sharpsinc.com/disposal\\_mail\\_product\\_page.htm](http://www.sharpsinc.com/disposal_mail_product_page.htm) or 800-772-5657

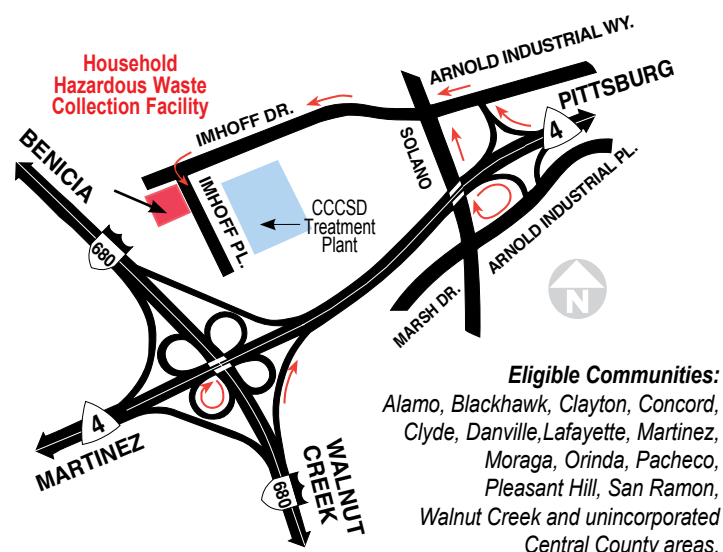
- **WasteMD.com:** <http://wastemd.com> or 877-927-8363

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

**HOURS**

**Residents:** Monday – Saturday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
(Reuse Room closes at 3:30 p.m.)

**Businesses:** Monday – Saturday, by appointment only



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

**800-646-1431**



*Sharps poke through a bag of batteries brought to the HHW Facility, putting our workers at risk of being stuck. Do NOT bring sharps to the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility.*

**Don't Flush Your Drugs!**

**Where to Safely Dispose of Unwanted Medications**

Due to legal restrictions, our Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility is unable to accept medications.

Please do NOT flush your drugs!

Instead, dispose of your expired and unwanted medications at one of these locations:

- **City of Clayton Police Dept.**  
(Call to confirm: (925) 673-7350)  
6000 Heritage Trail, Clayton
- **Sheriff's Field Operations Building**  
1980 Muir Rd., Martinez
- **Contra Costa Regional Medical Center Sheriff's Substation**  
(check with the deputy on duty)  
2500 Alhambra Ave., Martinez
- **City of Martinez Police Dept.**  
(Call to confirm: (925) 372-3400)  
525 Henrietta St., Martinez
- **Town of Moraga Police Dept.**  
(Call to confirm: (925) 376-2515)  
329 Rheem Blvd., Moraga
- **City of Orinda Police Dept.**  
(Call to confirm: (925) 254-6820)  
22 Orinda Way, Orinda
- **Walnut Creek City Hall**  
1666 North Main St., Walnut Creek

To ensure privacy, transfer pills to a sealable plastic bag (quart size or smaller) before depositing, then recycle the empty pill bottles. Please put liquid medication bottles in a sealed plastic bag to prevent spills.

**Do NOT Deposit Medical Sharps!**  
(See the article on page 7.)

For more information about safe pharmaceutical disposal, call 800-646-1431 or visit [www.centalsan.org](http://www.centalsan.org).

**Help Us Stop Illegal Discharges**

We occasionally experience periodic episodes at our treatment plant when contaminants in the wastewater cause problems for the biological element of the treatment process. We suspect this could be due to illegal discharges of pollutants into the sewer.

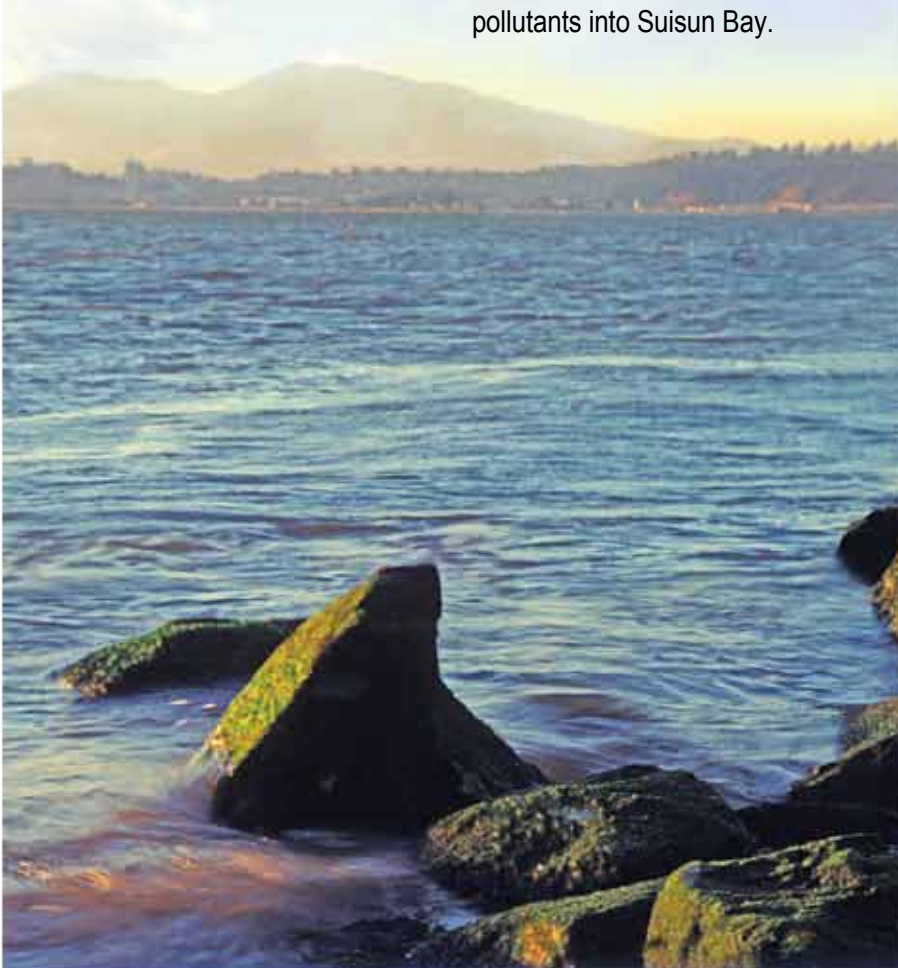
There have been documented incidents where grease haulers, carpet cleaners, and others have illegally opened manhole covers and emptied their loads into the sewer.

We depend on the community to inform us of illegal discharges. Photos are key! During one incident, an alert resident took

a photo of a work truck, with the company name in perfect view, while the operator opened a manhole and put a hose inside to discharge what he was hauling. That kind of evidence is concrete.

If you notice anyone putting anything into a sewer manhole, please report it by calling (925) 229-7288 (during business hours) or (925) 229-7214 (after hours). If possible, note the time, place, and type of vehicle. Better yet, take a picture!

Thank you in advance for your help in protecting the environment, and for helping us to keep a lid on unnecessary costs stemming from potential penalties for discharging pollutants into Suisun Bay.



## CCCSD Responds to Economic Challenges

As with many parts of the State's economy, revenues for the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (CCCSD) have continued to decline. Even so, in June the CCCSD Board of Directors opted not to increase the Sewer Service Charge in its 2009-2010 budget, because the District's customers, our neighbors, had been hit with the negative effects of the recession.

Then on July 24, 2009, the California Legislature passed a pair of bills to end the State's budget stalemate. These bills allow the State to "borrow" 8% of the Ad Valorem property tax revenues of cities, counties, and special districts this year. For CCCSD, that comes to just under \$1 million out of the approximately \$12 million of annual Ad Valorem revenue we normally receive. Concurrently, property values continue to decline, resulting in reassessments and lower property tax revenues for the remainder of the property tax not borrowed by the State. Housing development has remained at a near standstill, so there has been a large reduction in development and connection fees collected by CCCSD. In addition, low interest paid on investments has further reduced CCCSD revenues.

CCCSD responded very quickly to these revenue reductions. We instituted a hiring freeze for all but the most essential positions; we curtailed travel expenses and off-site training; we've severely limited overtime; and all departments have

tightened their belts and reduced expenses.

Sewage still has to be conveyed to the treatment plant in Martinez, and that means our 1,500-mile system of pipes and 18 pumping stations must be cleaned, maintained, repaired and, in some cases, replaced. Every day, 45 million gallons of wastewater that flow to the treatment plant must be tested, screened, treated, disinfected, and discharged into Suisun Bay under some of the strictest regulations of any industry. Every day, the capital needs of the District—whether in the streets or in the treatment plant—must be addressed to protect public health and the environment... for now and for years to come. And every one of these services takes money.

Recently the Board voted to sell bonds to fund needed capital improvement projects to take advantage of the extremely competitive bid climate and provide jobs for our local community. Fortunately, CCCSD's fiscal prudence and stability has resulted in a AAA bond rating from Standard

and Poors. This recently allowed CCCSD to borrow money at very favorable rates. In fact, we also refinanced our outstanding debt to same money.

As this issue of Pipeline goes to press, the CCCSD Board of Directors continues to review a number of additional options to address ongoing financial impacts to the District. This may result in increases to the Sewer Service Charge next year. The District's Sewer Service Charge is \$311 per year; \$389 when property tax is added.

The economy is showing signs of recovery, but it will likely be another challenging year from a fiscal perspective. We will continue to provide the high level of service you have grown to expect, and we will do so while treating your money as if it is our own and making prudent decisions that will protect the financial health of the District—as well as public health and the environment—for many years to come.

### Need a Guest Speaker for Your Group?

If your audience would be interested in hearing about wastewater collection or treatment, water pollution prevention, household hazardous waste disposal, or similar topics, we may be able to help! Call our Public InfoLine at (925) 335-7702 and leave a message about your event, and we'll let you know if we can provide a speaker for you (free of charge, of course).

# Infrastructure Improvements

**C**entral Contra Costa Sanitary District regularly maintains, repairs, or replaces sewer lines and other elements of our 1,500-mile wastewater collection system to ensure continuous, trouble-free service for our 456,000 customers and reduce sewage overflows. We do our best to minimize the inconveniences our projects cause and appreciate your understanding. Here's a brief summary of major construction projects currently underway:

## **Orinda**

South Orinda Sewer Renovation Project, Phase 4, is replacing or

renovating 11,500 feet of sewers in South Orinda. Expected completion: Dec. 2009.

## **Pleasant Hill**

Pleasant Hill Sewer Renovation Project, Phase 1, is replacing or renovating 2,500 feet of sewers in Pleasant Hill. Expected completion: Nov. 2009.

## **Lafayette**

Lafayette Sewer Renovation Project, Phase 6, is replacing or renovating 13,200 feet of sewers in Lafayette. Expected completion: Feb. 2010.

## **Walnut Creek**

Walnut Creek Sewer Renovation Project, Phase 7, is replacing or renovating 11,100 feet of sewers in Walnut Creek. Expected completion: Feb. 2010.

Detailed maps for each project have been sent to affected residents, and are available at [www.centrsan.org](http://www.centrsan.org) (check the links in the "Construction Zone" box in the lower right corner of the home page). For more information about these or other construction projects, please contact Community Affairs Representative Chris Carpenter at (925) 229-7200.



## Four New Videos on Our Website

We have new videos on our website that we hope will be helpful and interesting to you. You can find them all under the “Videos” link at [www.centrialsan.org](http://www.centrialsan.org).

1. **“From Waste to Worth ”** explains how we use biosolids to create energy at our treatment plant in Martinez. It’s based on an article that appeared in the Spring 2009 issue of this newsletter.
2. **“FOG: Fats, Oils and Grease”** tells why grease is a major cause of sewer blockages and overflows, and offers tips on how to prevent fats, oils, and grease from clogging sewers.
3. **“Preparing a Box for Household Hazardous Waste”** shows the best way to pack items you’ll be bringing to the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility for disposal.
4. **“Why Central San?”** This is a recruitment video that tells a little bit about our agency and features employees talking about what it’s like to work here.

We will be adding more videos to our website in the near future, and would appreciate your feedback. Please share your opinions about these videos by contacting Michael Scahill, Communication Services Manager, at (925) 229-7310 or [m scahill@centrialsan.org](mailto:m scahill@centrialsan.org).

## Green Tips

### Keep Chemicals Out of the Water and More Money in Your Pocket

When most people think about water pollution, images of leaking oil tankers, factories spilling toxic wastes into waterways, or garbage strewn along the beach come to mind. The fact is, the problem is a lot closer to home. In fact, it’s in your home.

One of the major sources of water pollution in the Bay Area is residents, not industries. Commonly used products like paints, motor oil, pesticides, and many cleansers contain toxic chemicals which, when poured down drains, pass through wastewater treatment plants and end up in local creeks, the Bay and the ocean, harming fish and wildlife. Treatment plants are designed to treat biological wastes and cannot remove all of the metals, solvents, and chemicals contained in many household products.

Here are tips you can use to help keep pollutants out of our water environment. Many of these will also save you money, as they are less expensive than commercial cleaning products:

- Use baking soda mixed with water as an inexpensive, effective all-purpose cleaner instead of harsh commercial products.
- Use lemon juice or vinegar mixed with water to cut grease, clean glass, and clean vinyl and linoleum floors.
- Use toothpaste to remove scuffmarks from floors and watermarks from wood furniture.
- Use vinegar to remove mineral deposits around faucets caused by hard water. Cover the deposits with the vinegar-soaked strips of paper towels for about an hour, then wipe clean.
- Use club soda to clean carpet and upholstery stains.
- Use olive oil or beeswax to shine leather shoes or polish unvarnished wood.
- Use linseed oil to revitalize old furniture.
- Use a plunger instead of chemicals to clear clogged toilets and drains.
- Use digital fever thermometers instead of mercury ones.
- Use latex instead of oil-based paints. Use water-based paint removers.
- Use boric acid to control cockroaches and ants instead of toxic pesticides.
- Use traps instead of poisons for mice.
- Dispose of unwanted paint, pesticides, solvents, cleansers, and other potentially hazardous household products at the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility—never down the drain or in the trash. Call 800-646-1431 for more information.

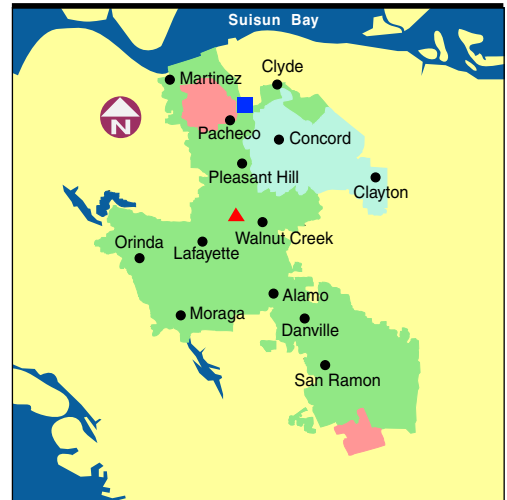


## About CCCSD

Our mission as a Special District is to protect public health and the environment. We do this by collecting and treating wastewater, providing recycled water, and promoting pollution prevention. Our treatment plant in Martinez collects, treats, and disinfects an average of 45 million gallons of wastewater every day. Some treated wastewater is recycled (treated further) for irrigation use on golf courses and parks; the rest is released into Suisun Bay. We also operate a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility.

## Where to Call...

General information	(925) 228-9500 or <a href="http://www.centralsan.org">www.centralsan.org</a>
Sewer overflows	(925) 933-0955 or 933-0990
Treatment Plant InfoLine (Report Odors)	(925) 335-7703
Household Hazardous Waste InfoLine	(800) 646-1431
Sewer connection permits/Permit Counter	(925) 229-7371
To report illegal discharges into sewer system	(925) 229-7288 (during business hours) (925) 229-7214 (after hours)
Source Control	(925) 228-7288
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>



**CCCSD serves 456,216 people within its 140-square-mile service area.**

- Sewage collection and wastewater treatment (and HHW collection service) for 322,201 people
- Wastewater treatment for 134,015 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 Department (sewer maintenance) is based in Walnut Creek

Board of Directors

**James A. Nejedly**, President

**Michael R. McGill**, President Pro Tem • **Barbara D. Hockett**, Director

**Gerald R. Lucey**, Director • **Mario M. Menesini**, Director

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

**James M. Kelly**, General Manager

### The Central Contra Costa Sanitary District PIPELINE

Written and designed by the CCCSD Communication Services Division.

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PIPELINE is printed with soy-based inks on Recycled Paper

