We are Central San
Since 1946, our dedicated and highly trained staff has been providing safe and reliable wastewater collection and treatment for central Contra Costa County. Today, we serve more than 481,600 residents and 3,000 businesses. Whatever goes down your toilets and into the drains travels through our vast sewer system to our treatment plant in Martinez. Our treatment plant cleans an average of 32 million gallons of wastewater every day, which is safely released into Suisun Bay. Additionally, we produce 1-2 million gallons of recycled water each day for landscape irrigation, industrial use, and our treatment plant processes. We also operate a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility and sponsor 13 pharmaceutical collection sites within the communities we serve.

Central San proactively maintains our infrastructure, which has extended the design life of many facilities and equipment. Although we have invested heavily over the last 10 years in replacing parts of our large and complex infrastructure, we need additional investments to maintain its reliability. Through an extensive, long-term planning process, Central San has determined what will be needed to keep our system working properly in the future, as well as a timeline for accomplishing such improvements. All of these developments are driven by four major factors:

1. Replace aging infrastructure
2. Prepare for future growth in our community and associated capacity increases
3. Meet emerging regulatory requirements
4. Ensure economic stability and sustainability for our operations

We have identified several key infrastructure projects over the next two years for both the treatment plant and the collection system to ensure they continue to function properly, now and into the future. These include more than 14 miles of sewer pipe replacement and upgrades to five critical pump stations. In addition, major renovations at our treatment plant will include replacement and upgrades of solids handling facilities and odor control equipment; and energy generation and security improvements. Please see the map on the opposite page for project locations.

**Proposed Rate Increase**

In order to fund these critical improvements and cover operations and maintenance costs (including labor), we are proposing to increase customer rates by up to 7% each year for the next two years (this would mean an increase of approximately 3 dollars per month for a residential customer).

Central San’s Board of Directors will consider the proposed rate increases at a public hearing on April 20, 2017 at 1:30 p.m. at the Central San Board Room, 5019 Imhoff Place, Martinez, CA 94553.

Notices have been mailed to property owners with detailed information about the proposed rates. Information is also available at CentralSan.org.

As we work hard to complete these necessary upgrades, we remain committed to our customers with these promises:

1. To make *fiscally sound investments* to upgrade infrastructure that has exceeded its useful lifespan and ensure operational reliability.
2. To ensure our system and facilities will continue to comply with all *environmental and regulatory requirements*.
3. To maintain ongoing *community outreach and transparency* about progress on projects.

Every day at Central San, we strive to fulfill our mission of protecting public health and the environment in a way that is both efficient and effective while providing exceptional service for our customers.
Your Dollars at Work: A Focus on Critical Infrastructure

Pump Stations
2017-2019: Central San will upgrade five of our 19 pump stations, which are critical for conveying wastewater to the treatment plant from areas where the terrain requires it to be pumped over hills, sometimes at a rate as high as 33,000 gallons per minute. The five pump stations set for replacement and renovation are nearly 50 years or older. They will be upgraded with new-technology equipment that is more reliable and reduces energy costs, such as sophisticated variable-frequency drives to more efficiently match the power demand to the flow.

Treatment Plant
2017-2019: Upgrades at the treatment plant will include renovations of the solids handling facilities and odor control equipment, improved energy efficiency, enhanced security, and development of innovative bioenergy projects.

Collection Systems/Street Pipe Replacement
2017-2019: Central San will replace 14 miles of sewer pipe in Walnut Creek, Lafayette, Martinez, and Orinda to maintain collection system reliability.

Central San Service Area
- Wastewater collection & treatment & household hazardous waste (HHW) services provided
- Wastewater treatment & HHW services by contract
- HHW services only
- Central San Headquarters Building, Treatment Plant & HHW Facility
- Collection Systems Operations Facility

Past Projects
2014-2016: Central San has performed work and has ongoing projects in the following communities:
- Danville
- Diablo
- Lafayette
- Moraga
- Martinez
- Pleasant Hill
- San Ramon
- Suisun Bay
- Walnut Creek
The Outrageous Truth About What We Do
(Number 5 Will Shock You!)

1. We Find Weird Stuff
Sometimes the sewers send more than wastewater our way. Foreign objects such as wood, rags, and debris are caught at our pumping stations or treatment plant bar screens each day. Weird items we’ve found include football-shaped bricks, golf balls, jewelry, flashlights, hardhats, a plastic horse pill with a tiny camera in it, a live snake (no alligators yet), and a motorcycle frame!

2. We Grapple with Globs of Grease
When people pour grease down a sink, it cools, solidifies, and sticks to the inside of the pipe. If that happens within your drain, you’ll need a plumber. Things get worse when grease from thousands of sinks builds up inside sewers. Those gross globs of grease can grow until they completely clog pipes! Our crews work tirelessly to find and destroy them before they cause overflows.

3. We Wrestle Wads of Wipes
Our system has no problem handling human waste and toilet paper. But “flushable” products are a different story. Disposable wipes and paper towels are designed to NOT dissolve quickly when wet. They accumulate into nasty wads that clog our machinery. We remove them by hand. We love gloves!

4. We Scoop Poop
Technically, what we scoop is wastewater. Samples are drawn before, during, and after the treatment process to ensure we’re meeting all water quality standards and it’s safe to release the water into Suisun Bay.

5. We Rely on You
We can’t control what enters the sewers. You can. If you flush only human waste and toilet paper, and don’t pour grease down the drain, you’ll be helping to make our jobs easier as we protect public health and the environment. And the world will be a better place!

Many people do not know what happens after they flush. But human waste isn’t zapped into nonexistence by magical wizards or eaten by gnarly underground gnomes. It flows through miles of sewers from homes and businesses to our wastewater treatment plant, and we deal with it in various ways:
When it comes to protecting public health and the environment, some serious detective work is involved. If pollutants in wastewater slip through our treatment processes undetected, it could have serious impacts on local waterways and aquatic life.

Fortunately, we have highly skilled and knowledgeable scientists at Central San who are also excellent detectives! They perform hundreds of tests each day at our award-winning Environmental Laboratory to ensure the cleaned wastewater we release into Suisun Bay is environmentally safe and complies with all regional, state, and federal requirements for water quality.

Even tiny trace amounts of some pollutants, such as mercury and toxic pesticides, can harm sensitive marine organisms in Suisun Bay and affect the food chain. Our scientists use a variety of chemical tests and advanced instrumentation to detect pollutants in the wastewater at extremely low levels – including at the parts-per-quadrillion range. That’s like trying to find a single bacterium in the distance from the earth to the moon!

Analyses are performed on wastewater before it enters the treatment plant, at every stage of the treatment process, and after the treatment process is complete. They also test samples collected from Suisun Bay.

Our scientists’ important work touches more than just the waters of Suisun Bay. In addition to the regular analyses to detect known pollutants, they conduct cutting-edge research at the laboratory to constantly identify and improve on the techniques used to monitor and reduce pollutants. They share their discoveries with others in the environmental field around the country.

At Central San, we’re helping to protect not just our local water resources, but the water environment as a whole.
We’re Teaching Kids How to Protect the Planet

Water is the most precious resource on our planet; it must be protected. To help kids learn this important lesson, we developed in-classroom educational programs that teach them about pollution prevention and wastewater treatment. We want them to understand how actions at home can affect the world around us, and what they can do to help keep our environment clean and safe.

- **Water Wizards** (for students in grades 3 - 5). This hour-long program offers a variety of fun, interactive activities to help young students learn about water pollution and what they can do to protect our limited water resources and delicate environment. The program is free in Central San’s service area.

- **Sewer Science** (for high school science students). This week-long program integrates biology, chemistry, physics and math, and it includes hands-on laboratory experiments that simulate the treatment process. The program is free in Central San’s service area.

- **Treatment Plant Tour** (age 10 and up). This tour provides an opportunity for students (and adults!) to “follow the flow” and see the processes we use to remove pollutants and recover resources from millions of gallons of wastewater each day. The tour is free but reservations are required.

For more information on these award-winning programs, please contact Kit Ohlman at (925) 229-7329 or KOhlman@centralsan.org.
HOW TO GET RECYCLED WATER FOR YOUR GARDEN

As a Central San customer, you can use our recycled water to hand-water your home’s garden and landscaping. Here’s how:

- Please check our website CentralSan.org/RecycledWater for current hours.
- Come to the Residential Recycled Water Fill Station behind our Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility, 4797 Imhoff Place, Martinez.
- If you haven’t used the station before, you’ll need to complete an Application/Agreement form. You can download it from CentralSan.org/RecycledWater or obtain one at the station.
- After turning in your form at the station, you’ll receive brief training (less than 10 minutes) on the proper use of recycled water, and can then fill your containers. You will not have to pay a fee.
- Bring your own containers. They must be made specifically to hold liquids, be a minimum size of one gallon, have water-tight lids, and be secured for safe transport.
- The maximum fill per trip is 300 gallons. There is no limit on the number of trips.
- Please Note: Water is heavy! Ten gallons weigh more than 80 pounds; 100 gallons weigh more than 800 pounds. When driving vehicles with such heavy loads, expect less stability and be sure to allow for additional stopping distance.

Recycled water should not be consumed or allowed to run off into storm drains.

For more information, please call 1-800-646-1431 or visit CentralSan.org/RecycledWater.

SEE YOU ON EARTH DAY?

At Central San, where we work to prevent pollution and protect the environment 24/7, every day is “Earth Day.” But we also participate in community celebrations of the actual Earth Day, including the John Muir Earth Day Festival in Martinez. If you’re planning to attend, please stop by our exhibit and say hi to our friendly staff! In addition to receiving a free giveaway (while supplies last), you can get helpful information about our recycled water fill station, household hazardous waste facility, and other services. The Festival will be on Saturday, April 22, at the John Muir National Historic Site, 4202 Alhambra Avenue in Martinez. See you there!
Central San was selected as the host site for a pilot project that will test an emerging technology to produce renewable fuels from wastewater solids.

A consortium led by the Water Environment and Reuse Foundation was recently chosen by the Department of Energy (DOE) to design and plan a waste-to-energy pilot project. The consortium includes Central San, DOE's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Genifuel Corp., Tesoro, and other partners.

The technology, called hydrothermal processing, converts wastewater solids into biocrude oil and methane biogas. The biocrude can be refined as a green alternative to petroleum-based crude oil. The biogas can be treated to renewable natural gas standards and used on site to produce power similar to fossil-fuel based natural gas. Another possible byproduct includes liquid fertilizer that could compete with commercial fertilizers which rely on the world's diminishing supply of mined phosphorus.

DOE is providing a $1.2 million grant for Phase 1, the planning and design for a pilot hydrothermal processing plant.

Our furnaces and waste heat recovery system continue to serve Central San well. While we continue to rely on the remaining life of those systems, we will be exploring new, innovative solids handling and resource recovery alternatives that could provide long-term cost savings, and minimize greenhouse gas emissions and dependence on imported fossil fuels.

After successful completion of Phase 1, DOE will consider Phase 2, which would include construction and operation of the pilot. If the project is successful and the process is fully implemented in wastewater treatment facilities across the U.S., the technology could produce more than two billion gallons of gasoline and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 17 million tons per year!

Free Tours and Presentations

Would you or your group like to know more about how we protect the environment? We offer speakers for your group and terrific tours of our treatment plant – FREE!

Quarterly 90-minute walking tours are available on these dates (reservations are required):

• April 26, 2017, 9 - 10:30 a.m.
• July 26, 2017, 9 - 10:30 a.m.
• October 18, 2017, 9 - 10:30 a.m.

Please contact Kit Ohlman at (925) 229-7329 or kohlman@centralsan.org, or go to this link to sign up for a free tour: CentralSanPlantTours.eventbrite.com.

Custom tours and presentations for groups can also be arranged.
When it comes to your health, prevention is always better than trying to fix a problem. Likewise, preventing pollutants from entering the sewer system is better than trying to remove them during the wastewater treatment process.

Restaurants often produce a lot of grease. If not properly disposed of, that grease can accumulate in sewers and create blockages that cause overflows into businesses or homes.

Some businesses use chemicals and produce wastes which are flammable, corrosive, reactive, or toxic, and if allowed to enter the sewer system, could corrode pipes or even cause fires and explosions.

Even the most advanced treatment processes cannot entirely remove these types of pollutants, and it only takes a small amount to harm the environment.

That’s why the Federal Clean Water Act and other laws and ordinances regulate what businesses can discharge into sewer and storm drain systems – and also require that we ensure compliance through periodic inspections.

Our Environmental Compliance team looks at facilities (both inside and out), noting production equipment and processes, housekeeping practices, sewer inlets, wastewater and stormwater discharges, pretreatment equipment, chemicals, materials, waste storage, vehicle and equipment storage, wash areas, etc. They review their findings with facility managers and work with them to correct deficiencies.

Our team often identifies activities that can significantly reduce the risk of pollution and can even save the business money. These activities are good for the environment, the business, and its customers.

We also offer recognition programs such as the Green Business Program and Pollution Prevention Awards which publicize businesses that go above and beyond minimum compliance standards. Such recognition can be used in marketing materials to show customers that a business really cares about protecting the environment.

Free Consultations Available

Our Environmental Compliance team offers free consultations to help business owners understand what’s required in order to comply with regulations, how best to navigate those efforts, and what else they can do to protect the environment.

For more information, please contact them at (925) 229-7288.
As first reported in our Spring 2016 issue, Central San’s Pleasant Hill Grayson Creek Trunk Sewer project will provide needed renovations for the collection system servicing portions of Pleasant Hill and Martinez, resulting in reduced backups and less potential for overflows. Additionally, the trunk sewer will provide a new backbone sewer enabling future renovations of the 60-plus-year-old residential sewers in the Gregory Gardens neighborhood, further increasing reliability of service.

It's a large, important project.

A typical sewer renovation project consists of replacing six-inch-diameter pipes at an average of six to seven feet deep. The Pleasant Hill project is installing almost 9,700 feet of 18-to-24-inch-diameter sewer pipes to a depth of up to 25 feet!

How can we do that without impacting residents? The answer is that we can’t. We can, however, minimize those impacts by using different construction methods. Central San engineers are doing just that.

Most of the pipes are being installed using a tunneling method. This allows the new sewer to be constructed without exposing or disrupting existing utilities along the alignment. Throughout the project there are buried water, gas, communication, sewer, and storm drain utilities. Additionally, the sewer must cross two creeks and the Contra Costa Canal. Tunneling allows the new pipes to be installed under these utilities, creeks, and canal. It also allows for better control of traffic and other construction impacts. There are also some lengths of the alignment that require traditional excavation due to the hardness of the bedrock.

We appreciate the understanding, cooperation, and patience of residents impacted by the construction work during these necessary infrastructure improvements. We expect to complete the project before the end of summer.

We regularly maintain, repair, or replace sewer lines and other elements of our wastewater collection system to decrease the likelihood of failures and to ensure continuous, trouble-free service for our customers. Our projects may cause short-term inconveniences, but they provide long-term benefits for you and your neighbors. We appreciate your understanding! Here is a brief summary of our current and upcoming major construction projects:

PLEASANT HILL: The Pleasant Hill - Grayson Creek Trunk Sewer Project is installing sewers in the Westover Drive and Pleasant Hill Road neighborhood. Expected completion: August 2017.

WALNUT CREEK: The Walnut Creek Sewer Renovation Project, Phase 11 will be installing sewers in the Hawthorne Drive and Boulevard Way neighborhoods. Expected completion: Nov. 2017.

LAFAYETTE: The Lafayette Sewer Renovation Project, Phase 11 will be installing sewers in the Mountain View Drive, Brook Street and Via Media neighborhoods. Expected completion: Dec. 2017.

MARTINEZ: The Martinez Sewer Renovation Project, Phase 5 will be installing sewers in the Gilger Avenue and Ulfinian Way neighborhoods, as well as various other throughout northern Martinez. Expected completion: Jan. 2018.

For more info...
For more information about these or other construction projects, please contact Community Affairs Representative Chris Carpenter at (925) 229-7200 or ccarp@centralsan.org, or visit CentralSan.org/Construction.

ONLINE: Detailed project maps are posted on our website, CentralSan.org (check the "Construction Zone" on the right of the home page).
When our Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility opened in October 1997, it was the first permanent facility in the county to provide a safe and convenient method for residents and small businesses to dispose of leftover paint, pesticides, used motor oil, batteries, and other hazardous materials.

That first year, people brought in nearly 745,000 pounds of household hazardous waste. Today, the annual amount is more than 2.1 million pounds – an increase of 182%!

During its 20 years of operation, our award-winning facility will have received – and kept out of the environment – more than 36 million pounds of household hazardous waste! That’s roughly equivalent to the weight of 450 fully loaded 18-wheelers!

More than 90% (30.7 million pounds) of those wastes were recycled, recovered as a resource-conserving fuel, or reused. The rest were disposed of safely.

Those wastes include:

- More than 2,600 pounds of mercury (thermometers, thermostats, elemental)
- Nearly 635 miles of fluorescent lamps
- More than 1,612,000 quarts of used motor oil
- More than 1,072,200 gallons of latex paint
- More than 41,000 car batteries and 337 tons of household batteries

Because so many of you bring your household hazardous wastes to the facility, we are able to keep thousands of tons of pollution from contaminating the environment. Thank you for your support!

### 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
- **Holiday Closures:** May 29, July 4, Sept. 4, Nov. 11, 23 & 24

**1-800-646-1431**

**Eligible Communities**

Alamo, Blackhawk, Clayton, Clyde, Concord, Danville, Lafayette, Martinez, Moraga, Orinda, Pacheco, Pleasant Hill, San Ramon, Walnut Creek, and unincorporated Central County areas.
County Passes Safe Drug Disposal Ordinance

Kudos to the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors! On Dec. 20, 2016, they passed a Safe Drug Disposal Ordinance requiring medication manufacturers to offer convenient drop-off locations throughout unincorporated areas of the county for safe disposal of unwanted and expired medications. Those locations will include pharmacies and hospitals.

The ordinance is the eighth Safe Drug Disposal Ordinance adopted in the Bay Area and the 13th in the nation. Central San and six other wastewater agencies in the county provided strong support of the ordinance.

Key Elements of Ordinance

1. It places responsibility on medication manufacturers to be a solution in helping reduce medications entering local waterways.
2. Drop-off bins will accept all medications, including over-the-counter drugs.
3. Medication manufacturers are subject to penalties if they fail to comply with the ordinance.

Pharmaceutical Drop-Off Sites

Alamo Sheriff’s Substation
150 Alamo Plaza, Suite C

Clayton Police Dept.
6000 Heritage Trail

Concord Police Dept.
1350 Galindo St.

Danville Police Dept.
510 La Gonda Way

Lafayette Police Dept.
3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 130

MARTINEZ:
• Police Dept.
  525 Henrietta St.
• Sheriff’s Field Ops Bldg.
  1980 Muir Rd.
• Contra Costa Regional Medical Center
  2500 Alhambra Ave.

Moraga Police Dept.
329 Rheem Blvd.

Orinda Police Dept.
22 Orinda Way

Pleasant Hill Police Dept.
330 Civic Dr.

San Ramon Police Dept.
2401 Crow Canyon Rd.

Walnut Creek City Hall
1666 North Main St.

Walgreens now has a collection kiosk for unwanted medications at their store in Walnut Creek (2900 Main Street).

How to Safely Dispose of Unwanted Drugs

Please bring unwanted medications to a free drop-off site for safe disposal instead of putting them down a toilet or drain, which can pollute local waters. Transfer pills to a sealable plastic bag before depositing them in the bin. Leave liquids in their bottles, but seal them in a bag to prevent leaks.

Please do not put sharps or anything other than medications in the container!

A list of sharps disposal locations is online: CentralSan.org/documents/Alternative_HHW_Locations.pdf

For more information, visit CentralSan.org/HHW or call 1-800-646-1431.
Please don’t use your toilet as a trash can. It may be convenient to flush disposable wipes, condoms, feminine hygiene products, dental floss, tissues, and paper towels. But those and many other items (even if labeled “flushable” or “biodegradable”) can clog your sewer pipes, cause overflows, damage wastewater treatment plant equipment, and contribute to water pollution.

Flush only human waste and toilet paper. Put everything else in a real trash can.

Thanks to the diligent efforts of our employees, Central San has one of the lowest sewer overflow rates in the Bay Area. But with 1,500 miles of sewers serving more than 480,000 customers, we can never totally eliminate overflows; there are too many things beyond our control.

Stuff happens. But it needn’t happen to you.

Installing an Overflow Protection Device on the cleanout of your home’s private side-sewer/lateral will prevent sewage from backing up into your home from a clogged sewer main. The device works by directing the overflow to happen in your yard, rather than through drains inside your home.

Note: The device will not help if a clog occurs between it and the house drains, so keep your pipe free of grease, disposable wipes, and anything else that might cause a clog!

Overflow Protection Devices typically cost $20 - $40, depending on the model, and are available at plumbing supply stores. We recommend installation by a licensed plumber. Be sure to keep the device clear of obstructions that might interfere with its operation, such as dirt or vegetation. For more information, please call our friendly Permit Counter staff at (925) 229-7371.
In our Spring 2016 issue*, we explained how some spot-on flea-control treatments (such as Frontline, Advantage, K9 Advantix and many others) will spread toxic chemicals throughout your home, the environment, and local waters. Their active ingredients (including fipronil and imidacloprid) can be as toxic to honey bees, birds, fish, and other aquatic organisms as they are to fleas and ticks!

Consider Oral Medications

If you have a flea problem, talk to your veterinarian about using oral medications for your pet rather than spot-on products or flea collars.

- Oral medications are typically more effective.
- They reduce your family’s exposure to toxic pesticides.
- They reduce the risk of harming the environment.
- Never flush pet waste, as it may contain chemical residue from flea medications that can pollute local waters.
- Always bag pet waste and dispose of it in the trash.

Treating Only Your Pet Will Not Eliminate the Problem

Here’s what you need to know about flea infestations: the adult fleas you find on your pet or in your house account for only 5% of total the flea population; the remaining 95% are eggs, larvae, and pupae that are hidden in carpets, furniture, pet bedding, and your yard, waiting to mature and jump onto your pet! Spot-on flea-control treatments, flea collars, and oral medications do nothing to control that hidden 95%.

The best way to avoid flea problems is to clean your home regularly and thoroughly to remove fleas, eggs, larvae and pupae.

- Keep floors, carpets and upholstered furniture clean by using a high-power vacuum, or get them professionally cleaned periodically.
- Wash pet beds and blankets in hot water and dry on high heat.
- When moving into a new location, make sure it has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

To safely dispose of flea-control products (as well as all other forms of pesticides), please bring them to our Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility at 4797 Imhoff Place in Martinez.

*You can find all issues at CentralSan.org.
Water pollution is bad. It can harm the environment and living things. That’s why we must all do our part to prevent water pollution.

**Color the Critters That Need Clean Water...**

**Answer:**
Did you color them ALL? All critters need clean water. Even ones that live on land (like the monkey) need clean water to drink!
We Are Here To Help...

General information  (925) 228-9500 or CentralSan.org
Sewer overflows  (925) 933-0955 or 933-0990
Recycled Water Fill Station InfoLine  (925) 335-7717
Treatment Plant InfoLine (Report Odors)  (925) 335-7703
Household Hazardous Waste InfoLine  (800) 646-1431 or CentralSan.org/HHW
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)
Environmental Compliance  (925) 229-7288
Job Hotline  (925) 229-7109 or CentralSan.org
Student Education Programs  (925) 229-7310 or CentralSan.org
Community Information Line  (925) 335-7702

Central San serves 481,600 customers within its 145-square-mile service area.

- Wastewater collection & treatment; Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) disposal for 340,700 people.
- Wastewater treatment & HHW disposal for 140,900 people in Concord & Clayton by contract.
- HHW disposal only.
- Central San headquarters, treatment plant, HHW Facility & Residential Recycled Water Fill Station.

The Central Contra Costa Sanitary District PIPELINE
Written and designed by Central San staff to communicate pollution prevention messages to the people and communities we serve.

Bonnie Lowe, Editor, Writer
Charles Waltmire, Graphic Designer

View archived issues online at CentralSan.org

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