

Valley Sanitary District News

ISSUE 5

APRIL, 2012

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

Under Construction

Wetlands = Conservation

Tertiary Treatment may be on the horizon

Conservation of Natural Resources

Pretreatment Plan

New District Website

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Under Construction



The District has embarked on a major upgrade of the Treatment Plant, Laboratory and Operations Center, renovations to the Administration Building and improvements to the grounds and drainage system.

This construction will take place during 2012 and 2013 with an expected completion date in the Summer of 2013. Due to the favorable bid climate, the project award was \$18 Million for the

project.

Valley Sanitary District is excited to report that the project is benefiting the local economy by generating jobs for local contractors, trades and crafts for the heavy civil construction and the building trades.

The treatment plant project includes renovations and expansion of the solids treatment/handling facilities. Construction Phase 2A will increase the capacity of the treatment facilities another 2.5 million gallons per day (MGD) by the installation of a new anaerobic digester for solids stabilization, construction of new primary clarifiers,



installation of chemical dosing facilities to enhance removal of solids in the new primary clarifiers, and rebuilding of the existing grit removal system.

The next phase of the project will be to install the remaining digesters, four primary clarifiers and gravity belt thickeners for waste activated sludge.

Wetlands = Conservation



Valley Sanitary District's constructed Wetlands. A rare scene today.

At first sight it looks like a pond you grew up around as a kid complete with bulrush, ducks, fish, geese, and turtles. In actuality it is a one million gallon per day wastewater treatment process with no moving parts. This wetlands was constructed in 2000 and utilizes a series of 4 lined ponds with vegetation zones to remove nutrients from the wastewater. Aquatic plantings were made as close as possible to those located in Coachella Valley

riparian environments. Although small in scale by comparison to other wetlands, the project offsets the loss of wetland habitat elsewhere.

Valley Sanitary District owns and operates the constructed 29 acre biological wetlands more popularly known as the "Coachella Valley Wild Bird Center (CVWBC). In addition to wastewater treatment it provides a wetlands environment and habitat for avian

species. Approximately 175 varieties of birds have been observed at the CVWBC. Ducks, geese, hawks, falcons, quail, herons and gulls represent a very small portion of the CVWBC avian population. The CVWBC provides medical care for injured birds, homes for orphaned birds, education and tours. For further information please visit their website at <http://www.coachellavalleywild-birdcenter.org/>

Valley Sanitary District has been recycling wastewater into safe water for over 85 years.

Reclaimed/Recycled Water Project

The District is exploring the possibility of a joint Reclaimed/Recycled Water project with the Indio Water Authority (IWA). The purpose of the project will be to utilize reclaimed water from Valley Sanitary District (VSD), with additional tertiary treatment for recycled water purposes. The process will take the existing treated water from VSD and treat to a higher standard,

suitable for recycled water use.

The water would provide beneficial use for irrigating golf courses as well as recharging the aquifer for supplemental water supplies.

The next steps in the project are the final feasibility study, financial plan, preliminary engineering studies and an agreement between VSD and IWA on how to proceed.

The benefits to the community would be an alternate source of sustainable water, from local sources.



VSD is Conservation minded



District staff conducts a lab class for students enrolled in the College of the Desert's Conservation of Natural Resources courses. One component of the lab is held in a classroom setting where the basics of wastewater treatment and reclamation are explained, then a tour of the Treatment Plant provides the students with a first hand look of the processes that take the influent sewage and transforms it into clean and safe water that exits the facility into the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel that flows to the Salton Sea.

Pretreatment Program Implemented

Valley Sanitary District is required by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to monitor all discharges into the sanitary sewer especially discharges that have the potential to harm the collection system or treatment plant collectively known as the sewer system. Valley Sanitary District complies with the USEPA directive through the use of a pretreatment program. Valley Sanitary District is updating the program to address the current needs of the community and protection of the environment.

All dischargers, both residential and business, have the potential to harm the sewer system by the discharge of pollu-

tants. Pollutants include, but are not limited to pesticides, prescription medications, paint, paint thinners or oil. The legal authority and discharge specifics are contained in Valley Sanitary District Ordinance No. 2010 and Resolution 2008-998.

The Valley Sanitary District collection system is made up of pipelines designed to gather domestic waste, (sewage), from homes and businesses and convey it to the wastewater treatment plant. Certain pollutants can kill the microorganisms used in the treatment plant, cause explosions or create toxic fumes. A treatment plant shutdown can cause the

public to be exposed to untreated sewage, be quite costly to repair and subject Valley Sanitary District to civil, criminal actions or fines and penalties.

Each Valley Sanitary District customer owns a portion of the sewer system and was granted the privilege of connection. With this ownership and privilege comes the responsibility to properly use the system for its intended purpose, disposal of domestic waste.

Reducing these type pollutants, reduces maintenance cost that translates into a **savings** for each VSD customer.

Check us out on the Web

www.Valley-Sanitary.org is where you will soon find all the information needed about the District.

Our new website will feature:

- Customer Service Information such as the District's rates and fees; billing information; reporting overflows; and Lateral Grant program guidelines.

- Development or Engineering Services for information on permitting requirements; projects out to bid; FOG Program; and District standards & specifications.

- Regulations
- Information on the District's Board of Directors; Board meetings; Budgets; and financial reports.

- An About Us section that will provide a history of the District, contact information; District boundary map; and newsletters.

We ask for your patience as our website is under construction and we continue to add items of interest and convenience.

Financial Update

The District is pleased to announce that it received an upgrade in its Standard and Poor's rating during this fiscal year. The rating increased from A+ to AA. The District has been prudently building its reserves in anticipation of major rehabilitation projects such as the one currently in progress. This has allowed the District to construct the

current upgrades and rehabilitation project without the use of borrowed funds.

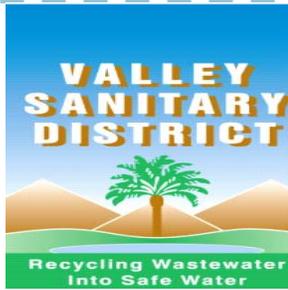
The District has also been able to time these improvements during times of lower construction costs.

The construction cost for the Plant upgrade is \$ 15 Million, and the Operations & Laboratory Building at \$ 3 million.

The District is also planning for long

term improvements to the collections system with the next major upgrade being the Requa Avenue upgrade project, estimated as a \$ 10 Million project.

Finally, our annual Sewer Use rates and Capital Impact fees continue to remain low, projected to be at \$ 270 a year and \$4,265 per equivalent dwelling unit (EDU) respectively.



Valley Sanitary District Management:

Douglas A. York
President

Richard Friestad
Vice-President

Merritt W. Wiseman
Secretary/Treasurer

Mike Duran
Director

William R. Teague
Director

Joseph A. Glowitz
General Manager

Mission Statement

The mission of the Valley Sanitary

District is to collect, treat, and dispose of wastewater in a safe and cost effective manner as prescribed by state and federal law. The District is dedicated to: maintaining a high standard of operations and maintenance; forward thinking in planning for facility and operational needs, and achieving maximum cost efficiency and effectiveness. The District board and staff are dedicated to having the District be a positive asset to the community.

FOG

At Valley Sanitary District, FOG is not a haze that rolls inland from the ocean but rather an acronym for Fats, Oil & Grease (FOG). FOG is a combination of meat fats from cooking, oil from salad dressings and dairy products including butter. The disposal of FOG into the sewer system from restaurants and homes can:

- Cause sewer stoppages and overflows that may pose a public health risk to all sewer system users not just those discharging FOG.
- Expose Valley Sanitary District to legal actions or fines for FOG related stoppages.
- Increase collection system sewer and treatment plant operating costs. Restaurant operators and homeowners can help prevent FOG related problems by following these basic practices:

- Not pouring fats, oil or grease into the sink or garbage disposal. Allowing fats, oils or grease to cool, placing them in a sealable container and disposing of them with the regular garbage.
- Scraping and dry wiping pots, pans and dishes with disposable towels before washing and disposing of the soiled towels with the regular garbage.
- Using sink strainers to catch food scraps and disposing of them with the regular garbage.

Restaurants and other non domestic FOG generators follow the same basic principals outlined above but through a slightly more formal program using what are called kitchen best management practices (BMP's). BMP's also include pumping grease interceptors on a regular schedule and performing preventative maintenance or repairs for effective operation. In 2006, The State Water Resources Control Board

(SWRCB) mandated sewerage agencies that own pipeline collection systems to implement a Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP). Part of this SSMP was implemented due to FOG related sewer pipeline stoppages. This program requires agencies including Valley Sanitary District, to evaluate the impact of FOG on the sewer system and implement policies and procedures to control the discharge of FOG into the sewer system. Valley Sanitary District maintains an active FOG program to stay in compliance with this requirement. Failure to remain in compliance with this program can subject Valley Sanitary District to fines; civil action or criminal prosecution.

Reducing FOG discharge to the sewer system reduces maintenance costs that translates into a savings for each VSD customer.