

THE PIPELINE

News From Your Ross Valley Sanitary District

District Receives Prestigious Award of Excellence for Comprehensive Financial Reporting

We were able to “stop the press” in time to include this important news that our ratepayers are sure to appreciate!

Your Ross Valley Sanitary District has just been awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association.

Your district achieved this special award by completing and submitting a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) to an independent organization that was established in 1945 to promote better financial reporting and recognizes organizations that do.

Though not required, Ross Valley Sanitary District (RVSD) will continue to

produce CAFRs, which are considered by many to be the accounting standard for financial transparency and full disclosure. The reports not only show yearly tax revenues and where these revenues were spent, but provide a complete cumulative record of assets, investments, and gross income from all sources.

“... the certificate is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting ...”

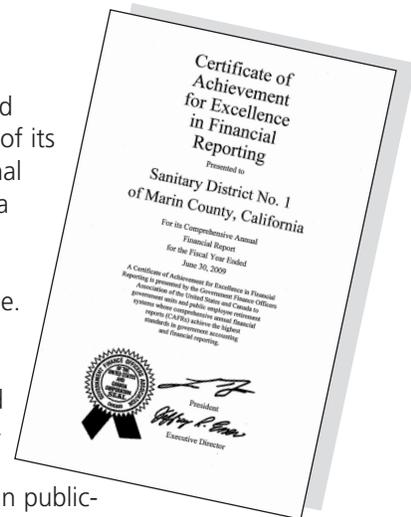
- Government Finance Officers Association

The decision to produce a CAFR each year was the result of RVSD’s new management and Board of Directors interest in raising the reporting standards for ratepayers, especially in light of the district’s extensive major capital improvement projects.

Reports submitted to the Government Finance Officers Association are reviewed

by selected members of its professional staff and a Special Review Committee.

The committee is comprised of individuals with expertise in public-sector financial reporting and includes financial statement preparers, independent auditors, academics, and other finance professionals. To see our CAFR go to our website, www.rvsd.org/about-us, then select the “Financial Information” link.



Serving Ross Valley & Larkspur Residents

Project Update

Novel Tunnel Completed Under Kent Library College Avenue Work Moved Ahead for Better Traffic Flow

If you managed to peek over the green safety fences at Kent Middle School this summer you would have seen quite a site. Specialized micro-tunneling crews orchestrated the completion of a 560-foot tunnel and sewer main installation, which was just one part of over 9,000 lineal feet (1.7 miles) of total sewer pipe replaced under Kentfield



The business end of the 22-foot laser-guided drill used in the project.

this summer. The technology used in digging the 30-inch tunnel under the school library and relatively new lunch area was nothing short of amazing. The drilling system is laser guided to within a half of an inch over the entire distance!

“Micro-tunneling is typically used in

much larger projects such as reservoir construction where you might be

(Continued on back page)

OLD SEWER PIPE REPAIRED IN FIVE YEARS

2007

Total Feet = 30,716
Capital Investment = \$4.38 Million

2008

Total Feet = 2,597
Capital Investment = \$3.82 Million

2009

Total Feet = 7,791
Capital Investment = \$3.24 Million

2010

Total Feet = 5,078
Capital Investment = \$1.12 Million

2011*

Total Feet = 33,582
Capital Investment = \$10.58 Million

TOTAL

Total Feet = 87,604
Capital Investment = \$26.28 Million

* Estimate Based on Budget

Five-Year Pipe Repair Total Projected to Exceed 16.5 Miles or 87,000 Feet!

If our ratepayers are looking for the best ways to measure the district's progress, the amount of repaired pipe in the ground is a good start!

The pipe chart on the left side of this page shows five years of progress in our effort to repair the nearly 200 miles of public pipe in our sewer system.

The big upswing in the number of feet repaired and capital investment in Fiscal Year 2011 is due to the impacts of the Kentfield Force Main and Woodland College Goodhill projects. These projects, which are well underway now, represent major accomplishments in our efforts to rehabilitate our aging sewer system.

Our conservative goal is to repair an average of 2 miles of pipe a year at an

investment of \$1.4 million a mile.

That being said, we are actively looking at ways to increase the total number of repaired pipe in the ground each year and to lower costs at the same time!

One way to accomplish this more ambitious goal is to utilize repair technologies such as pipe bursting (see article on opposite page) and to look at ways to streamline our operations.

Your Ross Valley Sanitary District has the most productive sewer repair and improvement program in Marin County and possibly the most productive north of the Golden Gate Bridge and West of Davis. We always welcome your comments and questions about our efforts.

Board OK's Additional \$500,000 to Help Fix Your Sewer Pipe!

Homes Built Before 1960 Often Need Pipe Repairs

There's great news for district customers who may be experiencing chronic plumbing problems and/or suspect their private sewer pipe is damaged or leaking. Your district's Board of Directors has approved an additional \$500,000 in grant funding to help you pay for repairs to your private lateral pipe. This is the pipe that runs from your home or business to the public sewer main.

Our pilot grant program that began last year has been a great success. Not only have thousands of feet of dangerous pipe been repaired, but we've been able to validate what we suspected about the age and type of pipes in our community that are most likely to be failing and harming the environment.

Over 94% of the district's customers who have taken advantage of the grant program are living in homes that were built prior to 1960 and many of these

homes were built before 1939. Pipes that have been in the ground for over 50 years are most likely to be made of clay.

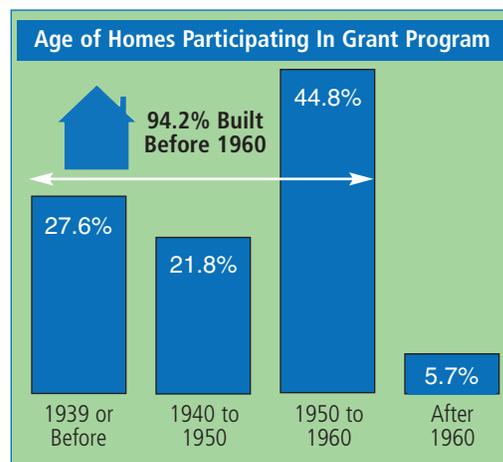
These pipes often leak at their joints and have cracks, some of which are caused by soil settling and others by powerful roots from trees and shrubs.

Our interest is getting these leaky pipes repaired as they

are responsible for about 50% of all sewer spills. Our grant program pays one half of your repair cost up to \$4,000, whichever is less.

District property owners have been pleased with how easy it is to use our program!

Learn More: Visit www.rvsd.org or call us to request a copy of our Lateral Replacement Grant Program Guide.



Crew Replaces 889 Feet of Pipe in Record Time!

Impressive Cost-Saving Results for New Pipe Bursting Test

We're not quite ready to celebrate in the streets as our construction crew is a little too tired, but we've got some great news about the early results of our first pipe bursting tests that should make our ratepayers happy!

As you may have seen in the last issue of *The Pipeline*, your district board gave the green light for district staff to begin a pilot program to utilize a method of replacing old pipes, which promised to be faster, less expensive, and create less impact on the community than typical repair techniques.

"What amazed us about the test was that we were able to accomplish so much so fast, even though we were just learning to use the new equipment," says Dennis Gavallos,



Assistant Engineer Dennis Gavallos monitors the bursting head and new pipe as the process begins.

Assistant Engineer for the Ross Valley Sanitary District.

"Based on how fast we were able to put new pipe in the ground, it seems clear that we'll be able to cost effectively replace over a mile of pipe each year with our new pipe bursting team," says Gavallos. Pipe bursting uses a hydraulic system to pull a steel cable attached to a bursting head, which in turn is attached to new HDPE replacement pipe. As the bursting head is pulled through, the old pipe is shattered and a new pipe is put in its place. It is called a



"trench-less" technology because it avoids having to dig a trench in the street to remove and replace old pipe.

"Even the neighbors picked up on what was going on and we spent some time explaining our work," says Gavallos.

"I haven't been inconvenienced at all," says Liz McNeil who lives in Fairfax where the test was performed. "I have to admit I was fascinated by the technology and equally impressed by how polite and helpful everybody was."

According to Gavallos, there are many ways that this new technology saves time and money that may not be readily apparent to our ratepayers.

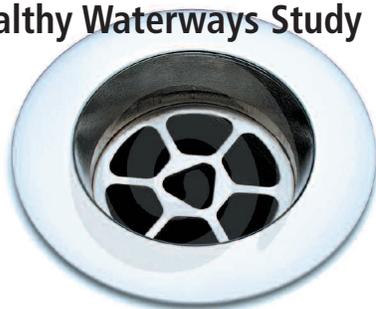
"I think most people can imagine the overall time savings of not tearing up the road with a big trench when we make a
(Continued on back page)

Watershed Stewardship From Rain to Drain District to Monitor Creeks with Healthy Waterways Study

When we consider how best to preserve and protect the beautiful watershed that provides life for every living thing in our community, it's important to not only understand and care for the system that provides our drinking water, but storm and wastewater systems as well. Everything that flows down a storm drain or sewer pipe can have a powerful impact on our watershed!

Your district, with the support of Friends of Corte Madera Creek, will conduct a Healthy Waterways Study to determine if human wastewater is present in the surface water of the Ross Valley Watershed.

Samples will be taken from Corte Madera, Sleepy Hollow, Larkspur, Fairfax



and San Anselmo during the wet and dry seasons, and will be compared with samplings in previous years. The study will help us gauge our progress and yours in repairing public and private sewer pipes.

You can learn more about efforts to protect the watershed and what you can do at home and at work to protect the environment at www.rvsvd.org. Also visit friendsofcortemaderacreek.org and marinwatersheds.org



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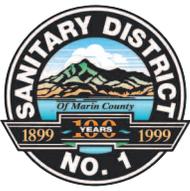
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New!
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Website Offers Project Updates, Repair Grants, News and More!

Your district has just updated its website to improve your access to valuable information! Here's what you'll find:

- Answers to common sewer questions
- Service rates and permit fees
- How to access grant dollars to help with the cost of repairing your pipe
- District project updates for your neighborhood including traffic impacts
- Board meetings, agendas, and minutes

Breaking News in Our Newsroom

The election in June addressed many questions raised by RVSD critics. In August, a few politicians, unhappy with the election results, complained to the Board of Supervisors about the same issues. Your district board has responded with a document that's been posted for your review on our website.

Project Update From Page 1

installing a 50 to 72-inch pipe," says Randell Ishii, District Engineer.

"In our case, while utilizing this technology was uncommon, it was nevertheless the only way to go given the project's requirements, available easement and other factors."

The tunneling, which is part of the district's Woodland-College-Goodhill capital improvement project, was clearly the most time-sensitive part of the project.

"We needed to be done before school started and we definitely were," says Ishii. "Because there were plenty of construction crews on tunnel site, our contractor decided to move the work on the gravity main pipe on College Avenue forward in the schedule. This schedule adjustment not only provided some extra insurance that this important pipe would be ready if we had an early winter, it also allowed for the completion of much of College Avenue before Kent School or the College of Marin were in session."

For more updates on progress, please visit our new website at www.rvsd.org.

Pipe Bursting From Page 3

repair," says Gavallos, "but there's a lot more to consider. When we dig a trench, we have to dispose of the dirt and old pipe off site. The result is a lot of dump truck traffic. We also need to take the time to set the new pipe in place and make sure it has the right grade as these main pipes are gravity fed."

In addition, Gavallos explains that trenching requires backfilling with new material once the pipe is replaced, then compacting the soil, then testing the compaction, before the asphalt is replaced. He also points out that there aren't tons of rock piled on the road nor is there anywhere near the dust involved.

"I'd say the backfilling and paving is about 50% of the repair operation that we are saving district ratepayers," says Gavallos.

We are continuing to collect data and will have full report for our board of directors and the public soon. It is hard not to be really optimistic about the impact this technology will have for the community.