



The Central Contra Costa Sanitary District PIPELINE

Volume 10, Number 1

A newsletter about collecting, treating, and recycling your wastewater

Summer 2006

CCCSD Implements Scheduled Rate Increase

Residents to Pay 75¢ More Per Month

In June 2004, after proper notification and conducting a public hearing, the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (CCCSD) Board of Directors approved a financial plan to implement modest Sewer Service Charge rate increases for the next three years. This resulted in an approximate \$8 increase to the annual charge in Fiscal Year 2004-05. However, in April 2005, after examining the District's financial position, the Board decided to defer a similar FY 2005-06 rate increase.

At the June 1, 2006 CCCSD Board Meeting, the Board voted to implement the last scheduled Sewer Service Charge increase for FY 2006-07. The new annual charge to residential homeowners is \$289 (an increase of \$9). Our business customers pay individually for sewer service based on the strength and amount of their sewage.

The Sewer Service Charge, which is collected on the County property tax bill, is CCCSD's primary source of revenue and accounts for over 50% of our budgeted revenue. It covers the costs of collecting, treating and disposing of wastewater from more than 440,000 residents and businesses in Central Contra Costa County, as well as operating the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility in Martinez. These operating costs are expected to be about \$54.2 million in FY 2006-07. This includes the Government Accounting Code which requires public agencies to consider how to fund long-term retiree health care obligations. The District Board will be looking at this issue as part of the budgeting process during the fiscal year.

Most of the revenue from the Sewer Service Charge is applied to the operations and maintenance costs of running the

District. These costs include labor, benefits, utilities and chemicals, hauling and disposal, outside services, materials and supplies, and routine repairs and maintenance.

A portion of the Sewer Service Charge also goes toward the District's capital budget, which is used to construct, repair, rehabilitate and maintain our sewer pipelines, pumping stations, and treatment plant facilities. These costs are expected to be approximately \$34.7 million in FY 2006-07.

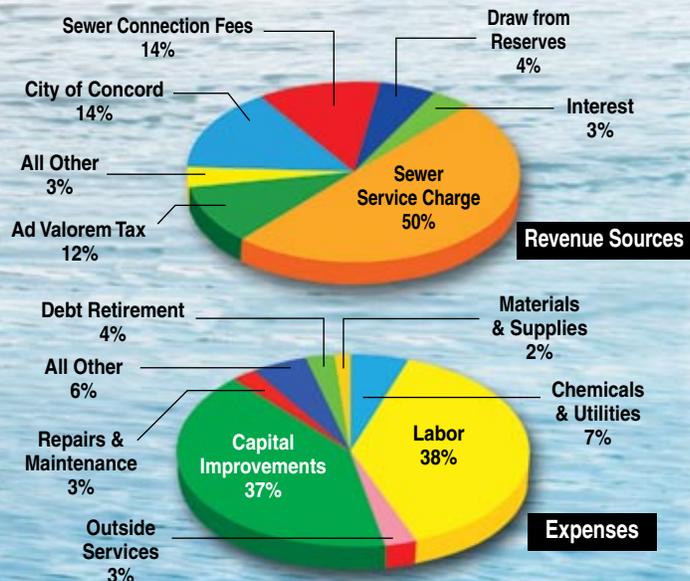
Infrastructure is a Top Priority

The importance of maintaining, repairing, renewing and replacing our infrastructure on a continuous basis can't be overstated. Just recalling the devastation caused after Hurricane Katrina when the New Orleans levee infrastructure failed—or listening to

(continued on page 3)

CCCSD FY 2006-07 BUDGET

Where does it come from and where does it go? These charts show a breakdown of CCCSD's approximate revenues and expenses for FY 2006-07. Total District expenses are expected to be about \$93.8 million, funded by \$90.6 million in revenue and a \$3.2 million draw from District reserves. This includes an Operations & Maintenance budget of about \$54.2 million, a Capital Improvement budget of about \$34.7 million, debt service of \$3.9 million and self-insurance of just under \$1 million. ❖



CCCSD: 60 Years of Service to Central Contra Costa County

The year was 1946. Central Contra Costa County was a rural area of farms, orchards and a few small towns. But for the 15,000 people who lived there, this tranquil setting was destined for change.

With the end of World War II, a massive building boom began. As the nearby cities of San Francisco, Oakland and Berkeley grew, so did the population of Contra Costa County.

At the same time, a sanitation crisis was developing in the area. Most of the county depended on septic tanks, which were inefficient due to the area's heavy adobe clay soil. State health authorities considered the polluted conditions resulting from central Contra Costa County septic tanks to be among the worst in California.

With septic tanks overflowing and waterborne diseases becoming a potential threat, civic leaders rallied public support for a solution. In an election held on June 24, 1946, a proposal to form a sanitary district for areas of central Contra Costa County was approved.

On July 15, 1946, the County Board of Supervisors approved a resolution officially creating the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (CCCSD).

Within 26 months, CCCSD's newly constructed main sewer trunk line and treatment plant were operational, collecting and treating 4.5 million gallons of wastewater per day.

That original system was expected to handle the area's wastewater for at least two decades. But by 1952, it became obvious that demand would soon exceed capacity. CCCSD began a series of expansions and improvements to meet the needs of a rapidly growing population.

During the past six decades:

- The population served by CCCSD has grown from 15,000 to 440,000;
- CCCSD's sewer system has expanded from 50 to 1,500 miles of pipe;
- The treatment plant's capacity has increased from 4.5 million to 54 million gallons per day.

While a lot has changed in 60 years, one thing has remained constant: our commitment to providing the highest level of service. This means development of efficient, cost-effective solutions and continuous improvement in all areas of our operations:

- Maintaining, repairing and constructing sewers that serve our communities;
- Preserving local aquatic habitats by ensuring our treated wastewater meets or beats stringent regulatory standards before it is discharged into Suisun Bay;
- Conserving resources by supplying high-quality recycled water for landscape irrigation purposes;
- Providing safe disposal and recycling of hazardous materials with our Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility;
- Protecting public health and the environment through a variety of innovative pollution prevention, student education, and public outreach programs.
- Planning and preparing for the future.

Since our humble beginnings in 1946 as a small agency serving a rural area, our mission and activities have significantly expanded and diversified, as have the communities we serve. Working in partnership with those communities, we'll continue to provide our customers with the highest level of service for decades to come. ❖



CCCSD General Manager Announces Retirement



Central Contra Costa Sanitary District General Manager **Charles Batts** is retiring in August. Batts has been with the District for 25 years, serving as General Manager for the past seven years.

"I've greatly enjoyed serving the community through my long career with the District," said Batts. "The population in this area has grown tremendously over the past 25 years, as has the public's awareness and concern over clean water and environmental protection issues. It's been both challenging and rewarding for me to have been in a position to help develop solutions to those and other important issues facing our local communities."

After joining the District in 1981 as Plant Maintenance Division Manager, Batts was instrumental in bringing a new advanced treatment facility into full operation. In the following years he managed the Treatment Plant Operations and Engineering Departments. He became the District's General Manager in 1999.

"The District's Board of Directors is dedicated to serving the needs of the public, and the District's employees are the best in the business," Batts said. "I know they will continue to provide exceptional service to everyone in central Contra Costa County."

At the recent District Board meeting where Batts announced his retirement, Board members shared their well wishes and thanked him for his efforts that helped to make the District a nationally recognized leader among public wastewater utilities.

The Board expects to select a new General Manager later this summer. ❖

Rate Increase (continued from front)

our own governor and other state officials talk about the urgent necessity to build and strengthen California's infrastructure—is enough to recognize the magnitude of what's at stake.

According to Richard Little of the Keston Institute for Infrastructure, University of Southern California, "Just as living things go through a process of generation, growth, maturation, decline and death, the life cycle of physical infrastructure follows a similar path. Unlike natural systems, however, physical systems cannot sustain themselves; they must be renewed from without. This implies actions on our part... actions that require capital, materials, labor and other resources. Depriving a physical system of funding for maintenance and repair, for example, will have a similar effect to depriving a natural system of food or water—it will decline and, ultimately, cease to function."

In addition to neglect and aging, natural disasters can threaten infrastructure. We live in earthquake country. While we can't prevent natural hazards, we can ensure that appropriate techniques, technologies and practices are employed to protect our critical infrastructure from their effects.

Having sufficient funding for routine inspection, maintenance and repair helps to prevent failures of our wastewater collection system and treatment plant. The CCCSD Board members have worked hard to balance the necessity to raise sufficient funding for these and other vital operations with the District's goal of maintaining responsible rates and providing our customers with value for their money.

While we continually look for savings in order to keep our rates reasonable, we cannot lose sight of our core mission to protect public health and the environment. We appreciate your understanding of this modest rate increase.

If you have questions about your Sewer Service Charge rate, please contact us via e-mail at rates@centralsan.dst.ca.us, or by calling (925) 335-7739. ❖

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTES

Mercury Pollution: What's Gold Got to Do with It?

Most people know that mercury is used in dental fillings, thermometers, fluorescent light bulbs, fungicides and pesticides. But did you know it's also used in gold mining?



The heavy use of mercury during the Gold Rush years is the primary reason why the San Francisco Bay is impaired by mercury today.

Mercury (also called "quicksilver") has a chemical affinity for gold. When added to ore, gravel or other material containing gold, it latches onto and combines with the gold to form an amalgam. The amalgam is then recovered and heated to separate the gold from the mercury.

Typical 19th century hydraulic gold mining practices (banned long ago) used mercury to recover gold from the soil. Mercury was poured on top of a wet slurry of gravel and dirt, combining with the gold and falling to the bottom of sluice boxes, where it was collected and separated.

It is estimated that as much as 30% of the mercury used in gold recovery processes was discharged with light sediments into surface waters and ultimately San Francisco Bay. The annual

loss of mercury from a typical sluice box was likely to have been several hundred pounds per year.

Because prospectors have been searching for gold in the rivers and hills of northern California since the mid-1800s, the richest deposits were located and mined long ago.

But while today's recreational miners are unlikely to strike it rich, searching for gold and reliving a little of California's Forty-Niner history is still a popular activity.

In addition to using small quantities of mercury themselves for gold recovery, thousands of recreational miners each year also recover mercury left over from the Gold Rush days when they sift through the old mines and pits. There are many areas in the Sierra foothills with intact sluice boxes, sluice box remnants, and drainage tunnel sediments, some with high levels of mercury. It is common for sediments from these areas and wood from the sluice boxes (which may contain mercury) to be taken from the area by recreational gold miners.

Individuals are potentially at risk for mercury exposure if they improperly handle or process

the sediments or wood from the sluice boxes.

According to the EPA's San Francisco regional office, two people in Fresno died when, in an attempt to recover gold, they heated a mercury-gold mixture on the stove in their house causing the mercury to vaporize. Mercury vapors are highly toxic.

Many recreational miners don't want to keep mercury around, but know it should not be tossed into the trash, poured down the sink, or dumped into waterways. So they end up storing it in their homes, sometimes for many years.

Our Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility provides a safe, free and environmentally friendly solution for the disposal of mercury in all forms.

If you (or someone you know) would like to safely dispose of mercury from recreational gold mining activities (or any other source), please bring it to our Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility. Call 1-800-646-1431 for information on safely handling and transporting mercury and other hazardous wastes to our facility. ❖

We Don't Accept Needles & Other Sharps

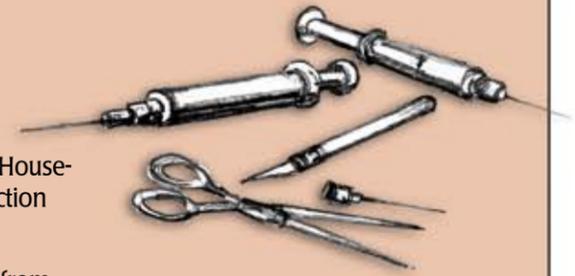
Please do not bring used sharps (needles, syringes with needles, lancets) to our Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility.

Syringes generated at home from personal treatment **are not** a regulated waste under the Medical Waste Management Act and **may be disposed** in your regular garbage.

However, to protect waste handlers, please use a household sharps container that can be purchased at a local pharmacy, or place the syringes with needles into a rigid puncture-resistant container (such as a heavy gauge non-recyclable plastic bottle with a narrow neck or a coffee can).

Keep the container out of the reach of small children. Once the container is full, secure the lid and seal it tight with tape, and place it in the trash (**not** the recycle bin).

For additional information on sharps disposal, please call the Contra Costa Environmental Health Services office at 925-646-5225 or visit their website, www.cchealth.org. ❖



We'll Take Your Unwanted Batteries and Fluorescent Tubes/Lamps

On February 8, 2006, it became illegal in California to dispose of batteries and fluorescent tubes/lamps in the trash.

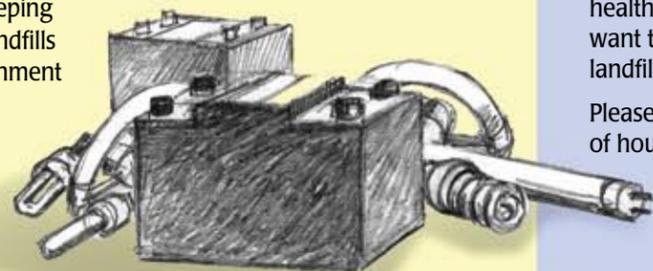
Batteries, both rechargeable and single-use varieties, contain metals and other corrosive materials. Fluorescent tubes/lamps contain mercury, a highly toxic substance. Because of their corrosive and toxic components, batteries and fluorescent tubes/lamps are considered to be hazardous waste when they are discarded. By making it illegal to put these items in the trash, California is keeping dangerous materials out of the landfills and helping to protect our environment and groundwater.

Instead of putting them in the trash, please bring your unwanted batteries and fluorescent tubes/lamps

to our Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility.

We suggest you keep old batteries in a plastic leak-proof container until you have a sufficient quantity to warrant a trip to our facility.

Please note that state transportation regulations limit the amount of hazardous waste (such as batteries) that can be transported in your vehicle to 125 pounds. ❖



Got Toxics?

Bring Your Household Hazardous Wastes to Our Facility

Do you have unwanted paint, paint remover, solvents, wood stain, pesticides, household cleaning products, used motor oil, dead batteries or fluorescent bulbs?

Did you know it's illegal to dispose of these substances in the trash, on the ground, down household drains or storm drains?

That's because they are forms of hazardous waste—substances that can poison, corrode, react, or ignite when handled improperly—and they can threaten public health and the environment. We never want these materials to end up in our landfills or waterways!

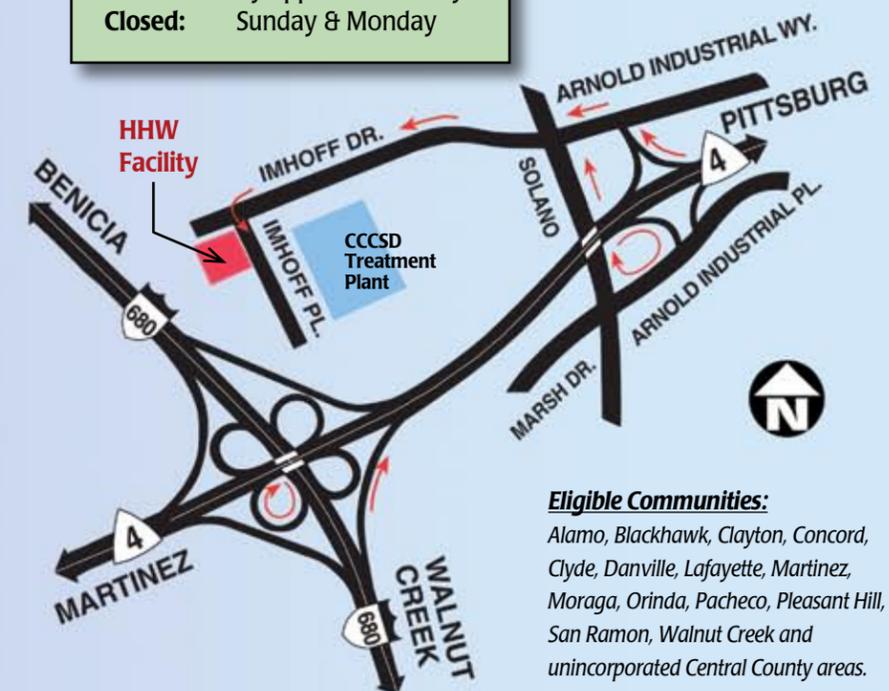
Please bring these and other forms of household hazardous waste to our collection facility at 4797 Imhoff Place in Martinez. (See the accompanying map and hours.)

Residents of our service area do not need appointments and can drop off materials at no charge. Businesses need an appointment and are charged a nominal drop-off fee based on the type and quantity of material they bring.

While you're at the facility, browse through our Reuse Room. Each year we give away thousands of reusable items (such as paint, deck stain and household cleansers).

Please Note: State guidelines limit the amount of hazardous waste you can transport in your vehicle to 15 gallons or 125 pounds. The size of each container of hazardous waste must be five gallons or less. Before you load up and head for the facility, call 1-800-646-1431 or visit our web site at www.centalsan.org for more information. ❖

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



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

Eligible Communities:

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

2006 Construction Emphasis on Renovation

CCSD's collection system includes about 1,500 miles of sewer pipeline and 19 pumping stations. These assets represent nearly \$2 billion in public investment. To preserve those assets, protect the environment, and ensure continuous, trouble-free service for our 440,000 customers, we must repair or replace sewers and other facilities that no longer function properly. We realize that construction work can be disruptive, and we do our best to minimize the inconvenience our projects may cause.

The 2006 construction season is heavily focused on renovating existing pipe, especially large-diameter concrete pipe.

Here's a brief summary of our ongoing and future major construction projects:

Danville:

Danville Sewer Renovation Project,

Phase 1: This project will repair or replace about 4,900 feet of 6- and 8-inch sewers at several sites and will use standard open-cut trenching, spot repairs

and pipe bursting construction methods. The work in Downtown Danville (on Prospect Avenue) will be done at night to avoid impacts on merchants and special events. Construction began in June and will be completed by the end of the year. Estimated cost: \$1.2 million.

Martinez:

M-4A Force Main Replacement Project:

This project will relocate a portion of one pressurized 20-inch force main of the Martinez sewage transmission line which was installed in 1970. Currently, approximately 4,000 feet of the force main is above ground on piers. Recently, District maintenance crews have had to repair several leaking joints and the pipe is showing further deterioration due to tidal influences. The above-ground portion of pipe will be removed and the new force main will be installed in Waterbird Way. Construction began in June and will be completed by December. Estimated cost: \$3.2 million.

Alhambra Valley Sewer Project: This project will install 6,500 feet of a new 10- to 12-inch trunk sewer from the Alhambra Valley Road/Gilbert Lane intersection southward along Sheridan Lane, Wanda Way and Alhambra Valley

Road to the intersection of Reliez Valley Road. The project will be in two phases. Phase 1, which includes all pipes except for Wanda Way, will start in July and be completed by October. Phase 2 will begin early next year. Estimated cost: \$1.5 million.

Orinda:

North Orinda Sewer Renovations Project, Phase 2:

The District's recent TV inspection of all the sewers in Orinda showed that approximately 10% of the lines (about 60,000 feet) need rehabilitation or replacement. Due to the size of the project, it has been split into seven phases. The first phase was completed in 2005. The second phase will renovate about 14,000 feet of sewer pipe at 17 sites located north of State Highway 24 and east of Camino Pablo. Many of the pipes to be renovated are located on private property. Trenchless technologies such as pipe-bursting and directional drilling will be used where feasible to reduce construction impacts. Construction of the second phase is expected to start in July and be completed by the end of the year. Estimated cost: \$3.2 million.

Walnut Creek:

Walnut Creek Sewer Renovation Project, Phase 4:

This ongoing project will replace or renovate deteriorated sections of about 7,000 feet of sewers at 14 sites in Walnut Creek that require frequent maintenance. Twelve of the sites involve work on private property easements. Trenchless technologies such as pipe-bursting and horizontal directional drilling will be used where feasible to reduce construction impacts. Construction is expected to start in July and be completed by the end of the year. Estimated cost: \$1.2 million.

Orinda, Martinez, Lafayette, Moraga, Walnut Creek

Cured-In-Place Pipe Project: This project will use a technique called cured-in-place pipe to internally line about 21,000 feet of corroded concrete pipe in four locations: Site 1 is in Martinez along Waterbird Way east of I-680. Site 2 is adjacent to St. Mary's College and along the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail. Site 3 is along Minert Road and Arkell Road in Walnut Creek. Site 4 is in Orinda on Camino Pablo just south of State Highway 24. Cured-in-place pipe is a trenchless technology that greatly reduces construction and traffic impacts. Construction began in June and will be completed by the end of the year. Estimated cost: \$5 million.

For more information about these and other construction projects, contact Community Affairs Representative Jackie Zayac at (925) 229-7168 . ❖

Five Ways You Can Help to Preserve Our Environment

1. Use rechargeable batteries. They may initially cost a bit more than single-use batteries, but they last a long time and reduce the amount of hazardous wastes requiring disposal.

2. Stop using pesticides. Homeowners in America dump nearly 70 million pounds of pesticides onto their gardens and lawns each year. These toxic chemicals kill more than pests—other victims include birds, pets, and beneficial insects. Runoff from irrigation and rain carries pesticides into our waterways. Ask for less-toxic alternatives at these stores, our partners in the "Our Water Our World" program:

• **Ace Hardware Stores:**

- 4451 Clayton Rd., Concord
- 3375 Port Chicago Hwy, Concord
- 3311 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette
- 3610 Pacheco Blvd., Martinez
- 2967 Ygnacio Valley Rd., Walnut Creek

• **Moraga Garden Center**

1400 Moraga Rd., Moraga

• **Navlet's Nursery and Garden Centers:**

- 1555 Kirker Pass Road, Concord
- 800 Camino Ramon, Danville
- 6740 Alhambra Ave., Martinez
- 2895 Contra Costa Blvd., Pleasant Hill

• **Orchard Nursery of Lafayette**

4010 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette

• **Orchard Supply Hardware Stores:**

- 2050 Monument Blvd., Concord
- 1550 Canyon Rd., Moraga
- 1041 Market Place, San Ramon

• **R&M Pool Supply**
6780 Marsh Creek Rd., Clayton

• **Sloat Garden Center**
828 Diablo Rd., Danville

• **Tassajara Nursery**
2550 Camino Tassajara, Danville

3. Never pour cooking grease or oil down the drain. Grease that goes down your drain will eventually harden and may create blockages in the sewer lines. Over time, these blockages can cause sewage overflows that might threaten local creeks and waterways. Instead, solidify the grease or oil in sawdust or kitty litter and collect grease in a disposable sealable container (such as a coffee can or zip lock bag) and place it in the trash. Households may also bring cooking oil to the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility in Martinez.

4. Do not flush unwanted medications. The chemicals in many medications can pass right through our sewage treatment plant and into the Bay, where they may harm aquatic life. Instead, remove any personal information, seal them in an unlabeled container and put them in the trash.

5. Bring your household hazardous waste to our Collection Facility. Never dispose of leftover or unwanted paint, paint remover, solvents, wood stain, pesticides, household cleaning products, motor oil, chemicals, batteries or fluorescent bulbs in the trash or down the drain. Instead, bring them to our Collection Facility for safe recycling and disposal. See the map and hours of operation on page 5. ❖



Some Retailers to Accept Used Rechargeable Batteries

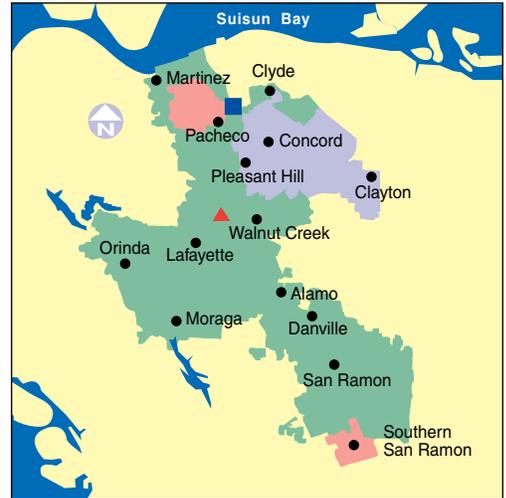
While some retailers have already been allowing their customers to drop off used batteries at their stores, a more formal system for accepting used rechargeable batteries has been implemented. A new California law (the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Act) will require large retailers (those with annual gross sales over \$1 million) of rechargeable batteries to begin accepting used rechargeable batteries from their customers on July 1st.

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

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. ❖



Where to Call...

General information	(925) 228-9500 or www.centralsan.org
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 www.centralsan.org
Student Education Programs	(925) 229-7310 or www.centralsan.org
Public InfoLine	(925) 335-7702 or www.centralsan.org

- 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

Past issues of the "Pipeline" are available on our web site:
<http://www.centralsan.org/education/publications.html>

CCCSD Pipeline is brought to you by:
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Barbara D. Hockett, Board Director • **Gerald R. Lucey**, 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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Harriette Heibel, Editor • **Bonnie Lowe**, Writer
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