



THE ENDEAVOR

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SERVING EL CERRITO, KENSINGTON, AND RICHMOND ANNEX

SUMMER 2015

STEGER SANITARY DISTRICT Calendar Year 2014 Performance Report

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MISSION STATEMENT OF THE STEGER SANITARY DISTRICT

It shall be the mission of the Stege Sanitary District to plan and operate a safe, efficient, and economical wastewater collection and transfer system for the present and future customers of the District.

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A comprehensive performance report on the operation of the Stege Sanitary District for the calendar year 2014 is available at the District office and on the web at www.stegesd.org. Comparisons are given for the years 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014, and between the District and California and Bay Area averages.

In important areas such as the total number of sanitary sewer overflows and overflows that reach a storm drain, a creek or other body of water, the District has consistently experienced far fewer incidences than either State or the Bay Area averages. In the volume of sewage overflow, the District is again significantly lower than both the State and Bay Area.

In the area of sewer maintenance, the

District completed 99.7% of scheduled operations in 2014. This average is comparable to years 2011-2013.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Consent Decree, wherein the District joined six East Bay Area cities in signing, calls for minimum goals of sewer cleaning, hot spot cleaning, remote sewer inspection, and chemical root control. In all these areas, the District exceeds the EPA's targets.

All of this is accomplished while staying on budget and with a safety record that exceeds industry standards.

Perhaps what is most important, is the customer satisfaction survey report. In 2014, customers who responded after a service call reported a 99% satisfaction with the quality of service received. **S**



“Flushable” Wipes Cause Big Problems

Grease, roots, kitty litter, even T-shirts flushed down the toilet, all can lead to sewer overflows. But by far the greatest contributor to clogged private sewer lines (laterals) and sewer mains are those supposedly “flushable” personal hygiene wipes that are now so popular. Despite claims to the contrary, these personal hygiene wipes do not belong in the sewer system. Unlike conventional toilet paper, the wipes do not break down in the water. After being flushed, they clump into tangled masses that can clog a home’s internal plumbing and the lateral that connects to the District’s sewer main. A clogged lateral is messy and expensive to correct. Homeowners are responsible for the cost of clearing their laterals.

Clogs that reach the District’s sewer main can cause wastewater to overflow out of manholes and into streets and nearby storm drains and creeks. Such overflows threaten the health and safety of the community and the environment.

Clearing wipes from the waste stream is also time-consuming and labor-intensive. At the wastewater treatment plant, intact wipes collect on screens, get caught in gears and pumps, and can cause damage to plant equipment.

The sewer system is only designed to handle toilet tissue and human waste.

“Flushable” wipes belong in the trash, not in the toilet.

Here are some other things that belong in the trash, not in the toilet: makeup pads; cleaning wipes; hair; bandages; latex products; dental floss; kitty litter; diapers; cotton swabs; hygiene products; baby wipes; whitening strips and their wrappers; cigarettes and ash. **S**



Public Meetings

The Stege Sanitary District is an independent Special District of the State of California. It operates and maintains 148 miles of sanitary sewers and two pumping stations serving over 33,000 residents in Kensington, El Cerrito, and Richmond Annex.

The Board of Directors generally meets on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 7:00 pm at the District’s office located at 7500 Schmidt Lane in El Cerrito.

You are encouraged to attend these public meetings. **S**

Helpful Reminders



Plumbing Contractors

For a list of plumbing contractors registered to work on private laterals in the District, visit www.stegesano.org. Please note, Stege recommends getting at least three bids before starting work. **S**

Don’t Connect Roof or Yard Drains to the Sanitary Sewer System

Piping runoff water into your sanitary system, either from house gutters or a sump pump, is illegal. To do so violates District regulations and other federal and local ordinances. Any illegal drain(s) must be disconnected from the sanitary sewer system and re-routed to the appropriate storm drainage system. **S**



Sewer Problems? CALL US FIRST!

If you see water backing up into your home, call Stege before you call a plumber. That number is (510) 524-4667. It is answered 24/7 by a real person. The problem may be in your lateral, or it may be in the sewer main. If necessary, we will send a crew out to investigate. The inspection is free and we try to respond within one hour. **S**



Lateral Requirement

Under the Regional Private Sewer Lateral (PSL)



Program, if you are buying or selling a property, building or remodeling in excess of \$100,000, or changing the size of your water meter, you must obtain a certificate from East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) certifying that all of your PSLs are leak-free. Please visit <http://www.eastbaypsl.com> for more information. **S**



Phased in Rate Increase

The Stege Sanitary District has once again been awarded the District Transparency Certificate of Excellence by the Special District Leadership Foundation (SDLF) in recognition of its outstanding efforts to promote transparency and good governance

To receive the award, the District had to complete essential governance transparency requirements, including conducting ethics training for all board members, properly conducting open and public meetings, and filing Financial Transactions and Compensation Reports to the State Controller in a timely manner.

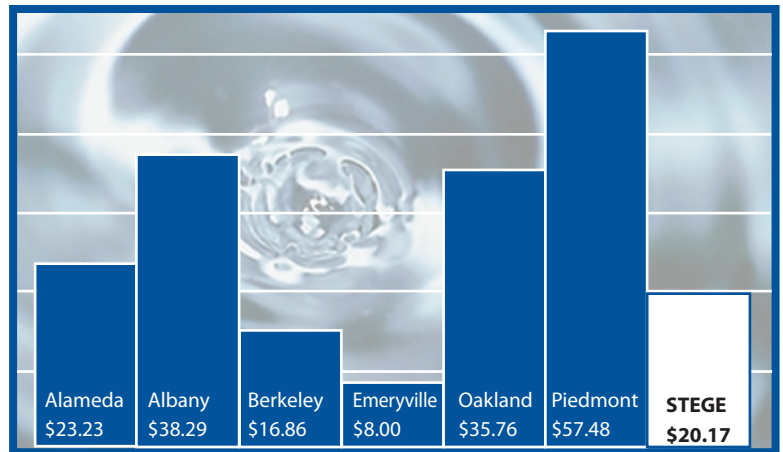
The District also fulfilled website requirements, providing readily available information to the public, such as board agendas, past minutes, the current District budget, and the most recent financial audit.

Finally, the District demonstrated outreach to the public through such activities as newsletters and community programs. **S**

In 2014, a rate increase, which will be phased in over a five-year period, was approved by the Board of Directors of the Stege Sanitary District. The first phase of that increase went into effect on July 1, 2014. The second phase of the increase will occur on July 1, 2015 when residential rates will rise from \$18.33 a month to \$20.17 a month and commercial and industrial rates will go from \$4.52 to \$4.97 per 1,000 gallons of wastewater.

Even with this increase, the District's sewer charge remains among the lowest in the Bay Area. **S**

Monthly Sewer Service Charge Comparison



Proposed Fiscal Year 2015-16 Budget

REVENUE

Sewer Operation Fund

Non Operating Income:	
Property Tax	339,000
Interest	5,000
Miscellaneous	21,000
Operating Income:	
Permit & Inspection Fees	25,000
Sewer Service Charges	2,435,000
Contracted Services	15,000
Subtotal	2,840,000

Capital Fund

Non-Operating Income:	
Interest	5,000
Operating Income:	
Capital Service Charges	2,242,000
Connection Fees	100,000
Subtotal	2,347,000

Other Fund Sources

Transfer FROM/(TO) Reserves (425,190)	
Subtotal	(425,190)

TOTAL REVENUE	4,761,810
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EXPENSES

Operating Expenses:

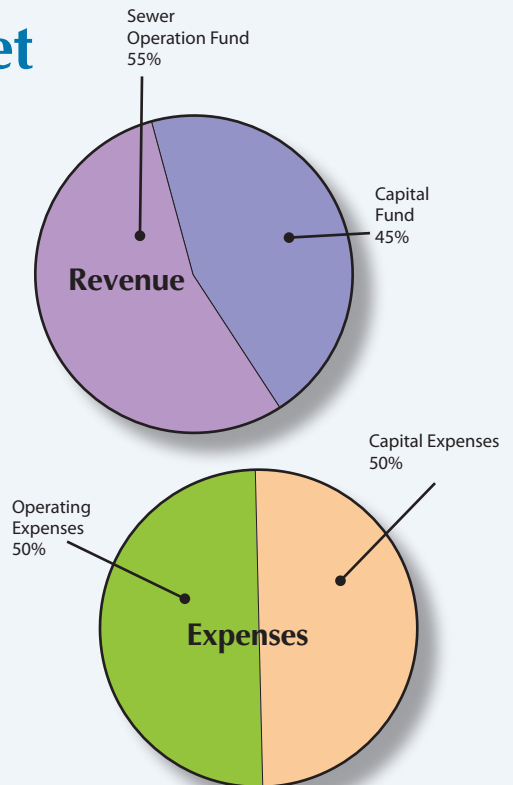
Maintenance/Engineering	1,615,590
Pump Stations	14,240
Contracted Repairs	58,000
General & Administration	674,780
Subtotal	2,362,610

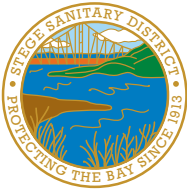
Capital Expenses

Capital Equipment	70,000
Debt Repayment -SRF Loan	148,200
Construction	2,181,000
Subtotal	2,399,200

TOTAL EXPENSES	4,761,810
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The District adheres to an investment policy for reserve funds that complies with state statutes and stipulates safety, liquidity, and yields as the order of investment objectives. All currently invested funds are with the State Local Agency Investment Fund (LAIF).





STEGE SANITARY DISTRICT
7500 Schmidt Lane
El Cerrito, CA 94530-0537 (510) 524-4667

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To Contact Us: Phone: (510) 524-4668 or after hours (510) 524-4667 Email: staff@stegesan.org Web: www.stegesan.org

Spotlight on Service

DENNIS WRIGHT JUAN PEREZ



After more than 24 years with the District, Walt Lunn retired as Maintenance Superintendent in 2014. He left behind some big shoes to fill.

Dennis Wright has stepped into those shoes.

Dennis has been with the district since 2009. He started as a wastewater collection system worker. Within a few months, he acquired his California Water Environment Association (CWEA) Collection System Maintenance Grade 1 Certification. He now has his Grade 4 Certification. This grade requires in-depth knowledge of grades 1-3 plus additional managerial training. It is the highest maintenance grade level that CWEA offers.

As superintendent, Dennis is responsible for scheduling safety training, dealing with vendors for purchase of sewer maintenance items, and generally overseeing and supervising the maintenance crew. He is also the person most customers talk to when calling about a potential sewer problem. If necessary, he is also the person who sends out a crew to investigate.

Dennis loves helping the public. He loves that he is still part of a team. Often, Dennis will go out in the field to assist the maintenance crews as they work to make sure the collection system is working at an optimal level.

Before coming to Stege, Dennis worked as an equipment operator and laborer at the Berkeley Cement facility. In his free time, Dennis enjoys spending time with his four children. **S**

Last year, **Juan Perez** became the District's newest permanent wastewater collection system worker. As such, Juan is part of a crew that maintains approximately 150 miles of sewer lines in the Stege Sanitary District. That includes regular cleaning and upkeep of the lines. To clear and clean the sewer mains from the street, a giant rodder and hydro-jetter are used. Sometimes, however, a thorough cleaning job needs to be done by hand. Here, Juan and the other crew members go down into the sewers and use hand tools to clear the lines. Toxic gasses, such as methane, carbon dioxide, and hydrogen sulfide are always potential problems that need to be checked for before venturing down into a main.

The maintenance crew is also responsible for using a remotely-controlled video camera to look for roots, debris, and grease that might clog the lines. In addition to general maintenance, the camera is used to assess the overall health of the sewer system and to help evaluate which lines need to be repaired or replaced. Every day, 3,000 feet of line is inspected.

Juan is proud of his new job because it gives him the opportunity to learn new things in an environment in which everyone works together.

Before coming to Stege, Juan worked for the City of San Pablo and in construction. He is a graduate of Richmond High. He still lives in Richmond with his wife and three children, two girls and a boy. **S**

