



Connections

Discharge Compliance Update: Construction Underway

The Santa Rosa Subregional Water Re-use System recycles up to 98 percent of the water it produces. The recycled water is used by the Geysers Project to recharge steam fields and produce energy and by agricultural and urban customers for irrigation. The remainder of the recycled water occasionally needs to be discharged in winter months because the amount produced varies substantially from year to year, based on weather conditions, and cannot be reliably depended on for reuse.

In December 2008, after completion of numerous studies and analyzing various alternatives, the Board of Public Utilities selected the most cost-effective and environmentally superior alternative to allow recycled water to be occasionally discharged while meeting increasingly stringent regulations.

The selected alternative consists of making improvements to the existing

Delta Pond discharge point. Extensive modeling under several different flow conditions showed that a multi-port diffuser configuration will result in a discharge that meets the new regulations and will allow the City to discharge only when needed.

Prior to starting the improvements in June of this year, the discharge from Delta Pond was an open ended, 48-inch diameter, corrugated metal pipe buried just below the surface of the water in the bank of Santa Rosa Creek at the confluence with the Laguna de Santa Rosa. While this configuration worked, it did not

optimize the mixing of recycled water with water in the Laguna and Santa Rosa Creek. The new configuration consists of a 37-foot long, 48-inch diameter buried pipe with 11 ports protruding through the bottom of the Creek. Each of the ports will have a 24-inch rubberized duckbill check valve installed on it. The check valves will keep water from the Laguna and Santa Rosa Creek from

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The location of the Discharge Compliance diffuser project presents many construction challenges.

Reducing Your Water Bill with Rainwater Harvesting

Are you looking for ways to reduce your water utility bill? How about collecting free rainwater and getting paid for your efforts?

Rainwater harvesting is the collection and storage of untreated rainwater for reuse in landscape irrigation. It is estimated that one inch of rain hitting a 1,000-square-foot roof will yield approximately 600 gallons of water.

Rainwater harvesting systems range from simple catchment devices, such as rain barrels, to more complex systems, such as cisterns and storage tanks. Harvesting rainwater helps conserve potable water and reduces storm water runoff.

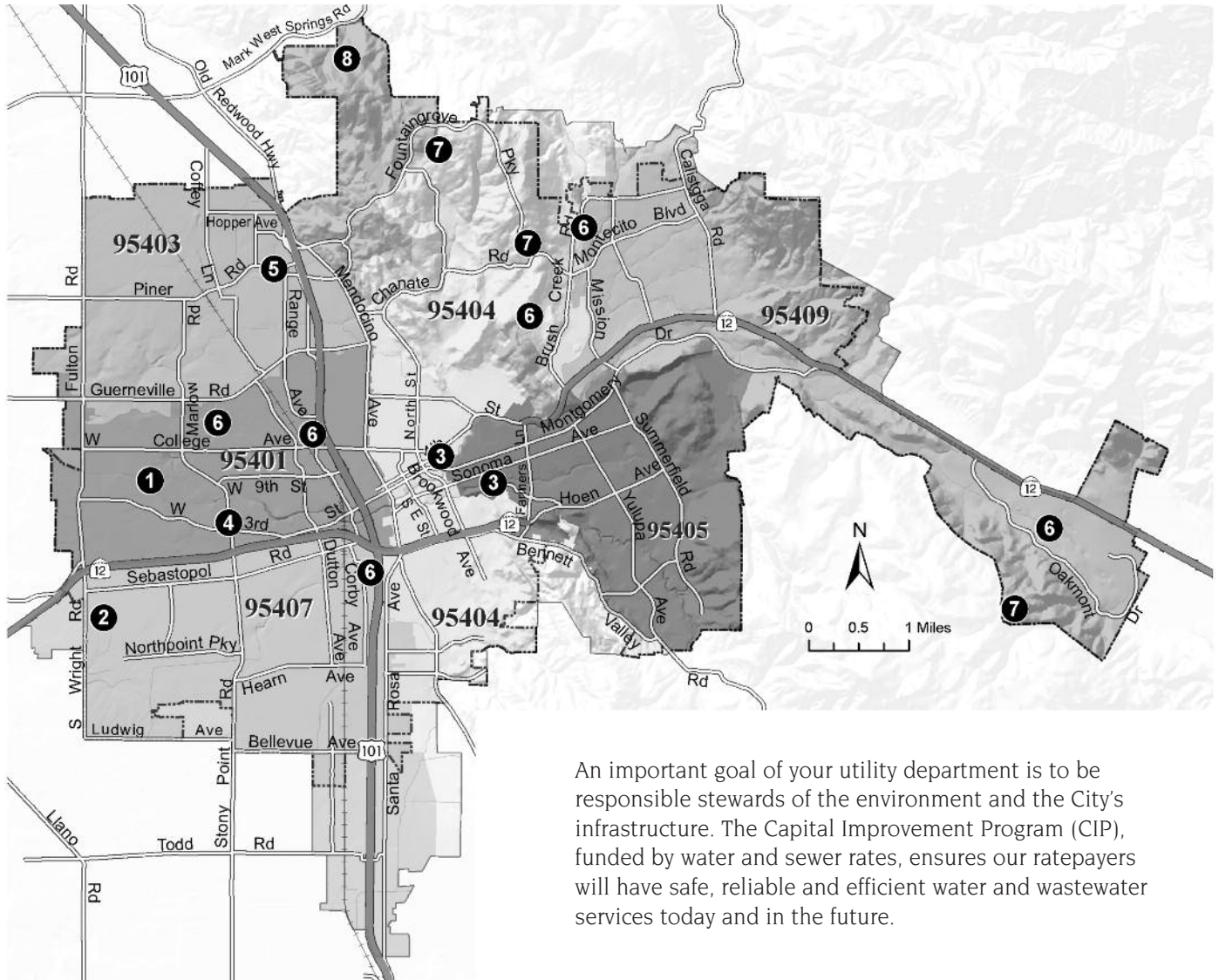
With the rainy season approaching, now is the perfect time to install a rainwater harvesting system. Not only is the collected water a free source for irrigating your garden, water customers are also eligible to receive a rainwater harvesting rebate. The rebate is \$0.25 per gallon of storage with a minimum of 100 gallons of storage required. Applicable permits, backflow protection, and pre- and post-inspections are required.

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Water and Sewer Capital Improvement Projects in Construction — October through December 2010



An important goal of your utility department is to be responsible stewards of the environment and the City's infrastructure. The Capital Improvement Program (CIP), funded by water and sewer rates, ensures our ratepayers will have safe, reliable and efficient water and wastewater services today and in the future.

This map shows capital improvement projects that will be under construction during the fourth quarter of 2010.

The map reflects projects that are estimated to occur during the period October through December 2010 and, due to varying factors, are subject to change without notice. The data represented has been generated from Utilities Asset Management.

#	Project Description
1	West College Municipal Facilities
2	Leddy Park Sewer and Water
3	Bishop Dr, Brookside Dr, Brookwood Ave, Coddling Dr, Hoen Ave & 3rd St Sewer and Water
4	Recycled Water Pilot Project Extension
5	Range Avenue Water Main - Russell to Piner
6	Sewer Main Lining Various Locations Fall 2010
7	Water Tank Seismic Upgrades and Improvements
8	Lift Station Upgrade- Skyfarm "A"

Preparing for the Rainy Season

With the coming rains, anything we spill, drop or throw on the ground can wind up in our local creeks. Storm water can carry pollutants such as oil and grease from cars, litter and pet waste, fertilizers and pesticides from lawns or gardens, and mud from construction activities. These pollutants can enter our streams and have a toxic effect on fish and wildlife. Now is the time to prepare your home for the wet weather ahead. Here are a few simple steps you can take to be ready for the rainy season and help protect our creeks:

- Pick up your yard clippings and trash from your yard and around your neighborhood.
- Store chemicals properly inside the garage.
- Don't fertilize if rain is in the forecast.
- Clean up pet waste and dispose in a trash container.
- Sweep – don't hose or wash dirt and debris from driveways.
- Clean up car leaks/spills with kitty litter or other absorbent material, sweeping it up and into a trash can. Keep your car well maintained and leak-free.
- Take your car to a commercial car wash; there the wash water doesn't drain to creeks, OR give your car a sponge bath, rinsing the soapy water

into a bucket that you dump into a sink.

- NEVER put anything in a storm drain; it's headed directly to your local creek!



Also, this fall, don't leave the leaves! When it rains, leaves are washed from the street gutter into storm drains. Leaves will decay in the water releasing nutrients that contribute to algae growth. The algae soon decomposes and uses up oxygen in the water, suffocating fish. So rake them up, not out. Instead of raking leaves out to the street, try:

- Placing them in a yard waste bin.
- Composting them into a nutrient-rich fertilizer for your garden.
- Using a mower to chop the leaves into small particles and then applying them directly to your lawn to enrich it. (This is called top-dressing.)
- Using chopped leaves as winter mulch for your flower garden.

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flowing back into the diffuser when the diffuser is not being used.

Although a relatively small construction project, improvements to the existing discharge point occur in a location that comes with its own set of challenges. The project is being built within the limits of Santa Rosa Creek, which requires numerous permits to be obtained and requirements to be met. Adding to the environmental complexity, the area is adjacent to a wetland.

Improvements have to be installed under dry conditions, which requires the installation of temporary piping and structures to divert the Creek around the area where construction will occur. Getting to the site is also challenging as is the tight construction window — all of the work must be done between July and October 15. Vehicles and construction equipment must be brought in along lengthy gravel and dirt roads that are not wide enough for two way traffic.

Despite the challenges, construction is currently underway and the work is on schedule to be completed by mid-October.

For more information on the Discharge Compliance project, please visit our web site at srcity.org/DischargeCompliance.



Did You Know?

Santa Rosa's pharmaceutical take-back program has collected and properly disposed of over 11,440 pounds of unused or unwanted medications?

Environmental Compliance Inspectors at the City's Laguna Wastewater Treatment Plant are tasked with keeping toxic substances out of the wastewater so the Treatment Plant can operate at peak efficiency.

Pharmaceuticals are one of the most regulated substances until the user wants to dispose of them. The easy way is to flush them down the toilet; but the consequences to the environment are substantial. Studies have shown that many over-the-counter and prescription drugs are being detected in

ivers, streams and groundwater. Even throwing them into the trash will eventually lead to a landfill where pharmaceuticals may leach into the groundwater.

Our Environmental Compliance Inspectors recommend the best way to reduce pharmaceuticals in the treatment plant discharge is to use the lowest effective dose of your medication and to utilize the City of Santa Rosa sponsored SAFE MEDICINE DISPOSAL PROGRAM. The **SAFEMED** program is a group of participating pharmacies that will take back your unused and unwanted medicines for free and properly dispose of them. For a current list of participating pharmacies, please visit our web site at srcity.org/safemed.

Your Utilities Department at Work for You

The Laguna Treatment Plant Water Reuse System

Committed to Environmental Stewardship and Innovation



Have you ever wondered what happens to the wastewater from the tubs, toilets and sinks inside your home or business? The City of Santa

Rosa Subregional Water Reuse System consists of over 500 miles of underground pipes that take wastewater from homes, businesses and industry and deliver it to the Laguna Wastewater Treatment Plant where it goes through three levels of treatment prior to being recycled. The Subregional Water Reuse System serves the cities of Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, Sebastopol and Cotati, as well as portions of Sonoma County. The reclamation system currently irrigates approximately 6,000 acres of agricultural lands. The recycled water that leaves the Laguna Wastewater Treatment Plant is high-quality, tertiary-treated water that is safe for many reuse options.

Wastewater Operator II Jason Bishop is one of the employees responsible for the operation and maintenance of the reclamation system. In 1988, Jason was employed as a temporary

Maintenance Aide at the Laguna Treatment Plant. He found the field so interesting, he applied for and received a permanent position.

Jason holds a State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Grade 3 Wastewater Operator Certificate. His job duties include daily monitoring of recycled water use throughout the system and daily pump station system checks. He is also responsible for preventative maintenance on the system equipment and continuous monitoring of the irrigation system using a computerized system known as SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition).

If you are interested in pursuing employment at the treatment plant, Jason recommends that you begin by touring treatment plant facilities and talking to professionals in the field. What Jason enjoys most about his position is "being a steward of the environment." He says, "I am proud to be a part of the solution. Water is far too precious to waste."

For more information about the Subregional Water Reuse System or to learn how you can schedule a tour of the Laguna Treatment Plant, please call 707-543-3350 or visit our web site at srcity.org/Laguna.

Board of Public Utilities Meetings Now Televised

Have you ever wondered what the City's Board of Public Utilities (Board) does? Have you ever wanted to watch a Board meeting but couldn't make it to City Hall? Now you can watch Board meetings from the comfort of your own home!

On May 20, 2010, the Board unanimously approved broadcasting its meetings on both television and the web to provide the public with an opportunity to understand the complex work that is being done by the Utilities Department and the Board. Meetings will be televised, webcast and web-archived similar to the City Council meetings.

If you are a Comcast subscriber, meetings can be viewed on City View Channel 28. If you are an AT&T subscriber, first navigate to Channel 99, select Santa Rosa and then select City View. Board meetings can also be viewed at srcity.org/bpu by clicking either on the live feed link or the archived meeting date that you wish to view.

Board meetings are held on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month at 1:30 PM in the City Council Chambers; the public is encouraged to attend. For more information on Board meetings, please visit our web site at srcity.org/bpu or call the Utilities Department at 707-543-4200.

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The rebate does not apply to pre-existing rainwater harvesting systems.

Benefits of rainwater harvesting:

- The water is free.
- The water is used close to the source, eliminating the need for complex and costly distribution systems.
- Reduces flow to storm water drains.
- May help reduce pollution entering the storm water system.
- Helps reduce demand on the water distribution system.
- May help reduce customers' utility bills.



For more information or to schedule a pre-inspection site visit, please call the Water-Use Efficiency Hotline at (707) 543-3985 or visit our web site at srcity.org/wue.

Web Resources

Visit these web sites to learn more about issues mentioned in this Update.

Discharge Compliance:

Srcity.org/DischargeCompliance

Water-Use Efficiency:

Srcity.org/wue

Board of Public Utilities:

Srcity.org/BPU

Laguna Treatment Plant:

Srcity.org/Laguna

SAFEMED:

Srcity.org/safemed

Twitter:

twitter.com/SantaRosaWater