



# Connections

## Construction Begins on Pilot Project for Expanded Use of Recycled Water

The Santa Rosa Board of Public Utilities and City Council recently approved a pilot project that will expand the use of recycled water for irrigation purposes in urban areas such as parks, golf courses, commercial landscaping and street medians. Water reuse is beneficial because it reduces demand on other water resources, such as groundwater and the Russian River and its tributaries.

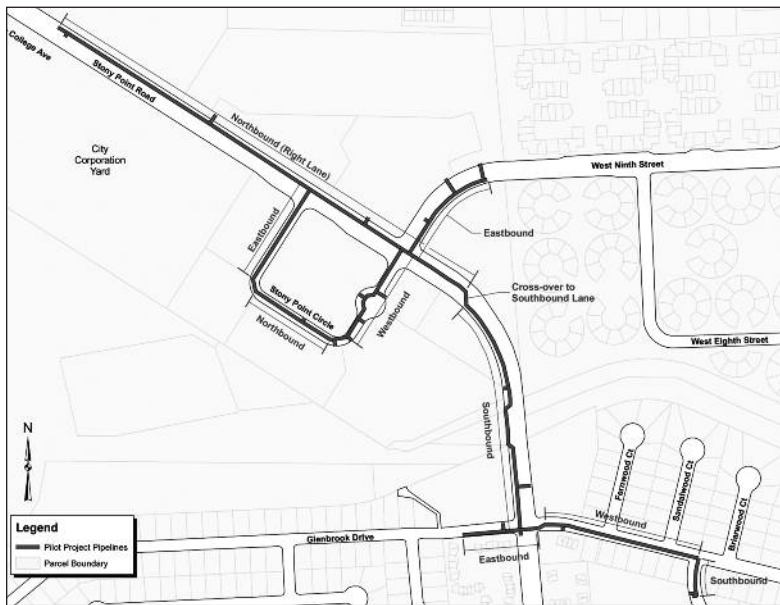
When construction of the pipeline is completed, the pilot project will use about 30 million gallons per year of highly-treated recycled water. The ultimate goal of the Santa Rosa Urban

Reuse Project (SRURP) is to use up to one billion gallons per year of recycled water for urban landscape irrigation and other approved uses, thus saving the same amount of drinkable water for human consumption.

Construction is scheduled to occur from February through June 2010, with the pipeline running along Stony Point between West College and Glenbrook. Access to all properties (business entrances and private driveways) will be maintained.

### The Subregional Water Reuse

System has been using recycled water for irrigation purposes for more than 40 years. Today, about one-third of Santa Rosa's tertiary-treated recycled water irrigates approximately 6,400 acres of agricultural crops and urban landscaping. The



Map shows pipeline route where construction activities will be occurring from February to June, 2010.

## Water Conservation Rebates & Incentives

The Water Conservation Program offers numerous programs, incentives and services that can help improve indoor and outdoor water-use efficiency during winter months and throughout the year.

One of these programs is the **Rainwater Harvesting Rebate** program. Rainwater harvesting is the collection and storage of untreated rainwater for reuse in landscape irrigation. It is estimated that one inch of rainfall hitting a 1,000-square-foot roof will yield approximately 600 gallons of water. Rainwater harvesting ranges from simple catchment devices, such as rain barrels, to more complex systems such as cisterns and storage tanks. Rainwater harvesting helps conserve potable water and reduce storm water runoff.

The **Rainwater Harvesting Rebate** program provides a rebate for capturing rainwater and using it to irrigate your landscape. The program offers a rebate of \$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. The rebate does not apply to pre-existing rainwater harvesting systems. To participate, call the Water Conservation Hotline at (707) 543-3985

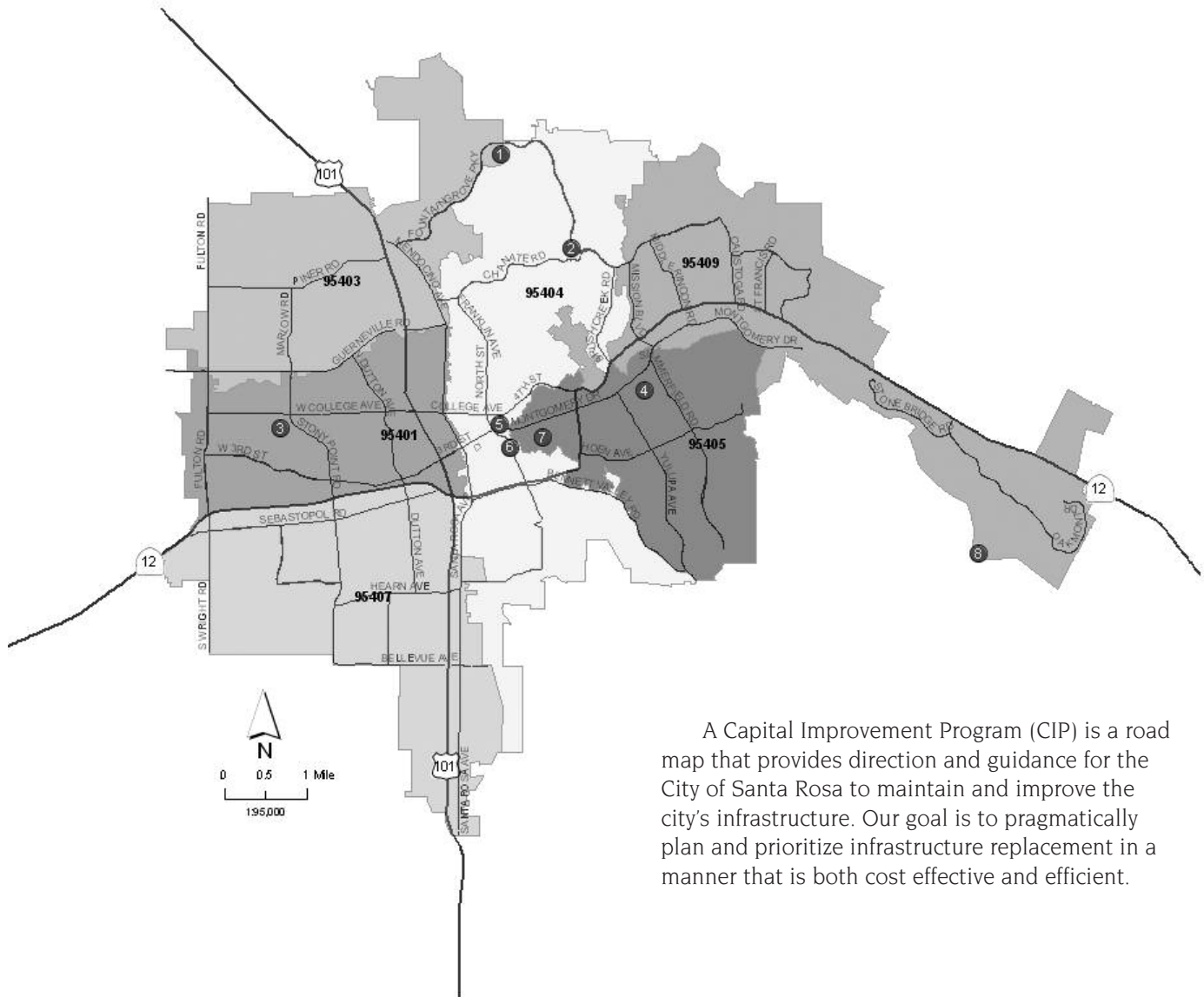
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# Water and Sewer Capital Improvement Projects in Construction — January through March 2010



A Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is a road map that provides direction and guidance for the City of Santa Rosa to maintain and improve the city's infrastructure. Our goal is to pragmatically plan and prioritize infrastructure replacement in a manner that is both cost effective and efficient.

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

The map reflects projects that are estimated to occur during the period January through March 2010 and, due to varying factors, are subject to change without notice. The data represented has been generated from Utilities CIP Planning and Technology sources.

#	Project Description
1	Seismic Upgrades and Improvements
2	Seismic Upgrades and Improvements
3	Recycled Water Treatment System
4	Rincon Valley Trunk Sewer
5	Third Street Sewer and Water Improvements
6	Brookwood Avenue Sewer and Water Improvements
7	Bishop Drive, Brookside Drive, Coddling Drive and Hoen Avenue Sewer and Water Replacement
8	Seismic Upgrades and Improvements

# Water and Sewer Rate Increase Question & Answer

**W**e have heard from a number of residents regarding the recently approved rates.

This correspondence helps us understand your questions and the type of information you need from us. We are committed to providing you with as much easily-accessible and easy-to-understand information as possible. Please continue to let us know how you like to receive your information (web site, direct mail, etc.) and whether or not the information we are providing is helpful to you.

Here are some questions we have received and a short explanation for each. Detailed information is available at [www.srcity.org/Utilityrates](http://www.srcity.org/Utilityrates).

**What caused the Sonoma County Water Agency rate increases?** When water use is limited, revenues drop and fixed costs remain the same.

**What influence does Santa Rosa have regarding the Water Agency's rates and expenses?** Cities can give feedback, but the Sonoma County Water Agency's budget is decided by the Board of Supervisors.

**What other water supply options is the City exploring?** The City is exploring well water, urban reuse and water conservation as supply options.

**Why are Santa Rosa's wastewater rates the highest in the area?** Our area has some of the most restrictive discharge regulations in the country which costs more money.

**Why isn't the City getting more money (is the City getting any money) from Calpine for the recycled water they use?** The City receives \$300,000 per year and Calpine pays for a majority of the pumping costs.

**What is the City doing to control its own expenses?** The Utilities Department has reduced its operating budget over the past two years and continues to look at reductions.

**Are ratepayers picking up the cost of development?** No, development pays for growth — and also pays for their share of the existing system.

We encourage you to follow the water supply and wastewater disposal issues facing the City and the County. You can visit our web site or sign up for e-alerts from the Board of Public Utilities and the Sonoma County Water Agency. In the next couple of months, we will be hosting events where you can learn firsthand from experts about our water and wastewater system; you will also have the opportunity to provide us with additional feedback. Event details will be published soon.

*"Water Conservation..." continued from page 1...*

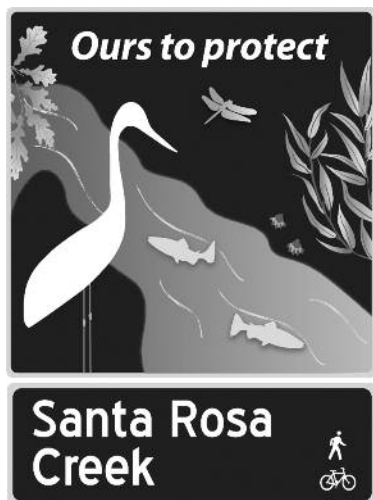
to schedule a pre-inspection site visit.

A new program, introduced this January, is the **Graywater Rebate** program. Recent changes to state regulations make it easier for homeowners to afford and install graywater systems for their backyards and gardens. Graywater reuse is the routing of water from showers, bathtubs, bathroom sinks and clothes washing machines (but not water from toilets or kitchen sinks, known as "black" water) to outdoor use for lawns, gardens, trees and shrubs. It is estimated that graywater systems can reduce a typical household's water consumption by thousands of gallons a year.

The **Graywater Rebate** program provides a rebate for reusing graywater on your landscape. The program offers a rebate of \$75 for qualifying fixtures and appliances, or up to \$200 per 1,000 gallons of monthly savings. Applicable permits, and pre- and post-inspections are required. The rebate does not apply to pre-existing graywater systems. To learn more about the Graywater Rebate program, call the Water Conservation Hotline at (707) 543-3985.

To help reduce indoor water use, the Water Conservation Program also provides **free** low flow showerheads and faucet aerators, and **rebates** for replacing your washing machine with qualifying high efficiency washing machines.

For more information on our Rainwater Harvesting, Graywater, or other programs, incentives and rebates, or to request assistance in reducing your water use, please contact the Water Conservation Hotline at (707) 543-3985 or visit [www.srcity.org/wc](http://www.srcity.org/wc).



## Ours to Protect

**D**id you know there are over 90 miles of creeks in Santa Rosa? Or that our local creeks support a wide range of terrestrial and aquatic species, such as steelhead trout, Chinook salmon, river otters, deer, egrets, hawks, ducks, herons, turtles, tree frogs, mayflies, clams, snails, maples, willows, alders and oaks? The City's Storm Water and Creeks Program has developed creek crossing signs that will identify various creek crossings throughout the City and increase public awareness about local creeks. The signs will indicate the creek name and



**Conserve, Recycle, Reuse**  
SANTA ROSA SUBREGIONAL WATER REUSE SYSTEM

whether it has a pedestrian or bicycle path. Look for these colorful signs to begin appearing throughout Santa Rosa in spring 2010.

# Your Utilities Department at Work for You

## Protecting Our Local Creeks



As a Senior Environmental Specialist with the Utilities Department's Storm Water and Creeks team, Sheri Emerson's week is filled with a mix of field and office work.

An employee of the City since 2001, Sheri provides biological expertise for the City's capital improvement and creek restoration projects, assists with the City's Storm Water Permit and the Creek Stewardship Program, and coordinates the efforts of other Environmental Specialist staff.

For anyone interested in pursuing a career as an Environmental Specialist, Sheri recommends coursework in biology and ecology in addition to familiarity with the many regulations in place protecting our ecosystems and endangered species. She says it is also important to have good communication skills: "Scientific understanding is great, but it's useless if it can't be communicated to decision-makers."

There are many things Sheri likes about her job with the City, such as working with species and habitats in Santa Rosa and also with diverse groups of people on large projects like the Citywide Creek Master Plan. The Plan covers 90 miles of creeks flowing through the City's urban area and was awarded the Association of Environmental Professionals Outstanding Planning Document award in 2007. "We spent a lot of time meeting and talking with people about their vision for local creeks; I'm really proud of everyone who worked so hard to carry the community's interests through to the final Plan."

But what Sheri enjoys most about her job is the people. "Our City staff comes from such a variety of backgrounds and life experiences. It has been wonderful getting to know so many people dedicated to making Santa Rosa a better place."

To learn more about the Storm Water and Creeks team, visit [www.srcity.org/stormwaterandcreeks](http://www.srcity.org/stormwaterandcreeks) or contact the Utilities Department at (707) 543-4200.

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## Did You Know?

Flushing the City's water distribution pipes improves overall water quality.

Flushing the water system on a routine basis removes sediment from lines and keeps the entire distribution system refreshed. Santa Rosa has over 600 miles of water pipes covering over 50 square miles. Although flushing water mains may appear to contradict our water conservation message, the quality of our water supply is equally important and flushing is essential.

Water quality depends on consistent refreshing of water in the pipes. In most cases, the water in the pipes is used by residents and businesses, which keeps the water circulating from reservoirs and pump stations to their taps. Sometimes, however, areas that are sparsely populated do not use enough water to refresh the pipes. In these areas, the older water needs to be

flushed out and fresher water brought in with measurable chlorine residual. Chlorine provides disinfection capabilities to the water, thus eliminating bacterial contamination threats.

The City also flushes fire hydrants during periodic maintenance and after a water main has been installed or repaired.

You may want to periodically flush water lines at your own home to keep the water fresh. The water heater at your home should be drained and flushed once per year to keep it clean and functioning correctly. If you travel from home for more than a week, you may want to flush all your faucets for a minute or two before using the tap to refresh your home's water lines and remove stagnant water.

If you need to report a water quality problem, please call (707) 543-3965.

"Construction Begins" continued from page 1...

remainder is delivered to the Geysers steamfields where it is used to produce clean energy.

In Santa Rosa, recycled water is currently used at Finley Park, A Place to Play sports complex, and Oakmont Golf Course. Expanding urban reuse is a high priority for the City because it provides a drought-proof water supply for irrigation and other approved uses while saving potable water for purposes such as drinking and bathing and creating an environmentally-friendly method of disposing of recycled water.

The pilot project is fully funded through a combination of grant funding from the State of California and the Sonoma County Water Agency. The Utilities Department staff has been working with potential recycled water customers located along the pipeline route to connect their irrigation system to the recycled water supply.

If you have questions about recycled water or for more information and updates on SRURP and other responsible recycled water projects being undertaken by your Utilities Department, visit our web site at [www.SRCity.org/RecycledWater](http://www.SRCity.org/RecycledWater) or call Jennifer Burke at (707) 543-3938.

For construction-related questions, please call Norman Amidon at (707) 543-3449.

To receive construction updates via e-mail, please send an e-mail to [Update@DataInstincts.com](mailto:Update@DataInstincts.com)

## Web Resources

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

### Recycled Water:

[www.SRCity.org/recycledwater](http://www.SRCity.org/recycledwater)

### Water Quality:

[www.SRCity.org/waterquality](http://www.SRCity.org/waterquality)

### Water Conservation:

[www.SRCity.org/WC](http://www.SRCity.org/WC)

### Turf Time:

[www.SRCity.org/turftime](http://www.SRCity.org/turftime)

### Water Calculator:

[www.SRCity.org/watercalculator](http://www.SRCity.org/watercalculator)

### Twitter:

[twitter.com/SantaRosaWater](https://twitter.com/SantaRosaWater)