

Utilities Connections



Incremental Recycled Water Program Update

A brief update on the Discharge Compliance project and efforts to expand the use of recycled water in urban areas around Santa Rosa.



Discharge Compliance

Prior to 2010, changes to water regulations imposed by State regulators are expected to necessitate the relocation of highly treated recycled water to new discharge points along the Russian River. In July, the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) directed City staff to continue studying a Discharge Compliance Project, which is part of the overall Master Plan of the Incremental Recycled Water Program (IRWP).

Santa Rosa is currently allowed to discharge its highly treated wastewater (called recycled water) into the Laguna de Santa Rosa between October and May. But higher flows in other parts of the Russian River make relocating all, or a portion, of the discharge to the River a more likely method of complying with new and anticipated regulations.

Discharge will continue to be an essential element of the Subregional Water Reuse System because the amount of recycled water produced varies substantially and unpredictably from year to year due to local weather conditions. The people using this recycled water—energy companies, farmers and other irrigators—need to know the water will be reliably available every year, and not subject to changes in the weather.

The next steps in the process are for the City to continue engineering and scientific studies and prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to evaluate alternatives for achieving compliance at the existing or possibly a new recycled water discharge point. Initial meetings for public information and input were held this summer and a screening report is due this fall. A draft of the EIR is expected to be complete by June of 2007. For details, visit: www.SRCity.org/DischargeCompliance



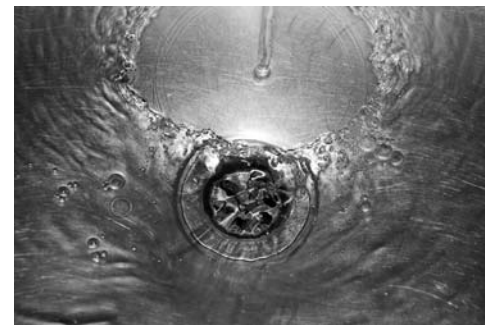
Urban Reuse

Urban reuse uses recycled water to irrigate urban landscaping such as parks, golf courses, commercial areas and street medians. Sometimes the water is also used in fire suppression systems and for industrial processes. Water recycling is beneficial because it reduces demand on other water resources, including our drinking water supply.

A detailed study is underway to determine the location, size, and timing of potential reuse projects within Santa Rosa to expand the City's current reuse system. Plans call for a phased approach over several years to reuse up to 1000 million gallons per day (mgd) of recycled water in urban areas. More reuse will require more storage, so a process to identify feasible storage sites is scheduled to begin this fall. For details, visit: www.SRCity.org/UrbanReuse

Healthy Sewer Laterals

When was the last time you thought about the health of your sewer lateral? Most people know that their sewer lateral (the pipe that comes from your house to the main sewer line) carries household wastes from your sinks, drains and toilets to the sewer treatment plant for processing, so what makes a sewer lateral healthy?



Keep your sewer lateral healthy by disposing of cooking grease and food scraps in the garbage.

A sewer lateral is healthy when all of your sewage makes it to the sewer main without any obstructions or blockages. DID YOU KNOW that as a property owner, you are responsible for keeping your sewer lateral free of obstructions or blockages all the way to the sewer main in the street? DID YOU KNOW that your sewer lateral could become blocked by grease or other materials like roots causing a sewage overflow? DID YOU KNOW that you could be financially liable for damages caused by sewer overflows from your sewer lateral?

A healthy sewer lateral is free of cracks or breaks. DID YOU KNOW that cracks and breaks in your sewer lateral could be a problem? Our wastewater treatment plant usually receives sewage

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Your Utilities Department at Work for You

Protecting the Integrity of Our Utility System



Kimberly Zunino started with the City in 1990 as a Customer Service Representative. In 1997, she became a Civil Engineering Technician (CE Tech)

and was promoted to a CE Tech III in 2003.

The position of CE Tech does not require specific certification, but Kimberly has found the classes she completed through the Santa Rosa Junior College (math, drafting and AutoCAD), and others concentrating in water and sewer distribution, have certainly helped. She gained an early knowledge of the system in her first years as a customer service representative.

As a CE Tech III, Kimberly's workload is substantial and diverse. She works on ensuring that connections to the water/sewer system meet the City Standards, including the new proposal for the 12- to 14-story buildings

downtown. One day, she may calculate water and sewer demand fees and capacity credits for properties, review building permits as they pertain to water and sewer standards, and help customers through the process of connecting to the City system. The next day will find her helping developers and contractors research projects, creating reimbursement agreements for connection fees and AutoCAD maps for various projects, or working on updating and modifying City and departmental policies. She helps develop the budget for the Current Development department of Utilities Engineering and assists the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) and Technical sections with their budgets.

The next time you visit the Utilities Department, you may see Kimberly behind the counter and after reading this, you will have an insider's knowledge of what she's been doing! You can contact Utilities Engineering at (707) 543-4200 if you have questions or would like more information.

"Healthy Sewer Laterals" continued...

flows of about 20 million gallons per day during the dry season. Sounds like a huge amount of flow, doesn't it? Well, during the rainy season the treatment plant receives four times the flow or about 80 million gallons per day! Amazing, isn't it? Why does this increase happen? There are two reasons. The first reason is called INFLOW which is flow from storm water that enters your sewer lateral through surface openings such as open cleanouts, illegally connected sump pump drains or roof drains. The other reason is called INFILTRATION which is groundwater that enters the system through cracks or breaks that could be in your sewer lateral. Think about it! If you have cracks or breaks in your sewer lateral and they allow storm water or groundwater to enter your lateral, you are contributing to the large problem of excess flows at the treatment plant requiring processing and disposal.

Nationwide research shows that

leaking sewer laterals cause about 40% of these excess flows. DID YOU KNOW that these excess flows increase the costs for the treatment plant and ultimately for you, the customer?

So what could you do to help with this problem of Inflow and Infiltration?

If you experience any backups with your toilets, bathtub or shower drains or sinks, you could have a blockage or break in your sewer lateral. If you have any squishy or wet spots on your lawn, you could have a break in your sewer lateral causing leakage. The City recommends that you call a professional to investigate the problem. Putting off handling the problem could only make the solution more costly, especially if a sewage backup occurs inside your house or onto the street.

You CAN make a difference! Keep your sewer lateral healthy by disposing of cooking grease and food scraps in the garbage. Dispose diapers, condoms or personal hygiene products in the garbage, not the toilet.

Reduce Your Fall Irrigation Use

As we enter in to the fall months, the water needs of plants change. In an average year in Santa Rosa, plants need the most water in July. By the time October comes, plants need approximately 40% of the water that they needed during the month of July. Even when the weather is hot, shorter days mean less hours of sunlight, which is one of the biggest factors affecting the water needs of plants. Shorter days means plants require less water, so remember to reduce your irrigation use in the fall.

Some simple ways to reduce your irrigation use and prevent over watering your plants include reducing the amount of time you run your sprinklers; checking and adjusting your irrigation controller on a weekly basis; and calling Turf Time at (707) 543-3466 for suggested weekly lawn watering requirements. In addition, when Daylight Savings ends, this is a good reminder to start a new habit of replacing the back up battery in your irrigation controller on a semi-annual basis.

For additional information on ways to reduce your irrigation use in the fall, please contact the Water Conservation Hotline at (707) 543-3985 or visit our website at www.srcity.org/wc.



Web Resources

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

Discharge Compliance:

www.SRCity.org/DischargeCompliance

Urban Reuse:

www.SRCity.org/UrbanReuse

Recycled Water:

www.SRCity.org/RecycledWater

Water Conservation: www.SRCity.org/WC

Incremental Recycled Water Program (IRWP):

www.SRCity.org/IRWP