



Connections

Santa Rosa — A DOE Solar America City

This year Santa Rosa was named one of the “Solar America Cities” by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) for a proposal to create Solar Sonoma County, a countywide solar project to increase and accelerate local solar energy production. Santa Rosa is among 25 cities now recognized by the DOE as “Solar America Cities” partners committed to solar technology adoption at the local level. Twelve new cities were announced for 2008, with 13 cities named as partners in 2007.

What is Solar Sonoma County (SSC)? It is a public-private consortium of local governments, businesses, and other entities and individuals working collaboratively to identify and implement initiatives to promote, expand, and accelerate solar photovoltaic/solar thermal, energy generation, and energy efficiency throughout Sonoma County. The target is 25 megawatts of new solar over the next three years.

The City of Santa Rosa will function as a grant administrator for SSC, and funds will assist Santa Rosa’s and its SSC partners’ efforts to increase the amount of solar installations in the County. SSC plans to develop ways to increase local solar energy production, such as:

- Reducing or removing financial barriers for municipalities, businesses, and homeowners



- Creating additional solar and energy efficiency incentives
- Streamlining existing and recommending new, local solar policies
- Engaging and educating the public about energy efficiency and solar energy through local events and centralized resources
- Identifying additional projects for achieving initial and future solar energy production goals
- Encouraging local municipalities to install solar equipment on their buildings and properties.

As part of the Utilities Department’s participation in the DOE grant, two new solar projects are in process: a 21 kilowatt (kW) roof mounted system on an equipment storage facility and a 65 kW shade canopy system. These two new systems, added to the four existing systems, will bring the total to 195kW of solar, producing approximately 293,000 kW hours of green energy each year. For more information about SSC, visit the City’s Environmental Stewardship webpage: www.srcity.org/environmental

Incremental Recycled Water Program Update

Ratepayers and the Environment Win with Project Selections

In fall 2008, Environmental Impact Reports (EIR) were certified as complete for both the Discharge Compliance and Seasonal Storage projects. In December 2008, the Board of Public Utilities selected the Discharge Compliance Project alternative that is both environmentally superior and the most cost-effective; that alternative is the continued discharge into the Laguna de Santa Rosa, west of Santa Rosa at the Delta Pond discharge site. No alternative has been selected for the Seasonal Storage Project because changing conditions have eliminated the need for more storage at this time.

Seasonal Storage Project

The objectives of the Seasonal Storage Project (SSP) were to provide additional storage so more recycled water could be reused and to help manage discharge in compliance with regulations. The SSP EIR evaluated the environmental impacts of five alternatives for recycled water storage ponds.

However, as the SSP alternatives were being studied, another solution

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Take a Tour of the Laguna Treatment Plant

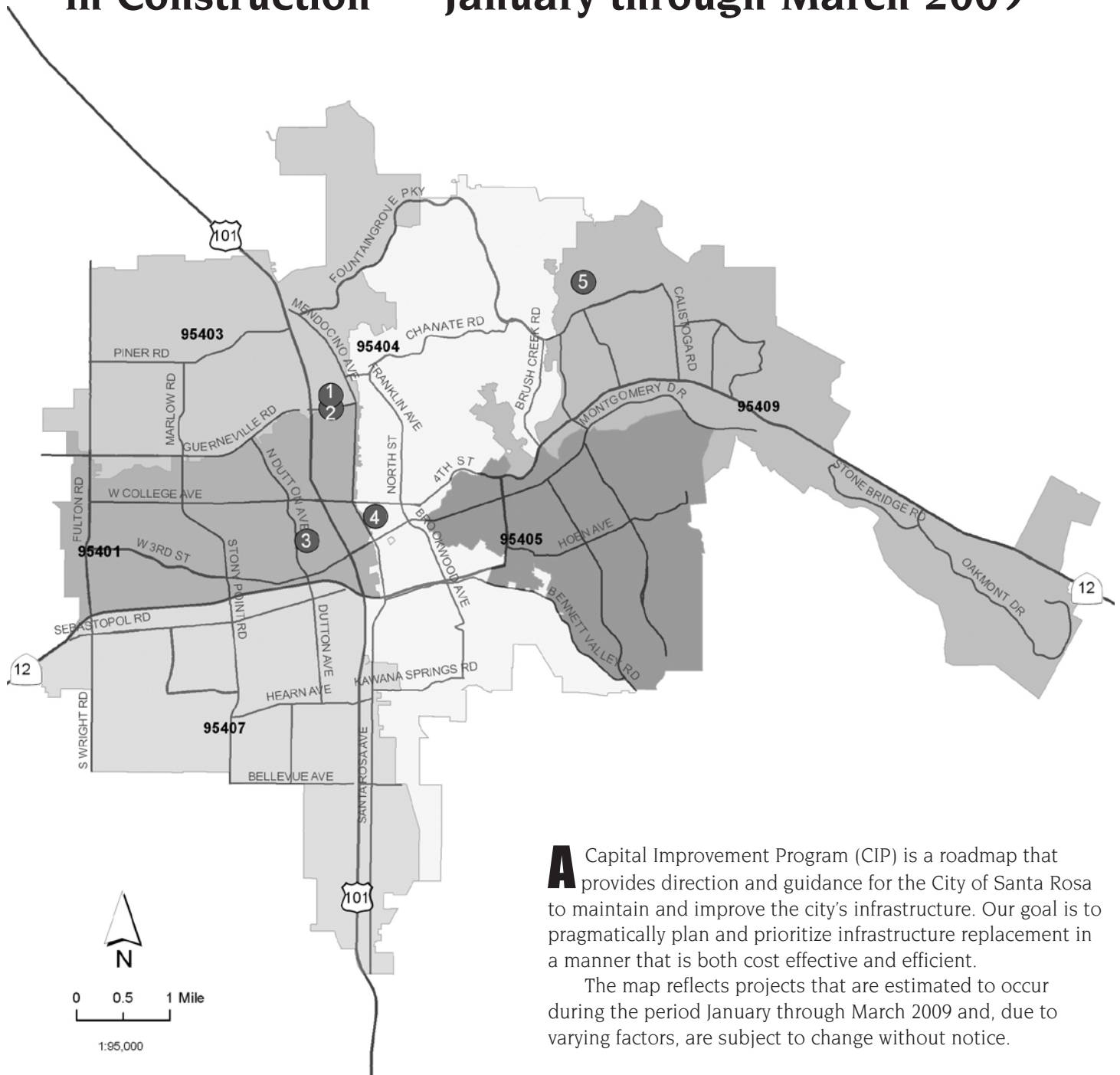
Public Tours are offered on the first Saturday of the month at 9:00 AM and the first Wednesday of the month at 4:00 PM.

Reservations required: (707) 543-3350.

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Water and Sewer Capital Improvement Projects in Construction — January through March 2009



A Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is a roadmap 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.

The map reflects projects that are estimated to occur during the period January through March 2009 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	Lillie Drive Sewer and Water Replacement
2	Steele Lane Sewer and Water Replacement
3	Dutton to Coulter and Coulter Neighborhood Sewer and Water Replacement
4	7th Street Sewer and Water Replacement
5	Middle Rincon Road - Sunshine Ave to Badger Rd Water and Sewer Replacement

Help Your Gardener Learn How to Save Your Money and Water with QWEL

In Santa Rosa, landscape irrigation is one of the largest components of water use. Santa Rosa's water use averages 13 million gallons per day (mgd) in the winter and increases as high as 32-34 mgd in the summer. This increase in water use is primarily driven by irrigation of landscapes. Improving your landscape irrigation efficiency helps reduce summer water use and helps you save money on your water bill.

One way to improve your irrigation efficiency and reduce your water bill is to encourage your gardener to become a Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper (QWEL). QWEL is a local training program that provides instruction on water efficient irrigation. Your gardener should have the knowledge and skills available not only to cut your grass and trim your hedges to perfection, but also operate your irrigation system efficiently by not wasting your water.

Through the QWEL Program, which is taught in English and Spanish by local landscape and water conservation experts, your gardener will become more water efficient in landscape

design, maintenance, and operation. QWEL provides 18 hours of educational foundation based on principals of proper plant selection for the local climate, irrigation system design and maintenance, and irrigation system programming and operation.

QWEL is one of two approved US EPA WaterSense Irrigation Auditor training programs in the nation and was developed in cooperation with the California Landscape Contractors Association, Sonoma County Water Agency, City of Santa Rosa, Marin Municipal Water District and the colleges of Santa Rosa and Marin.

English and Spanish QWEL classes will be offered throughout 2009. For more information on upcoming classes or to see a current list of QWEL gardeners, visit www.qweltraining.com. You can also contact Ali Davidson at 707-547-1933 with questions or to sign up for the English Program or Dan



Kahane at 707-521-6209 for the Spanish Program.

Don't have a gardener? The City of Santa Rosa Water Conservation Program also offers a FREE Residential Water Wise Gardening series. This three-series class is designed for the homeowner, with classes on selecting and planting low water use plants, determining and improving your irrigation system efficiency, and installing and maintaining a drip irrigation system. In 2009, the Water Wise Gardening series will be offered on April 8, April 15, and April 22. Additional information and registration will be available through the 2009 Spring Adventure Guide.

In addition to the QWEL and Water Wise Gardening classes, the Water Conservation Program offers many incentives and rebates for improving indoor and outdoor water use efficiency. For more information on current rebates and incentives or to request assistance in reducing your water use, please contact the Water Conservation Hotline at (707) 543-3985 or visit our website at www.srcity.org/wc.

Did You Know? Laguna Keepers Help Protect the Laguna

The City of Santa Rosa purchased a number of beautiful properties in the Laguna de Santa Rosa as part of the water recycling program. Most of the acreage is used for irrigation and farming, but every property has natural areas that are managed for biodiversity of native plants and animals. Many of the restoration projects implemented on the City of Santa Rosa farms have enjoyed the help of volunteers.

The Laguna Keepers is a volunteer group, co-hosted by the City of Santa Rosa and the Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation. They meet about once a month on Saturday mornings to work on projects in the Laguna. Work days usually include installing native plants along the Laguna channel, in the floodplain or on a tributary creek. Often the

Keepers work on the City of Santa Rosa reclamation farms (Alpha, Brown, Kelly and Stone), but we also include other important habitat areas within the Laguna. The Laguna Keepers planted thousands of native trees, shrubs and grasses as well as helping control weeds and cleaning up older restoration sites.

The folks who come out on these volunteer days are great. The morning always goes by quickly and people leave filled with a real sense of accomplish-

ment, community connection and, of course, good snacks!

Visit the Laguna Foundation website, www.lagunafoundation.org, under the volunteer page for a full Laguna Keepers schedule and details about work days, or call 527-9277 x108 for more information. Individuals, supervised children and groups are welcome. There are always many different tasks; something for all ages, skills and physical condition.



Your Utilities Department at Work for You

Keeping Our Utility Safe

Ensuring that Utility employees work safely and that the public is protected are essential responsibilities of Katy Molnar's position with the Utilities Department. As one of two Safety and Training Coordinators, Katy is part of a small group of three that conduct a wide variety of tasks, from ergonomic evaluations to air quality assessments. Katy started with the Utilities Department in 2006 and gained experience in the field working as an Industrial Hygienist for Chico State University prior to working for the City.

As a Safety and Training Coordinator, Katy works with Utility employees to understand how they perform their daily work and help them resolve any safety concerns. She gives recommendations to employees to help prevent injuries and ensure that

employees are using proper safety procedures. "Working with employees to understand their job and incorporate their recommendations to correct a safety problem provides the City with the security that employees are doing their job safely, protecting themselves and the people in the community."

Katy's day-to-day work varies quite a bit, from testing fume hoods at the Laguna Treatment Plant to providing safety orientation for new employees. To be able to provide this wide range of expertise for so many different types of work, it is vital to keep up-to-date on new safety regulations and requirements. Katy is thankful for the dedicated team that she works with and is proud of the Utilities Department's commitment to safety. "The Utilities Department's dedication to safety



Katy is setting up a noise meter for Javier Fernandez to wear which will monitor the noise levels during his work shift.

insures that employees go home unharmed to their families every night and that the Santa Rosa community is protected."

To learn more about the Utilities safety program, visit the City's website at www.srcity.org/ut or contact the Utilities Department at 707-543-4200.

"IRWP Update" continued from page 1...

emerged: an amended agreement with Calpine, entitled the Geysers Expansion Project (GEP), takes advantage of the untapped Geysers Recharge Project's potential by increasing the delivery of recycled water to the Geysers steamfield from 4 billion gallons (BG) per year to as much as 7.1 BG per year. Calpine, the operator of the steamfield, purchases recycled water from the City of Santa Rosa, and injects it into the ground to produce steam that generates enough "green" power to supply up to 100,000 homes with electricity.

While more storage may be needed in the future, the GEP eliminates the need for additional storage at this time and it allows the City to meet its objective to reuse more recycled water at a much lower cost.

Discharge Compliance Project

The GEP also plays a starring role in the selected Discharge Compliance Project (DCP) alternative. Without GEP, more recycled water would need to be discharged, which may have necessitated a costly discharge relocation to comply with environmental regulations. With GEP, the system is discharging less water during times when compliance

with regulations is especially difficult, thus making continued discharge into the Laguna de Santa Rosa a viable solution. Addition of a diffuser to the Laguna outfall is planned and will allow for more rapid mixing of effluent into, and provide additional protection of, the Laguna.

Additionally, the project team developed a computer model to help make decisions about when and where to store water and when to discharge. Project studies have also proven that the Subregional Water Reuse System's effluent is cleaner than it was thought to be by the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Savings for Ratepayers

The City is able to save millions of dollars by avoiding the need for additional storage and relocation of its discharge. Instead of incurring immediate costs of at least \$160 million for discharge relocation, the selected alternative is expected to cost approximately \$6.5 million over the next few years.

In November 2008, the City of Santa Rosa entered into an agreement with the Town of Windsor to make a small amount of capacity in the Geysers

Recharge Project pipeline to the Town in exchange for an average annual payment of \$1 million from the Town until 2037. The Town will begin delivering recycled water through the pipeline to the steamfield by before mid-2011. While their participation will have very little impact on the project's operations, Windsor's annual \$1 million will reduce net operating costs by more than half, which is a direct benefit to Santa Rosa's ratepayers.

Web Resources

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

Utilities Department:

www.SRCity.org/UT

Recycled Water:

www.SRCity.org/RecycledWater

Water Conservation:

www.SRCity.org/WC

Incremental Recycled Water Program (IRWP):

www.SRCity.org/IRWP

Environmental Projects:

www.SRCity.org/EnvironmentalProjects