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CUSTOMER FOCUS

Union Sanitary District

VOLUME III | AUTUMN | 2007

USD's Latest Awards

- | **CASA Innovation Award**
Statewide recognition of our Safety Program, which has improved our safety record and reduced insurance costs.
- | **Northern California Distinguished Project Award**
for our work to protect Alameda Creek.
- | **Government Finance Officers Association Financial Reporting Award**
for excellence in financial reporting.
- | **NACWA Silver Award**
A national award recognizing consistent permit compliance.



Hayward Marsh: Wetlands From Wastewater

Not far from the rush of commute traffic, Union Sanitary District helps to create a 145-acre haven for migratory birds and other wildlife. The District diverts up to five million gallons of its treated wastewater per day to the Hayward Marsh, which is located just north of Highway 92.

The original marsh was a place where fresh water mixed with Bay tides, creating wetland areas that were home to fish, birds and small mammals. The 1800's brought its destruction with the development of ponds for salt production. Decades later, a partnership between USD, East Bay Regional Parks District and other agencies restored the abandoned ponds, recreating a natural resource that today supports the health of wildlife and the Bay. The marsh is also an educational resource that is visited by students of all ages and nationalities to study the many species of birds

it attracts and to learn how wastewater can be utilized for wetland enhancement.

USD's effluent provides fresh water to the marsh under permit from a national authority, which requires the wastewater to be cleaned to a level that is conducive to the wetland's health. Natural biological processes of the marsh further clean the wastewater before it makes its way to the Bay.



The Hayward Marsh is an important migratory stopover for over 190

species of birds. Up to 25,000 waterfowl have found refuge there yearly in its grasses and bulrushes, and the endangered California Least Tern and threatened Snowy Plover have enjoyed a protective nursery on its wildlife islands. With a little assistance from USD, a sanctuary has emerged to help restore the natural environment of the past.

USD's Labor-Management Partnership

Board of Directors

Pat D. Gacoscos, Chair
Representing Union City

Tom Handley
Representing Fremont

L. Patricia Kite, Vice Chair
Representing Newark

Anjali Lathi
Representing Fremont

Jennifer Toy
Representing Fremont

General Manager

Richard Currie



USD works with doctors, dentists and medical facilities in the Tri-City area to reduce mercury in wastewater. Mercury cannot be completely removed by treatment processes. Keeping mercury and other toxic metals out of San Francisco Bay is an important component of our stewardship of the environment.

If you have questions, please call us at: (510) 477-7500.

Lockouts and walkouts - that's what the public often hears about when unions and utilities negotiate. At USD, the old model of labor and management clashing until one side wins and the other loses doesn't apply. "We have a positive and cooperative relationship," says General Manager Richard Currie. "We collaborate to take actions that are for the betterment of the District as a whole."

This partnership recently resulted in the ratification of a new 5½ year contract. A non-traditional, non-confrontational process called "Interest-based bargaining" was used to reach agreements. "Some great strategies have come out of working jointly to solve problems," says Rich Czapka, SEIU Local 1021 Chapter President. "One very successful example is our exchange of ideas to improve our safety record, which contributed to an award-winning program that we've been asked to share with other agencies."

A joint task force also tackled the issue of

planning for the retirements of key employees. "We created a program to bring replacements in well before retirees left the District," Currie explains. "Many ideas about how to transfer their years of knowledge to their successor came from the union, and our selection panels are always a mix of union and management employees."



USD plans to continue using joint task forces to improve operations and efficiency. "These collaborative groups are constantly coming up with new, cost-saving ideas that are implemented by the District," continues Currie.

"The difference is that we don't have the thought process of "us" and "them," says Czapka. "We have good communication and respect for each other, and these things allow us to discuss concerns and come up with solutions that work for both sides. Knowing that labor and management can sit down, talk about issues and resolve them together makes USD a better place to work."

We've Got What It Takes To Treat 30 Million Gallons Per Day

It takes a lot of things to treat the 30 million gallons of wastewater USD receives every day! Here are some highlights of what we use at our treatment plant during our 24/7 operations:



1,100,000 gallons of water - 97% of which is recycled.

53,000 kilowatt hours of electricity - about 2,120 times what is used in a typical home. We produce 30% of our electricity ourselves, decreasing our daily bill from \$4,745 to \$3,650.

1,200 gallons of chlorine bleach solution to disinfect the treated wastewater. Our bleach is about 2.5 times stronger than Clorox.

764 miles of pipeline to get the wastewater from all the homes and businesses to USD.

450 gallons of polymer chemicals to improve treatment efficiency.

1,500 gallons of Ferrous Chloride - a purplish-brown liquid containing lots of iron - to reduce corrosion and improve treatment.

GETTING READY FOR EMERGENCIES

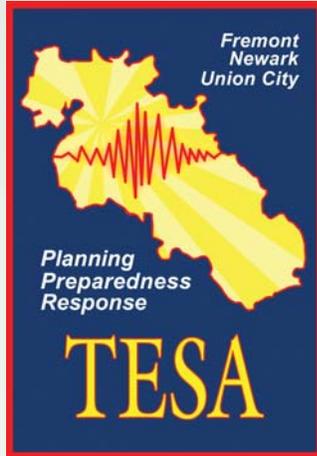
Emergency preparedness is something many people would rather avoid thinking about, but when your mission is to protect public health and the environment, it's a subject that must be addressed. USD has focused intensely in recent years on upgrading its emergency response capabilities in order to ensure the integrity of our systems and to provide assistance to other agencies in the event of a disaster.

"We've purchased equipment that allows us to get to sites faster and repair damage quickly," says Andy Morrison, Collection Services Manager. "We won't have to worry about trying to rent or borrow it if a disaster occurs, and we have the resources here to respond rapidly to problems."

"USD has materials and equipment stored at several sites throughout the District, and our contracts for assistance with public and private agencies increase our reliability," says General Manager Richard Currie.

The District has mutual aid agreements in place with local agencies as part of the Tri-City Emergency Services Association (TESA), along with membership in CalWARN and other

response networks. CalWARN is a network of water and wastewater agencies throughout the state which deploy manpower and equipment to devastated areas. After Hurricane Katrina, Florida's FlaWARN provided quick response to affected areas.



"Training and drills are essential to preparation," says Safety Officer Mike Marzano. "We recently had a crew training to set up a bypass as if there had been a rupture in the street, and we've obtained software that allows us to develop exercises that are customized to our needs. There are also interagency trainings for response network members."

The District improved communication capabilities by purchasing a satellite phone and upgrading radios so that employees won't have to rely on cell phones or land lines in a disaster. USD's wastewater treatment plant in Union City is manned 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and employees who live nearby can be tapped for quick response.

"Preparedness is a never-ending process," says Marzano. "We learn from our everyday maintenance activities and the support we give other agencies in their times of need. It's good to know that our staff is always increasing proficiency in technology and processes that will assist us in an emergency."

WWW.

LEARN More About Us On Our Website!

USD has lots of useful information for residents and businesses posted at www.unionsanitary.com. Click through to find our budget and finance data, sewer safety tips for homeowners, permit and connection fee details, District news, employment opportunities and our latest awards.

Our environmental programs pages show you the many ways we're working in our community to reduce the impact of pollutants on the environment. Tri-City industries that win awards for 100% compliance with our pretreatment standards are highlighted.

Browse around to find out more about us!

USD's Mission:

To safely and responsibly collect and treat wastewater for the Tri-Cities while protecting human health and improving the environment in a way that benefits our customers, employees and the community.

○ SERVICE | ○ WATER QUALITY | ○ ENVIRONMENT

Protecting Our Community and San Francisco Bay

WWW.UNIONSANITARY.COM

Win A Year

Visit our website at
www.unionsanitary.com &
answer a few fun questions to
be eligible to win a year of
FREE service - a \$243 value!!
For residential customers
only

of FREE Sewer Service!

Your Views Are Welcome

Meetings of the
USD Board of Directors
are open to the public

- | Meetings are held on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Boardroom at our Administrative Headquarters.
- | Visit our website for the upcoming agenda: www.unionsanitary.com.
- | Our newsletter can also be found on our website.



Protecting Our Community and San Francisco Bay
5072 Benson Road
Union City, CA 94587-2508

Prsrt Std
U.S. Postage
PAID
Hayward, CA
Permit # 3335

**Win FREE
Sewer Service
For A Year!
Details Inside**

Tips For Helping The Environment

Keep Medicines Out Of The Bay

Prescription medications should never be flushed down the drain! Treatment doesn't remove 100% of all substances from wastewater. Some of your expired or unwanted medications could flow into the Bay where they could harm wildlife.

USD and the Bay Area Pollution Prevention Group will soon offer programs that will let you turn in medications at your pharmacy and mail controlled substances for incineration.



Be on the lookout for ads in local newspapers in early 2008. The fish will thank you! For more information, contact us at (510) 477-7621.

Less Toxic Pest Control

Using pesticides in your yard is not just a health risk for your family and pets - they can also run off into storm drains that lead to San Francisco Bay and harm the environment.

USD partners with several local hardware stores and nurseries to provide information about Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which offers safe alternatives to harmful pesticides. Look for the "Our Water Our World" symbol on products and find more information at these locations:

Navlet's Garden Center
Regan's Nursery
Dale Hardware
Orchard Supply Hardware
(Fremont & Newark)
Warm Springs Ace Hardware
Mission Adobe Nursery

For more information, see
www.ourwaterourworld.com.



Think About Your Sink!

Reducing waste that goes down your drains is the best way to protect your home and the environment. Wastewater treatment can't remove all pollutants, and some food wastes can build up and cause costly overflows even after grinding in a disposal.

Don't put oil, grease or solids such as coffee grounds or eggshells down your drain.



Tri-City residents can drop off used cooking oil free with proof of residency at the Allied Waste Customer Service Center located at 42600 Boyce Road in Fremont. Dispose of solidified grease in the trash.

Questions? Call Allied Waste at (510) 657-3500 or USD at (510) 477-7621.