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What's Happening Now...

Wet Weather



In the fall, staff at CMSA gear up and plan for the rain and how to manage the wet weather flows. On January 21st, we experienced our first significant rain storm of the season, when peak flows exceeded 85 million gallons per day.

When there are such large flows, there are domino-like results throughout the plant and staff carefully monitors these effects. One such effect during the January storm was a large intake of screenings and grit. Over twenty yards of screenings and twenty yards of grit were collected. "Screenings" is the term used for material that

initially makes it into the plant such as rags, plastics, and other debris that can be flushed down a toilet or put down a garbage disposal. Smaller screenings are referred to as "grit." Grit is essentially rock or sand that has made it into the plant and is screened out. Pictured above is a large bin of grit caught during the January storm.

The plan ran very well during the January storm, and staff did a great job making sure that operations ran smoothly and effectively throughout the plant. Pictured, right, are several bins containing collected and screened material. ♦♦♦



Efficient Project Management Practices



Last November, in accordance with provisions of the California Uniform Public Contract Cost Accounting Act (CUPCCAA), the Agency advertised for qualified contractors interested in being listed on the 2012 informal bidders lists. Twenty-three contractors expressed interest, and 22 followed up with required supporting documentation. The 2012 bidders lists are used for informally-bid projects, estimated to cost between \$30k—\$175k. The informal bidding process has a streamlined advertising and bidding procedure using prequalified contractors. Below \$30,000, the Agency may self-perform the work or have it performed based on quotes. Above \$175k, the formal bidding process remains in place. These expanded project delivery options help the Agency efficiently complete routine maintenance work well. ♦♦♦

Safety

CMSA always strives to ensure everyone at CMSA is working in a safe environment. Our safety committee meets monthly to discuss employee safety concerns and to ensure required safety trainings are up to date for all staff. Over the last couple months, we closed out all findings from eight safety work orders generated from the 2011 General Facility and Pump Station inspections. The Treatment Plant Facility safety assessments have just been completed. More safety work orders will be issued to address any additional findings in the future. ♦♦♦

Agencywide Projects & Programs



Aeration Blower Replacement Project: Recently, Western Water Constructors (WWC), the Aeration Blower Replacement Project's prime contractor, requested to substitute APG-Neuros™ (Neuros) high speed blowers for the ones they had originally proposed Turblex™ blowers. The contractor proposed this kind of substitution, and in accordance with those provisions, Agency staff reviewed and concurred with the request. WWC expedited the Neuros technical submittal, which is now under review by the internal Agency project team and Carollo Engineers, the project designers. The quick turnaround in providing the Neuros submittal will help keep the project on track. Sitework for this project is planned to be in late April, and the project is due to be completed in late August. Pictured, left, is a typical APG-Neuros variable speed blower. ♦♦♦

Outfall Diffuser Section Repairs: Every year, CMSA engages a diving contractor to inspect the Marine Outfall's 1,035-foot-long diffuser section, consisting of 176 six-inch diffuser risers with Tide-Flex™ check valves installed on each riser, located about a mile and a half offshore in North San Francisco Bay. This year's inspection, conducted in November, 2011, by Parker Diving Service, indicated that six of the check valve assemblies were missing, and six more were either buried below the mud or missing. (Recreational fishing boats' anchors can become entangled

on the check valves, which sometimes will snap off when anchors are raised.) As is usually the case, the diffusers needing to be raised or replaced are all located near the end of the diffuser section, and typically only operate during wet weather flows of 30MGD or more. The Agency has engaged Parker to perform the diffuser extensions/check valve replacements needed this year. Pictured, right, is a typical TideFlex diffuser. ♦♦♦



Digester Improvements Project



GSE Construction, the project's prime contractor, is continuing to move the Digester Improvements/FOG-F2E project along well. The FOG-F2E Facility's structural concrete pours and backfill have been completed, and the facility is on track to be ready by late summer 2012. Meanwhile, the old gas mixing and biogas scrubbing equipment have been operating well in their new temporary location on the service road behind the Digesters. Demolition in the mixing equipment room has been completed, the pump pads have been constructed, and the

wall penetrations (pictured, above) into the first digester have been core drilled. The new pump mixing system and that digester's membrane cover are scheduled to be operational in the first digester by May 2012. Once that digester is restarted and stabilized with the new mixing and fuel scrubber equipment, the other digester will be cleaned, its floating steel cover and the remaining gas mixing equipment will be demolished, and that digester will be fitted with the pump mixing piping and a membrane cover, as well. Pictured, right, is a FOG-F2E facility underground storage tank. ♦♦♦



RFP out for Professional Auditing Services

The accounting firm of Vavrinek, Trine and Day, LLC has performed the Agency's annual financial audit for the past several years. The recommended practices for State and Local Governments as prescribed by the Governmental Finance Officers Association states that governmental entities should periodically undertake a full-scale competitive process for the selection of an independent auditor. Consistent with this recommendation and guidelines in



the Agency's financial policies, staff will be issuing a Request-For-Proposals (RFP) for Auditing Services to interested certified public accounting firms to audit the Agency's FY 2011-12 financial statements. Once the Agency has received proposals from interested firms, Finance staff will evaluate the qualifications and experience of firms and will bring a recommendation to the Board for auditor selection at the April meeting. ♦♦♦

Finance News

FY 2011-2012 Monthly Budget Performance

As of December 31, 2011, the Agency received 45.6% of budgeted operating revenue and incurred 48.3% of total budgeted operating expenses. The Capital Improvement Program was at 28.6% of budget and incurred an additional \$126.4k in encumbered funds. The Revenue Bond Program was at 95% of budget (\$61.7 million) and included \$5.4 million in contractual obligations associated with the Digester Improvement/FOG Project, Aeration Blower Replacement Project, and other minor capital projects. The remaining budget balance of \$3.5 million represents Revenue Bond funded activities for FY12 through FY13. ♦♦♦

Regional Charge Alternatives Study

During the development of the Agency's FY 11-12 Budget, the Board's Finance Committee explored other alternatives to allocating the Agency's Regional Service Charges (treatment costs) in future years. Since its inception, CMSA has assigned its Regional Service Charges to its Member Agencies, and by extension its ratepayers in the service area, by Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDU). However, due to recent challenges associated with the Agency's ability to independently verify the EDU count in each Member Agency's jurisdiction, the Finance Committee recommended that the Board approve a study to fully explore all viable allocations of the Regional Service Charges that are allowed under the Agency's Joint Powers Agreement.

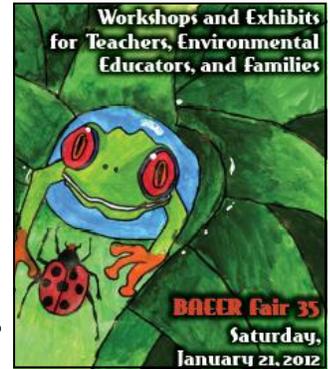
The Agency received four proposals to conduct a Study and in September 2011, the Board selected HDR Engineering to perform the study. HDR developed various methodologies that the Agency could use to allocate the treatment costs to its Member Agencies that is consistent with cost-of-service principles and can be applied equitably among all users. HDR also calculated the impact to each Member Agency under each methodology and analyzed the various pros and cons. The methodologies included:

- EDU (status quo)
- Annual and three-year average wastewater flows to CMSA
- Wastewater flows in conjunction with the strength of the influent
- Flows, strength and concentration with a portion of the allocation based on wet weather peaking factors

The Board reviewed the final report in January and directed staff to draft procedures that would articulate the two flow based allocation methodologies. Also, over the next year, CMSA will periodically sample influent from each collection system to determine their strength. In the coming months, the Finance Committee will review the draft procedures and FY12-13 allocations using the EDU and two flow based methodologies, and the Board will select the allocation method to be used in the development of the Agency's FY 12-13 Budget. ♦♦♦

Environmental Services Updates

Public Outreach: The 35th Annual Bay Area Environmental Education Resource Fair (BAEER Fair) was held in January at the Marin Civic Center. Despite rainy weather, hundreds of teachers from around the Bay Area and Marin County attended the event to discover what environmental resources were available to them for their schools and students. It was great event and we were able to talk to many educators about our public education and outreach program, our school outreach programs, and the “Go With The Flow” environmental education program for Marin County students grades K-3.



Environmental Compliance/Industrial Waste Program: Every year, we sit down to plan the environmental compliance program for the new year and begin educating our dischargers. We have begun the restaurant inspections in San Rafael for the new year and are continuing to work with the industrial dischargers to help them achieve compliance. Also, our dental amalgam inspection program is going extremely well. 100% of the dentists in the CMSA and LGVSD service areas have installed amalgam separators. We are completing the first annual inspections. By partnering with the Marin County Dental Society and providing all the dental offices with our inspection forms and information we will need before our inspections, the overall dental inspection program has been a success.

NPDES Testing: CMSA’s lab testing has been in compliance with NPDES permit requirements, with 100% survival in all our bioassay.◆◆

Retirements and New Employees in Operations

The Agency’s Operations Department recently saw two of its longtime operators, Tom Asdell and Linda Bodwin, retire. In order to prepare for their retirements, the Agency initiated in late 2011 a recruitment for Operators-In-Training (OIT). Over 450 applications were received. Of those applicants, 20 were selected for interviews and then eight were called back for second interviews. Offers of employment were then presented to three individuals:



Nick Gaunt, left, was previously an OIT at the City of Brentwood and is currently enrolled at the Tri-Valley Regional Occupational Program for Waste Pollution Control. Nick says, “My experience at CMSA has been excellent. The through training and leadership shown on a daily basis has been inspiring, and encouraging, and I truly enjoy being at CMSA and look forward to a long and fulfilling career.”

Ben Northcroft, right, previously worked as a Collection System Operator with the Novato Sanitary District before becoming an OIT at CMSA. Ben states that “the skills and knowledge of my fellow co-workers is outstanding and the learning curve so far has been short due to the trainer’s ability to convey information in a manner that is easily understood.” He says he is looking forward to continuing his training as an operator at CMSA.



Matt Weekley, left, came to CMSA in early 2011 to intern in Operations and Maintenance. He felt lucky that staff took time to speak with him about a career as an operator. After his internship and through the recruitment process, Matt was hired as an OIT. He says, “It has been a wonderful experience. Every day I am handed a wealth of knowledge from my fellow operators and supervisors and I am having a great time learning. I am confident that being an operator is going to turn into a great career.” ◆◆

Strategic Business Plan Update...

The Agency Strategic Planning Committee (ASPC) held monthly meetings in December and January to map out employee involvement, resource requirements, and timeframes associated with the implementation of the Strategic Business Plan over the next five years. In December, ASPC members discussed what outcomes the Agency wanted to see implemented and concluded that the SBP is not a series of tasks and assignments, but rather a process to change the Agency’s culture by involving as many employees as possible. In January, the ASPC discussed the responsibilities of each employee involved in SBP implementation. Each ASPC member has continued with the task of 1) identifying lead staff for tasks associated with Strategic Actions; 2) identifying resource requirements for Strategic Action implementation; 3) determining the importance of each Strategic Action and the level of effort required for its implementation; and 4) determining the priority of each strategic action based on when the activity should take place and the length of time involved for implementation.

A presentation of the SBP will be made to all employees in February, to provide an overview of the SBP and to discuss implementation and expectations.◆◆

