



## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

March 2010

### ADMINISTRATION

#### Personnel



Long time CMSA employee Louis "Lou" Breuer retired on March 30th. Lou began his career with the Agency when the plant came on-line on January 1, 1985, and advanced to his current position of Maintenance Repair Worker III in 1990. There will be no lazy days ahead for Lou though; he plans on raising organic beef and sheep on the family farm in Penngrove.

Kit Groves, CMSA's Electrical and Instrumentation Supervisor, attended a training on "Cyber Security for Industrial Control Systems." This class was sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security and focused on pointing out possible process control system attacks (computers that run and monitor our facility). The second half of the class focused on methods to monitor and secure our systems.

#### Safety Director Recruitment

CMSA shares a safety director with Novato Sanitary District, Sausalito Marin City Sanitary District, and the Sewage Agency of Souther Marin, with CMSA being the host agency or employer for the position. The recruitment for the a safety director is under way and the application deadline is April 5<sup>th</sup>. As of the end of March, we have received over

30 applications for this highly specialized position. We anticipate having a new director hired by the early summer.

#### Safety

In March, Du-All Safety conducted a regulatory workshop at CMSA. This class was for managers, supervisors and in-house safety committee members. The presentation was a broad overview of the regulatory compliance issues that organizations such as ours face on a daily basis. This is part of Du-All's comprehensive safety contract to ensure our training and safety practices meet OSHA requirements for a safe workplace.

#### Monthly Budget Performance

As of February 28, 2010 the Agency received 74% of budgeted operating revenue and incurred 65% of total budgeted operating expenses. Asset Management activities under the Capital Improvement Program were at 49% of budget. The Revenue Bond Program was at 83% of budget (\$68.3 million) and included \$1.5 million in contractual obligations associated with executed WWIP contracts and change orders and \$646,000 in contractual obligations for other Revenue Bond projects.

#### FY 2010-2011 Budget

Key staff members are meeting weekly to update the Agency's 10-Year Capital Improvement Plan for Capital and Asset Management projects. During the first meeting they reviewed the status of FY 10 projects, year to date expenditures, and activities that need to be initiated or completed by year-end. The second meeting

will focus on the development of the FY 11 Budget for Asset Management projects. The remaining meetings for April will be geared towards developing the 10-year Capital Improvement schedule through FY 2020.

The Finance Analyst has been developing the FY 11 Budget for salary, benefits and insurance.

#### Draft Personnel Policies for Non-represented Employees

The Finance Manager has been drafting new Personnel Policies related to 1) the eligibility and administration of the MARA and 2) administration and coordination of post-employment health benefit coverage with CalPERS. The draft policies will be presented to the CMSA Board for review and adoption in April.

#### California Employers' Retiree Benefit Trust (CERBT)

CalPERS has accepted the Agency's agreement and election to prefund other post employment benefits (OPEB) through the establishment of a CERBT fund, an irrevocable trust that employers use to set aside funds to meet retiree health benefit obligations. Money in the trust is managed and administered by CalPERS. Prior to June 30<sup>th</sup>, the Agency plans to deposit funds previously received for SRSD employees who transferred from the Marin County Employees' Retirement Association system. This initial deposit is expected to satisfy FY 10 compliance with the GASB Statement 45, with the result that there will be no unfunded liability to report for OPEB on the FY 10 Financial Statements.

**Training**

Several managers went to the Liebert Cassidy Whitmore training on Personnel Issues. The training focused on implementing fair hiring practices, safeguarding confidential personnel information, and giving and receiving reference checks while recognizing employee privacy rights.

Finance staff attended a forum by Public Financial Management Group on investments, debt issuance and management, and CalPERS pension shortfall and actuarial modeling.

**Upgrade to Financial System**

The Finance Department has begun an assessment to upgrade to the Open Systems latest release. The rep will prepare a proposal to include all hardware and software requirements, customized programming and an assessment of Agency staff time required to support the technical implementation.

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**PROJECTS**


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**Wet Weather Improvement****Project**

Western Water Constructors has nearly finished the project's construction work, is focusing on completing the final punch list items, and has started demobilizing equipment and storage facilities. The project work will be completed by mid-April, and we anticipate bringing the project acceptance recommendation to the May Board meeting. Change orders are at about 3.7% of the construction contract amount, and we expect not to use all of the budgeted change order funds.

The deck reconfiguration at the top of the new Primary Clarifier ramp (to permit better access for the Agency's maintenance carts) has been completed. Remaining paving and slurry sealing in the Corporation Yard and Maintenance

Yard are scheduled for early April, weather permitting. Gardeners' Guild is performing landscaping touch-up work not included in the original contract. Having them perform the work separately saves the subcontractor markup in the WWIP contract.

A combined WWIP dedication ceremony and 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration is being planned for mid- to late July. Staff will bring the revised planning document and draft invitation letter to the Board in April for review.

**Outfall Crack Investigation**

As noted last month, the inspection was carried out in mid-February and no external cracking was found, which is great news. The site paving and landscaping around the investigation area, by the San Rafael Bay Trail, have been completely restored. This project is now completed.

**Capital Master Planning**

Staff developed the Request for Proposals in January, and sent it to over a dozen environmental engineering firms. Proposals were received, evaluated and scored by the project team, and Kennedy/Jenks (K/J) was selected as the most qualified firm based on their approach and scope, proposal content and quality, and estimated project fee. The project involves preparing a revised 10-year capital improvement program, developing solution alternatives to wastewater blending, and performing a high level seismic vulnerability analysis.

The project team is currently reviewing the contract's draft scope of work, project and task schedule, and fee schedule, and will work with K/J to finalize these documents in early April. We anticipate bringing the professional services agreement to the Board in April, and if approved, completing the project

work in the fall 2010.

**Digester/FOG/F2E**

Design is underway on the project, with the project team periodically meeting with K/J to evaluate various equipment, process, instrumentation, and interconnection alternatives, then to decide on which to select and integrate into the project design.

The team initially selected fixed digester covers during the predesign phase of work, but recently learned that the fixed covers will require additional structural support systems and a biogas storage system which significantly increase the cost of that cover option. In collaboration with K/J, the team evaluated other cover options and ultimately selected a flexible multi-layer membrane cover, similar to covers installed at the EBMUD, Richmond, and SFPUC facilities. This option is more economical than the fixed cover option, and does not require a separate gas storage system or modification to our cogeneration system operations.

**Headworks Screen Replacement**

The screens are working well and remove quite a bit more material than the original screens, preventing that material from entering downstream processes and equipment. Most of the construction punch list items and identified system improvements have been made, and record drawings have been finalized.

Western Water completed installation of explosion-proof flexible conduits. They also installed additional spray bars at the back side of the screens and relocated the #3 water header arrangement, from inside the washer compactor to the outside. These measures are expected to reduce the build up of solids inside the washer compactor.

With the ongoing intermittent wet weather, solids loading during high flows has decreased, so the team is planning a solids load test in the near future to assess expected performance at the beginning of next year's wet weather season.

### **Biotower Arm Replacement**



The new biotower equipment from Case-Cotter has been received. The Case-Cotter factory assembled the new stationary base, Agency-supplied replacement bearing, new turntable, and the first tier of the rotating tower. The contractor field-assembled the rest of the rotating tower together with the four biotower arms, and lifted the assembly 40-feet up to the top of the biotower.

The manufacturer's representative, Kearby Cotter, came onsite and provided equipment start-up assistance. He checked the equipment alignment and the rotation speed and found it appeared to perform well. Testing should be completed by April 7, and the project will be ready for Board acceptance at their May meeting.

### **Administration Building Expansion Project**

The project design is moving forward, and Kappe+Du, the project architects, have completed floorplans for the women's locker room, Environmental Services (ES) staff offices, and relocated bioassay and ES storage areas. The project will include a major overhaul of the Heating, Ventilation

and Air Conditioning (HVAC) system, both to accommodate the remodeled areas and to replace existing equipment that is outdated and beyond its service life, together with some minor electrical upgrades in the remodeled areas.

The Agency team, including women's locker room users and the ES staff, are now working with Kappe+Du to develop the final finish/furniture schedule for the remodeled areas. Once this is completed, and depending on the San Rafael's plan check comments, this project is scheduled to bid in the summer, with construction to begin after the Board awards it.

### **Operations**

Spring has sprung and so have we! Operations is preparing the treatment works for summer time operations. Operations is working closely with the maintenance department to line up preventive maintenance scheduling of equipment that will be coming down for the season, and is preparing remote odor and corrosion control chemical facilities for spring time start-up. Staff is also preparing treatment equipment for summer time use and wondering what to do with all the room now available to us with the WWIP project contractor moving their equipment off-site!

### **Maintenance Projects**

The Maintenance corporation yard saw some hard use over the past couple of years. It was used by the WWIP contractor as a storage area for parts, tools, heavy equipment, and project materials, and was home to the Ross Valley Sanitary District for three years. Staff is preparing the corporation yard for a new face lift (resurfacing). Specifically, ensuring that all utility boxes, underground piping, and electrical

conduits are in working order prior to the work getting done.

Maintenance is rebuilding the digester's waste gas burner with stainless steel parts and installing a reliable ignition system. The burner is used to burn off methane gas from the anaerobic digesters when the co-generation system or plant boilers are not available.

As part of our annual preventive maintenance/fire prevention of the Andersen hillside, (the property just beyond our fence line on Andersen Drive) the Marin Conservation Corps (MCC) has been removing invasive Scotchbroom and Pampas Grass.

Arborists from Urban Forest came through this month and treated our oaks for sudden oak death syndrome (SODS). We cut and cleared 28 trees that either identified as SODS stricken or dead. Staff annually reviews the state of our oak tree population along with the seven or eight other on-site tree species.

The Electrical shop installed a Human Machine Interface, a device which translates direction into a language that computers understand, and a telephone in the new Effluent Pump Station. These additions will allow quick responses from operations staff members in the pump station area and allow for better monitoring of the treatment works while working in this area.

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## **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

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### **NPDES Testing**

The CMSA lab testing was in compliance with permit requirements, with 100% survival in our March bioassay.

### **Public Outreach Activities**

The Wastewater Treatment Agencies of Marin County won the California Water Environment Association (CWEA) Large Budget Statewide Public Education Program of the Year Award. It is very prestigious to be competing against large organizations like Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, and other large public education programs in Northern California. Our innovative county-wide program won the statewide award and we will be honored at the CWEA State Conference in Sacramento on April 23. Robert Cole will receive a certificate for runner-up for the Statewide Public Education Person of the Year at the Awards Luncheon.

Word is out that our remodel is almost complete and local high schools are again requesting tours. Thirty science students from Marin Academy toured on March 9, and Marin Catholic had 62 students tour the plant on March 26. Marin Academy wanted to focus on laboratory methods used to test wastewater, and Marin Catholic had a lecture about wastewater treatment and an overall plant tour about where wastewater goes when they flush the toilet.

March was Poison Control Month and the Wastewater Treatment Agencies of Marin County and the Marin County Pharmacists Association exchanged mercury thermometers for digital ones at five local pharmacies. The final numbers are not in, but we expect to have exchanged around 300 thermometers!

### **Environmental Compliance**

We have begun our annual carwash inspections at auto service facilities that wash cars and individual car wash operations in our service area.

There are chemicals used at auto facilities, body shops, and car dealerships that pose a concern if discharged to the sanitary sewers. Staff will inspect each facility to ensure hazardous chemicals are stored properly and that they are not discharging inappropriate materials to the drains or storm drains. Staff will collect samples to ensure each facilities' washwater treatment systems are being maintained properly and the water they discharge meets our acceptance limits.

### **Mercury Reduction Program**

In order to maintain our excellent public outreach to dentists in our service area, we held an amalgam separator fair at the Community Room at the Town Center in Corte Madera on March 24. It was one-stop shopping for dental professionals to go to one place and see all of the available amalgam separators, installation options, and options for easy disposal of the waste that is generated. Many dentists were able to quickly determine which system would work best for their practice and needs.

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## **CONTRACT/OUTSIDE SERVICES**

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### **SRSD**

Staff has recently completed a review of the FOG pumped permit database and will begin inspections at the restaurants that have haulers pump their traps and interceptors. Staff will inspect each trap and interceptor to determine if pumping frequency needs to be increased based on its condition. Increased inspections will occur if the trap appears to have more FOG accumulated than expected.

### **LGVSD**

Inspections at restaurants with self-clean permits, where they clean their own traps, were

completed this month. Two restaurants have installed traps and are being issued new permits. Staff is following up on the last two restaurants currently in the installation process.

### **RVSD**

Overall FOG program awareness at the RVSD restaurants is excellent, as environmental services staff have completed the self-clean inspections and all restaurants were in compliance.

Staff continues to work with the last four restaurants that were granted installation extensions in April 2009, but have not installed their required traps. They have all contacted plumbers and are in the installation process.

### **Tamalpais Community Services District**

Draft trap installation letters have been submitted and reviewed, and will be mailed out in April to the six restaurants in the TCSD service area, pending minor changes to the district's Sewer Use Ordinance. Restaurants will have three months for plumbing plan approval and an additional three months to install their traps.

### **SD#2**

Maintenance completed regular checks and routine preventive maintenance for the district's 19 pump stations in March.

Lakeside pump station had a failure of its wetwell's ultrasonic transducer, which is a measuring instrument that tells the pumps to turn on and off based on water level. Staff replaced the instrument and made other improvements, so staff wouldn't have to enter the confined space in the future.