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What's Happening Now...



Strategic Business Planning

In September, the CMSA Board adopted the Agency's second five-year Strategic Business Plan (SBP), 2011-2016. The adoption of the SBP reflects ten months of melding invaluable contributions from an array of stakeholders, including the Board, representatives from Member Agencies, other sanitary districts, Agency regulators, the Agency Strategic Planning Committee, and other former and current employees of CMSA.

With the Plan finalized and in hand, the Agency now looks forward to embarking on an ambitious five year schedule to implement the identified Strategic Actions in order to fulfill the Plan's Goals and Objectives. Over the next few weeks, the Executive Team will be identifying staff coordinators to implement the strategic objectives and actions in the Strategic Business Plan. ♦♦♦

Awards!



It has been an exciting couple of months at the Central Marin Sanitation Agency. The National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) recognized the treatment facility performance and compliance with NPDES permit requirements through their Peak Performance Award Program. In 2010, the Agency did not have any NPDES permit exceedances and complied with all provisions in our permit. NACWA awarded CMSA the 6-year Platinum Peak Performance Award in August, 2011. Now, CMSA is only about three months away from achieving full permit compliance for our seventh consecutive year! ♦♦♦

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) awarded the Agency their Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its FY 2009-2010 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). This the 9th year the Agency has received recognition from GFOA. The Agency was also awarded its first Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial reporting for its FY 2010 Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR), which is meant to be an easily understandable financial document for those without a background in public finance. ♦♦♦



Agencywide Projects & Programs

Solar-powered Remote Radio Repeater The new solar-powered radio repeater, *pictured right*, will relay telemetry signals from various pump stations “over the hill” from the CMSA Treatment Plant. Radio communication is more reliable than the old copper-wired telephone equipment. The radio repeater station was designed, built, and installed by CMSA staff. Besides being solar-powered, the base has a pivot (like a flagpole), which allows the antenna and solar cell array to be serviced from the ground, which is both more convenient and safer. The Agency has nominated the team who designed and built this installation for the California Water Environment Association’s (CWEA) annual “Gimmicks and Gadgets” Award. ♦♦♦



FOG/Food to Energy(F2E)

Facility: The FOG Facility is a key element of the Digester Improvements Project, and will allow the Agency to receive FOG pumped out of restaurant kitchens’ grease traps and food waste from restaurants. Both are ready sources of energy that are wasted when FOG is disposed of at landfills. Instead, the FOG Facility will allow the material to be transformed into gas in the anaerobic digesters, and the resulting increased gas production will allow the Agency’s cogeneration engine to run more hours per day on renewable digester gas rather than natural gas. The demolition of the first digester is complete, and the next step is temporarily relocating the gas mixing compressors and old hydrogen sulfide filters for the remaining digester

is complete, and the next step is temporarily relocating the gas mixing compressors and old hydrogen sulfide filters for the remaining digester so that the rest of the old equipment can be demolished and the new mixing equipment installed. *Pictured, above left, are workers pouring the facility’s base slab.* ♦♦♦

Aeration Blower Replacement Project: This project will replace two of the four original single stage centrifugal blowers with two energy-efficient variable-speed turbine blowers, which reduce energy consumption and reduce power costs. The Agency received and opened nine sealed bids in late August and the construction contract has been awarded to Western Water Constructors, the low bidder, for the lump-sum price of \$467,338. Staff are scheduling the pre-construction meeting with Western Water in mid-October, and will issue the Notice-to-Proceed at the meeting. Construction is planned to take 300 calendar days from the Notice to Proceed. *Pictured, right, are original aeration blowers.* ♦♦♦



SBS Polishing System:

Operations and Maintenance have finished performance testing the Sodium Bisulfite polishing system. The intent of this system is two fold: primarily, eliminate potential chlorine violations by monitoring for chlorine residual downstream of the primary Sodium Bisulfite Solution (SBS) dosing location, and if necessary, apply a calculated SBS polishing dose to ensure water heading into our Bay is chlorine free. Secondly, with the new System, staff can lower the initial SBS dose to a level that just satisfies the demand for dechlorination, thus reducing the amount of SBS used at CMSA. In the event an analyzer detects a chlorine residual, the System will pump additional SBS solution to ensure chlorine-free water. *Pictured, right, is Operator Alan Burleigh checking the SBS Polishing System.* ♦♦♦



Agency Policy Update

As part of its culture of continuous improvement, CMSA updated its Smoking Policy, to clarify the areas where smoking is allowed. By designating smoking areas, the Agency hopes to ensure protection of the health and safety of CMSA's employees and of the public. The Smoking Policy was approved at the September Board meeting. ♦♦♦

Digester Improvements Project

The Digester Improvements Project is in full swing, and progressing well. Take a look at the Project's progression:



Pictured, *left*, is the Secondary Digester after purging was completed, and before demolition began. At the time, all equipment was still in place, including the large yellow gas pipes and the stainless steel vertical cover guides around the wall. ♦♦♦ Pictured, *right*, is the cover with demolition underway. Since the cover



floated, there were no internal supports. Due to weight, the cover was removed in pieces, and the "pie slice" pattern kept the cover balanced during demolition, eliminating the need to install temporary internal supports. Pictured, *lower right*, the cover is now entirely demolished and all equipment removed. When the digester was purged, the lower edge of the cover's skirt rested on the 20 concrete pilasters around the digester wall. The lower copper-colored stain is from ferric chloride which is added to the digesters to control production of hydrogen sulfide, a corrosive byproduct of the anaerobic bacteria that digest the sludge. ♦♦♦



Finance News

The CMSA Budget: The Agency ended FY 2010-11 with an operating surplus of around \$1.16 million when compared to an expected surplus of \$910,000 at the time the FY 11 budget was adopted. The source of the additional surplus was that the Agency achieved a 5.3% savings in operating expenses while at the same time experiencing a 2.4% shortfall in operating revenues.

Financial Audit FY 2010-2011: The Agency's independent auditors, Vavrinek, Trine & Day & Co. (VTD) were on site in August to audit the Agency's financial statements for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011. VTD focused on the Agency's adherence to its financial policies and procedures. The audit findings from both the internal control audit and financial audit will be presented to the Agency in October and to the CMSA Board in November 2011. ♦♦♦

Comparison of Final FY11 Budget to Adopted Budget

Revenues: Sewer Service Charges were 2.5% less than budgeted. The total number of EDU reported by the JPA members for FY 10-11 was 1,110 less than the budgeted figure, resulting in a revenue shortfall of under \$183,000. ♦ Interest income was at 54.9% of budget. The budget was predicated on earning 1% interest on Agency cash. Actual interest rate earned was around 0.5%.

Expenditures: The Agency retired \$1.805M in outstanding debt from the 2006 Revenue Bonds. ♦ Chemical expenditures were at 81.2% of budget. Projected Unit price adjustments on chemicals were less than budgeted. ♦ Insurance was at 82.1% of budget. Savings were the result of lower costs for workers compensation insurance and the application of CSRMA program dividends to offset expenses. ♦ Asset Management Program expenses were at 82% of budget. ♦ Total expenditures financed by Revenue Bonds were at \$2.83M. This included \$276k for salary/benefits, \$1.08M for Admin Building project, \$125k for development of the Capital Master Plan, \$417k for design/plan on the Digester Improvements/FOG Facility Project and \$748k of AM expenditures. ♦♦♦

News From Environmental Services

Public Outreach: The first annual EcoFair Marin took place on Sunday, September 4, over Labor Day weekend.

The EcoFair was the first county-wide event focusing on a healthy and sustainable Marin. It was well attended and the public education booth was very popular. Over 260 environmental quizzes were distributed to the public and staff spoke with many members of the community on a variety of topics centered around wastewater treatment.

Pollution Prevention Week 2011 was September 18-24 and the public education booth was set up at local Farmers' Markets. The San Rafael Thursday night Farmers' Market was very busy, with great warm weather. Over 120 quizzes were distributed.

Laboratory Activities: We are awaiting our last set of Laboratory Certification samples that are analyzed in order to maintain our laboratory certification. We have done extremely well with all of the sample results we have received so far being within the acceptance limits. Every year we analyze the unknown samples and submit the results to an unbiased certification provider. Results we submit must be within a narrow margin for acceptance. The results are then

reported to the State Health Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program, the EPA, and State Water Board for all of our testing requirements for our NPDES permit to ensure the excellent performance of laboratory.

Environmental Compliance/Industrial Waste Program: The annual inspections for auto facilities that discharge wash water to sewers are complete. We have also completed the annual dry cleaner inspections for those dry cleaning operations that still

use tetrachloroethylene, which is a hazardous but effective chlorinated solvent. In July 2010, any dry cleaning machine greater than 15 years old was required to be taken out of service. There are only five cleaners in our service area using that solvent, and every year there will be fewer, as they begin to utilize water-based solvent machines.

NPDES Testing: The CMSA lab testing was in compliance with permit requirements, with 100% fish survival in all recent bioassays.

Outside/Contract Services: We have completed the annual pumping permit inspections for restaurants that have licensed pumping companies cleaning their interceptors. No Notice of Violations (NOVs) were issued this year—which is a great sign that the monthly reminders we send them asking them to submit their pumping receipts is an effective way of making sure the cleanings are occurring.

The final round of grease trap self-clean inspections is under way. This is the third inspection of the year. ♦♦♦



Safety Matters...



CMSA's proactive safety committee team is always on the job. This team meets monthly to discuss safety issues and concerns, review safety programs, and prioritize safety-related work orders. Maintenance staff recently put the final touches on a handrail system that leads up to the plant's Waste Gas Burners. This handrail system was the final work order to be completed, to close out last year's plant safety inspection. Staff generated 67 safety recommendations from this inspection, prioritized them, and then generated work orders to complete the necessary safety corrections.

Pictured: Maintenance Worker Steve Schoenstein works on the handrail system.

