

# Contra Costa Special Districts Association Newsletter

Contra Costa Chapter of the California Special Districts Association

Summer 2012

June 2012

## Joint Chemical Bids Save Money for Water and Wastewater Agencies

More than 30 water and wastewater agencies from seven Bay Area counties are saving money on chemical purchases through a bidding consortium spearheaded by Dublin San Ramon Services District (DSRSD). The Bay Area Chemical Consortium (BACC) is an informal cooperative that advertises and opens sealed competitive bids and then prepares bid recommendations. Once bids are opened, participants enter into their own contracts with the lowest responsive bidder.

DSRSD took the lead in forming the consortium and currently handles all of the administrative tasks associated with compiling, soliciting, and opening bids. Bidding is done each spring in order to produce bid recommendations before the start of the next fiscal year.

Current BACC participants include nine members of the Contra Costa Chapter of the California Special Districts Association as well as three cities in Contra Costa County. BACC accepts new members at any time, although bidding for fiscal year 2012-2013 is already underway. For more information and contacts, visit the BACC page at [www.drsrd.com](http://www.drsrd.com)

In 2011 BACC solicited bids for sodium hypochlorite, ferric/ferrous chloride, caustic soda, and polymers. In 2012 the consortium added bidding for alum, anhydrous and aqueous ammonia, citric acid, hydrofluorosilicic acid, powdered activated carbon, and sodium bisulfate.

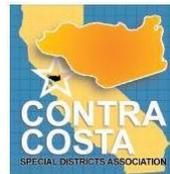


## CCWD Los Vaqueros Reservoir Ceremony & Open House

The Contra Costa Water District Los Vaqueros Reservoir is planning a dedication ceremony on July 13<sup>th</sup> and a public open house on July 14<sup>th</sup> to commemorate the reopening of the newly completed dam project. The Los Vaqueros Interpretive Center has been updated, and will reopen on Saturday, July 14<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m. with programs all day long. Look for additional announcements on the districts website: <http://www.ccwater.com>

## CCSDA and CSDA Membership

In Contra Costa County there are potentially 49 special districts that could belong to the Contra Costa Special Districts Association (CCSDA). We have 34 active districts in our chapter. More than 60% of our member districts are also California Special District Association (CSDA) members.



California Special Districts Association  
*Districts Stronger Together*

## Is CCSDA Getting Your District News and Press Releases?



Contra Costa Special Districts Association (CCSDA) wants to know what is happening at your district. News of our local districts is of interest to us all. Please send us your news stories! Anytime your special district sends out a news release to the public or to the media please send a copy to CCSDA!

Send your district news releases to Stan Caldwell at [stan\\_caldwell@comcast.net](mailto:stan_caldwell@comcast.net) and keep us informed on all of the exciting things going on in your special district.

## Central San Wins Two Safety Awards

The Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (Central San) won two Awards for its Safety Program from the California Water Environment Association (CWEA) and from the Water Environment Foundation (WEF). Both awards were announced at CWEA's Annual Conference in Sacramento in April.

Central San won the 2011 CWEA Large Plant Safety Award for its comprehensive safety training program that encompasses elements from communications to staff training; from its overall safety record to promotion of a Safety Culture throughout the organization.

Central San won the WEF's Annual George W. Burke, Jr. Award that recognizes a wastewater facility for maintaining an active and effective safety program and an outstanding safety record for the year. The purpose of the award is to encourage an active and effective safety program in municipal and industrial wastewater treatment facilities.

## ILG Special Districts Panel Members Selected

The Institute for Local Government (ILG) is the research and education affiliate of the California State Association of Counties and the League of California Cities.

ILG has worked closely with the League of California Cities and California State Association of Counties (CSAC). ILG was hoping to get additional input and involvement from special districts. ILG stated "Our thinking is that this would add to our understanding of the needs of a much wider range of local officials and perhaps suggest how our present and future publications and resources could also serve special districts. Of course, in addition, this could add to the panel of advisors' and to the Institute's awareness and knowledge of special district roles and responsibilities."

The Institute for Local Government promotes good government at the local level with practical, impartial, and easy-to-use resources for California communities.

Stanley Caldwell from Mt. View Sanitary District was chosen to be an ILG panel member for 2012.

## Ironhouse Sanitary District's Saving Ways Earn Rebate

Ironhouse Sanitary District has received over \$280,000 in rebates for its energy-efficient water recycling plant. Pacific Gas & Electric Co. presented agency officials with a cashier's check for \$280,199 at a recent board meeting.

Those designing the facility worked with PG&E engineers to build a facility that is projected to save 2.74 million kilowatt-hours per year, the amount of electricity that 424 homes would use during that period.

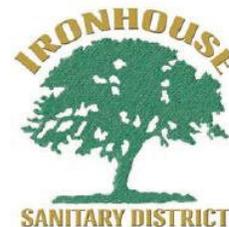
Some of the energy Ironhouse Sanitary is saving is because of the 200 and 300 horsepower turbo blowers used to provide air during the sewage treatment process.

The special district has been considering using solar panels to help slash its energy costs in half each year. Ironhouse Sanitary held two forums to solicit the public's opinion on harnessing sunlight -- a free and renewable source of energy -- to produce electricity.

The overall goal would be to protect ratepayers as much as possible from future PG&E increases, said district General Manager Tom Williams.

Workshop discussions were held to explore the cost-effectiveness of adding solar panels and how long it would take to install the low-maintenance technology as well as the disadvantages and payback costs associated with a solar project.

Adding 1 megawatt of solar panels could save the district approximately \$25,000 per month on its energy bill.



## District Muscles Up on Green Power

The agency that delivers water to 1.3 million customers in Contra Costa and Alameda counties, the East Bay Municipal Utility District, also performs other services, such as treating wastewater and generating electricity from waste.

The agency collects discarded food and other waste – some of it too gross to describe for a family online newspaper – at its main wastewater treatment plant near the eastern end of the Bay Bridge. The muck is tossed into a digester and spews a tremendous volume of methane, which in turn can power electricity-generating machines.

The district had been using three conventional engines – each about the size of a car – that run on the methane to make electricity and lower its greenhouse-gas footprint, but there' was a big surplus, the district recently began using "a state-of-the-art turbine" that will nearly double the plant's generating capacity.

"It's basically a jet engine," Alice Towey, an associate engineer with the agency said. "It's just a lot more efficient." The turbine is more compact, able to fit in the bed of a truck, and has a 5.6-megawatt capacity, compared with the existing three engines whose combined capacity is 6.3 megawatts, she said.

"The nature of the wastewater treatment plant as we know it has evolved," said agency spokesman Charles Hardy. "That's why we call it the 'green factory.' Instead of a place where we get rid of something, it's a place where we produce something."

The state-of-the-art turbine nearly doubles the utility's capacity to produce clean energy from waste previously thought to be too gross, too toxic and too difficult to manage. Now, communities across the nation are following EBMUD's lead and developing similar programs to convert wastes into renewable energy.

"We've turned wastes into commodities. The same materials that once no one wanted to touch, now have become so valuable everyone wants them," said EBMUD Director of Wastewater David Williams.

In the past, the wastewater treatment industry focused exclusively on treating and disposing of sewage. No wastewater utility wanted to treat organic wastes, like fats, oils and grease, food

scraps, or dairy and animal farm wastes. Even though they could be detrimental to the environment, with nowhere to put them, these waste streams were left to decay in landfills or pollute groundwater.

## Special Districts LAFCO Representative



**On April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2012 Mike McGill, Contra Costa Central Sanitary District board member, and current Special Districts LAFCO member was re-elected to serve another term on Contra Costa County LAFCO.**

On Friday, May 4th in Marysville (Yuba County) Mike was also appointed to the CALAFCO Board of Directors. CALAFCO serves as an organization dedicated to assisting member LAFCOs with educational and technical resources that otherwise would not be available. The Association provides statewide coordination of LAFCO activities, serves as a resource to the Legislature and other bodies, and offers a structure for sharing information among the various LAFCO's and other governmental agencies.

"I am honored to have the privilege to serve on LAFCO on behalf of the Independent Special Districts and I thank everyone for their support" said Mike McGill.

## LAFCO Public Member Selected



Contra Costa County LAFCO has selected new Public Member and Alternate Public Member.

Don Blubaugh, the former executive director of the Contra Costa Mayors Conference and the former city manager of Walnut Creek, Martinez and Orinda, was unanimously selected to fill the open public member seat, the term is four years. Sharon Burke was named the Alternate member.

## Fire Chief Named Citizen of the Year



**San Ramon Valley  
Fire Chief Richard  
Price**

At a community event hosted by the Danville Area Chamber of Commerce, the San Ramon Valley Times presented Fire Chief Richard Price as "Citizen of the Year." San Ramon Valley Fire Chief Richard Price was honored as citizen of the year for his commitment to public service and citizen-helping-citizen outreach with the PulsePoint foundation and CPR app.

### About the PulsePoint Foundation

PulsePoint is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit foundation based in the San Francisco Bay Area whose goal is to make it much easier for citizens who are trained in CPR to use their life saving skills to do just that... save lives! Through the use of modern, location-aware mobile devices PulsePoint is building applications that work with local Fire Departments, EMS agencies, and Police Departments to improve communications with citizens and empower them to reduce worldwide sudden cardiac arrest deaths. For more information visit <http://pulsepoint.org>

### Town of Discovery Bay Appoints new Director

The town of Discovery Bay Community Services District has appointed James Mattison to fill the vacancy with the resignation of former director Brian Dawson. Director Mattison was sworn in on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012 and will hold the office until the next general election scheduled for November 6, 2012.



## PulsePoint App nominated for International Webby Award



**PulsePoint is one of only five mobile apps worldwide honored by nomination.**

The International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences has nominated the lifesaving PulsePoint App for their prestigious Best Use of GPS or Location Technology award.

The "Webby" award nominations were announced on Tuesday, April 10, 2012 in New York City.

"PulsePoint is an innovative location-aware mobile application that empowers everyday citizens to provide life-saving assistance to victims of Sudden Cardiac Arrest," said Richard Price, President of the PulsePoint Foundation. "We are very excited by the prospect of receiving the Internet's most respected symbol of success. We are equally proud of our partners at Workday, Inc. ([www.workday.com](http://www.workday.com)) and the volunteers throughout their organization that truly made this app possible."

### CCSDA Meets @ Central San

The Contra Costa Special Districts Association thanks Contra Costa Central Sanitary District for the use of the Multi-purpose room and their facility for our quarterly meetings. Central San does much to assist CCSDA, all the past efforts, and present support, are much appreciated. Contra Costa Central Sanitary District's contributions and generosity provide a significant cost savings to the Contra Costa Special Districts Association helping to keep our dues low. Thank you Central San!

### Contra Costa Special Districts Association Landing Page

The Contra Costa Special Districts Association Chapter Landing Page is located on the CSDA website and is available to the public. Visit our chapter webpage at:

<http://bit.ly/ContraCostaChapter>

## Teaching plumbing skills to a hungry workforce

East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) and Laney College partner to open doors to plumbing trade

As the EBMUD workforce transitions over the next few years with many older workers giving way to a new generation of utility employees, the District has joined forces with Laney College in Oakland to increase opportunities for some local residents to acquire or hone the skills necessary to join the plumbing ranks here or elsewhere.

Last year, 198 people applied for the 20-week Waterways Plumber Training Program, which provides hands-on plumber training and fundamental math and critical thinking skills, while exposing students to the workings of the civil service process. Of 28 graduates, one was hired by EBMUD. Graduates benefit from improving their life skills and are better prepared to take their place in the workforce.

"Waterways gives students a chance at a chance," says Beth Maher, Laney College program coordinator. "We're happy to offer this training now, when it is needed most."

EBMUD and Laney reached out to community groups, youth centers, women in trades and veterans' organizations to invite broad participation in the program.

"This course gives men and women in EBMUD's footprint a shot at improving their lives," says William B. Patterson, member of EBMUD Board of Directors, "We have people in our own backyard who need help in building jobs skills. We hope to equip the best and most ambitious of these students by providing training that can put them in a better position to compete for future jobs and lead them to a meaningful career in civil service."

This year, 256 people applied and 15 dedicated students graduated on Friday, March 23, at a celebration at EBMUD offices in Oakland.



## West Nile Virus Season Began Early For Contra Costa County



**Residents are urged to continue to report dead birds to the West Nile Virus state hotline: 1-877-968-2473.**

The Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control District reported a stellar jay from Pleasant Hill tested positive for West Nile virus on April 12, 2012. CCMVCD confirms that finding a dead bird with the virus this early in the season could mean a longer, more intense West Nile virus season. Last year, the District reported the first West Nile virus-positive dead bird on June 29.

"Mother Nature plays a significant role in virus risk," said Craig Downs, general manager for the District. "The mild winter has created a thriving environment for mosquitoes. We all need to be diligent about dumping out water where mosquitoes can live, such as rain gutters on houses, neglected swimming pools, boat covers, toys; even flower pot saucers can hold enough water to allow mosquitoes to thrive."

Dead bird reports are an important tool for West Nile virus detection, even if the bird is not picked up and tested. Lack of dead bird reports decreases the District's ability to detect higher risk locations.

## Thank You West County Wastewater District

Contra Costa Special Districts Association (CCSDA) appreciates having West County Wastewater District (WCWD) provide support services for CCSDA.

The work and effort that Maria Sena puts into all of our functions, meetings, correspondence, and emails is greatly appreciated. We thank West County Wastewater District for the services your district provides to assist CCSDA.

WCWD contributions to the Contra Costa Special Districts Association help our organization to be a success; we value the volunteer services you are providing.

# John Muir Birthday - Earth Day Celebration 2012

John Muir inspired people all over the world to “keep close to nature’s heart.” In this spirit, many celebrated **John Muir’s 174<sup>th</sup> birthday** and the **42<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of Earth Day** at his former home located at the John Muir Historic site in Martinez, on Saturday April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012.



Many enjoyed the fun exhibits and activities for all ages; there was live music, self-guided tours of the Muir’s Victorian home, nature walks, and a silent auction.

The event was presented by the John Muir

Association, and the National Park Service, and sponsored by the City of Martinez, Shell Martinez Refinery and Allied Waste Services.



Igor Skaredoff a Director at the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District portrayed John Muir.

Contra Costa Water District, Contra Costa Sanitary District, Mt. View Sanitary District, and East Bay Regional Parks District had informational booths at the event.

A record-breaking 2,501 visitors – the highest attendance number to date – gathered to celebrate John Muir’s birthday and Earth Day.

Nearly 50 exhibitors set up booths providing information on their respective organizations and activities for young and old. The event featured both local and national exhibitors.



## Meet the new Central San General Manager



**Ann Farrell assumed the role of General Manager on March 31, 2012.**

Ann Farrell has been with the District since 1999. She was first hired as the Director of Engineering. She was named Deputy General Manager in August 2011.

As Director of Engineering, Ms. Farrell oversaw Environmental Services including the expansion of the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program and the Recycled Water Program. She also oversaw the development of a sewer condition assessment and renovation program which contributed to reducing sewer overflows.

A number of significant capital projects have been completed during her tenure including the Dougherty Valley Tunnel and Trunk Sewer Project; the Standby Power Improvements Project and Sludge Hauling Facilities.

Ms. Farrell previously worked for a national consulting firm designing wastewater treatment facilities for a number of cities and Districts in California including the ultra violet disinfection facilities at CCCSD.

## Mt. View Sanitary District Billboard

Mt. View Sanitary District celebrated American Wetlands Month again this spring with a billboard which was up during the month of May.



McNabney Marsh and the Mt. View Sanitary District are adjacent to I-680 just before the Benicia Bridge.

## EBRPD Announces New Chief of Park Operations



**Anne Scheer is the new Chief of Park Operations for the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD).**

The Operations Department manages public use of parks and facilities, collects park user fees at numerous sites, controls opening and closure of all facilities, performs routine maintenance of grounds and buildings, and provides emergency response staff to support police and fire emergencies. The operations staff performs natural resources management activities such as vegetation management and soil conservation to manage, maintain and restore the parklands in order to retain their important scenic, natural, and cultural values.

Ms. Scheer has worked her way up at the Park District. She holds a Bachelor's of Science degree in Conservation and Resource Studies from the University of California, Berkeley. Ms. Scheer replaces outgoing Chief of Park Operations Jeff Wilson, who is retiring after more than three decades of service at the agency.

## Dublin San Ramon Services District Board to Fill Vacancy with Election

Director Daniel J. Scannell resigned from the Board of Directors, after serving more than 11 years. His decision was prompted by time constraints with his new job, a desire to spend more quality time with his family, and the realization that it's someone else's turn to serve.

The Dublin San Ramon Services Board of Directors decided to fill the current Board vacancy by letting voters make the decision during the November 2012 election.



**DUBLIN SAN RAMON SERVICES DISTRICT**

*Water, wastewater, recycled water*

## Longtime County Supervisor and Friend of Special Districts Dies of Cancer



**Supervisor Gayle B. Uilkema**  
**September 2, 1938 - May 19, 2012**

Contra Costa County Supervisor Gayle Uilkema died Saturday morning, May 19th, with her family beside her as she lost her two-year battle with ovarian cancer.

Gayle Uilkema, who had served 16 years on the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, 15 years on Contra Costa LAFCO, and 19 years on the Lafayette City Council, had planned to retire from public service at the end of this year. She had earlier announced she would not seek re-election.

She often said "Local government is the most important form of government. Serving local government has been very rewarding to me."

On March 23rd 2012, she was honored as the **Lafayette Citizen of the Year** while overcoming a bout of pneumonia.

Mt. View Sanitary District was the only special district that presented a resolution to Supervisor Gayle Uilkema at the Citizen of the Year Award celebration.



Board President Randy Williams along with board members Greg Pyka and Stanley Caldwell presented the resolution

Because she was in frail health this was most likely was the only opportunity to present the resolution to Gayle.

The dinner was excellent, the entertainment and presentations were fun and interesting. Gayle is a much loved Supervisor and it was an honor to be there and hear about her long service to the community and to Contra Costa County.

We will all miss her; she was special, a friend to many, her passion and dedication to public service are reflected in her 35 years of service. .

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## Mark your calendars with our future Chapter Meeting Dates:

October 15, 2012 January 28, 2013 April 15, 2013 July 15, 2013 and October 21, 2013

We meet at Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, 5019 Imhoff Place, Martinez, CA.

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## Contra Costa Special Districts Association

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