

Manager's Corner



by Sergio Ramirez
General Manager

As we close out 2023 and look in our rearview mirror, I reflect on all of our accomplishments. During the past year the district has been working on a new master plan. The master plan sets a road map to rehabilitate or reconstruct our infrastructure over the next 10 years. As part of the master plan study the district conducted an inflow and infiltration study to analyze the districts wastewater capacity. We managed to capture a 100-year storm event on Christmas Eve of 2022. A 100-year storm event is significant because they don't occur too often, and they bring an enormous amount of rain in a short period. At the time, we had over 30 flow meters monitoring the system. Fortunately, we fared well even though we were battered by atmospheric rivers all season long. In preparation for this winter season storms, we performed manhole lid repairs in the Bell Haven neighborhood of Menlo Park and a new pipeline installation, looping the wastewater collection system, in East Palo Alto near Newbridge Street and Laurel Avenue. This was to prevent near-miss issues in the system. What the new master plan demonstrated was the need to continue an aggressive infrastructure replacement schedule. In the past we have been able to spend approximately \$5 million to \$6 million in pipeline replacement but due to escalating construction cost we will need to fund our pipeline construction budget to roughly \$10 million in order to maintain our Capital Improvement Program.

In looking to the future, I'm excited about the progress we have made in obtaining environmental and construction permits for the levee project at our off-site facility behind Bedwell Bayfront Park. The project will raise the existing levee and will create a living shoreline in anticipation of sea level rise. The living shoreline is funded in part by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation through a \$4.8 million matching grant received by the district. Another exciting project is the Bayfront Recycled Water Facility that will bring six hundred thousand to one million gallons of recycled water to the Bayfront area to be used for irrigation, water cooling towers, and toilet flushing. This project will off-set the use of potable drinking water for such needs. The district is actively working with developers in Menlo Park and the surrounding areas to help fund the district's recycled water program to ensure the sustainability of our community.

Lastly, we have been working diligently to upgrade our hardware and software systems to "Software as a Service platform(s)", including moving to an on-line construction bidding process and an on-line permitting process to assist property owners and contractors. I'd like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and remember to "Call Us First" with your sewer related issues.



PROJECT MANAGER: FARIBORZ HEYDARI, P.E.

West Bay Sanitary District welcomes Fariborz Heydari, P.E. as the new Project Manager. Fariborz brings over 25 years of municipal expertise in utilities and Capital Improvement Programs (CIP) – executing a wide range of professional services for the public sector. He joined the district in January 2023. As the team's Project Manager, he will lead the design and construction of capital improvement projects to rehabilitate or replace the district's infrastructure as authorized by the District Board of Directors. Fariborz will provide capital planning support, including supporting the implementation of the 2023 Master Plan, developing annual capital improvement budgets, optimizing the capital improvement program, approving construction drawings, reviewing deliverables prepared by outside engineering consultants, and providing overall project management. Fariborz will assist in managing grant funding support efforts, including identifying potential grants.



ASSOCIATE ENGINEER: YUTIAN LEI

Associate Engineer, Yutian Lei joined the district in June 2023. Prior to West Bay Sanitary District, she worked for an engineering consulting company as a project manager for over 3 years and has more than 5 years of engineering experience in the water/wastewater and the environmental remediation industry. Yutian received her bachelor's degree in environmental science and holds a PhD degree in Civil/Environmental Engineering. Yutian is an engineer in training (EIT) and is pursuing her Professional Engineering (PE) license.



UTILITY WORKER: DOMINIC NANNI

Utility Worker, Dominic Nanni joined the district in December 2022. He comes to the district with 5 years of experience in the wastewater industry. While working for the City of Pacifica he gained knowledge in Construction, CCTV, Power Rodding, and Hydro Jetting. Dominic also spent time maintaining the Calera Creek Water Recycling Treatment Plant, recycling 4 million gallons of wastewater per day. He received technical certification through the California Water Environment Association and holds a Grade 4 Certificate in Collection System Maintenance and a Grade 2 in Mechanical Technology. Dominic spent the last year working with the district's pump crew and at the West Bay-Sharon Heights Recycled Water Facility with the Chief Plant Operator. He is West Bay's first Operator-In-Training. Dominic has shown his skills in diagnosing and repairing the district's pump stations and treatment plant. He is a great addition to the West Bay team.



MAINTENANCE WORKER: ANDRES GARCIA

Maintenance Worker, Andres Garcia joined the district as a regular full-time employee in March 2023. In his short time with the district, he completed the Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Collection Systems, Volume 1 and 2 through the Office of Water Programs through California State University, Sacramento and obtained his California Commercial Class A driver's license permit. He obtained technical certification through the California Water Environment Association and holds a Grade 1 Certificate in Collection System Maintenance. Andres has displayed a great work ethic and dedication as a team player. If you have called the district about a sewer related issue in the past few months, you may have had the pleasure of meeting Andres. He is trained in the district's emergency response and is solving residential sewer related issues.



MAINTENANCE WORKER: D'ANDRE WHITE

Maintenance Worker, D'Andre White joined the district in June 2023. He transitioned from a part-time temporary worker to a regular full-time employee. D'Andre completed the Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Collection Systems, Volume 1 and 2 through the Office of Water Programs through California State University, Sacramento and has obtained his California Commercial Class A driver's license permit. D'Andre is the newest member of the West Bay team and is ready to do his part in keeping our sewer collection system clean and flowing as it should at all times.

DISTRICT LEVEL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Construction has begun to protect the district's Flow Equalization and Resource Recovery Facility (FERRF) against the FEMA floodplain and sea level rise. The FERRF is a district multi-use facility that provides temporary storage of wastewater during wet weather events, storage of district vehicles and equipment, and serves as an off-site Operation, Maintenance, and Construction corporation yard for the district. Work to the levee includes the installation of sheet pile walls, raising the levee crest, construction of a living shoreline and the installation of oyster reef structures. Construction is expected to conclude in 2026.

TRANSPARENCY CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE AWARDED TO WEST BAY SANITARY DISTRICT

West Bay Sanitary District received the District Transparency Certificate of Excellence by the Special District Leadership Foundation (SDLF) in recognition of its outstanding efforts to promote transparency and good governance.

"This award is a testament to West Bay Sanitary District's commitment to open government," said, Sergio Ramirez, General Manager. "Our staff is to be commended for the level of service they provide and their contributions that empower the public with information which facilitates engagement and oversight." To receive the award, West Bay Sanitary District demonstrated the completion of essential governance transparency requirements, including conducting ethics training for all board members, properly conducting open and public meetings, and filing financial transactions and compensation reports to the State Controller in a timely manner.

SDLF is an independent, non-profit organization formed to promote good governance and best practices among California's special districts through certification, accreditation, and other recognition programs.

Special districts are independent public agencies that deliver core local services to communities, such as utility, wastewater treatment, fire protection, parks and recreation, healthcare, sanitation, mosquito abatement, ports, libraries, public cemeteries and more. Districts are established by voters and their funding is approved by voters to meet specific needs through focused service. They can be specially molded to serve large regions or small neighborhoods depending on the need.

For a sewer emergency or sewer-related problems, please call us first! You can reach us day or night at (650) 321-0384. If the main public sewer line is blocked, only West Bay has the authority to clear the system. If the public sewer main line is clear, we may advise you to contact a plumbing contractor to resolve the issue on your property.

For more information visit <https://www.sdlf.org/programs/transparency>



District Transparency Certificate of Excellence