



## **MONTEREY REGIONAL WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCY**

5 Harris Court, Bldg. D, Monterey, California 93940-5756  
(831) 372-3367 or (831) 422-1001 - FAX: (831) 372-6178

### **SUMMARY OF RECENT ACTIONS**

#### **Report for April 2016**

##### **Pacific Grove Sewage Spill Update:**

In February of this year the Board of Directors of the MRWPCA authorized a \$299,000 penalty payment to the state's Regional Water Quality Control Board to account for the sewage that was spilled in PG early last year. State regulations state that "anytime wastewater is spilled into a water body and adversely affects that body of water" it is a violation of the Clean Water Act, and there is a penalty. I put the actual state penalty documents into a small folder and gave it to the City Manager for the city's records.

##### **Sequence of events:**

This happened on May 18, 2016, when Agency staff attempted to take advantage of a contracted engineered bypass to facilitate wet-well concrete maintenance work at Pump Station No. 13 at Fountain Avenue, to disassemble and replace the internal plug component of an upstream discharge plug valve inside the pump station. Unfortunately the main station valve that was anticipated to isolate the bypass pumping flow from the valve to be repaired failed.

The sewage that had back-flowed into the station's piping began spilling at a high flow rate from the then opened connection at the discharge valve, filling the pump station. An estimated 219,733 gallons of raw wastewater spilled from the station, and the event threatened imminent damage to pump station equipment, and sewage overflow to the public area around the station and to Monterey Bay.

Because untreated wastewater entered the Bay as a result of this event, the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Board (RWQCB) staff recommended that their board assess administrative civil liability for the event, and the Agency was assessed an initial penalty \$320,121.13.

MRWPCA staff provided the RWQCB with additional documentation and participated in an informal settlement conference with board staff in December of 2015. As a result of these efforts, the RWQCB staff later presented a revised settlement of \$298,958. The Agency decided to pay this new amount rather than go through the time and expense of further debating the fine.

Because this was not in the Agency's normal budget, however, an additional ~~budget~~ appropriation \$298,958 was included in the midyear budget adjustment as part of the midyear budget review.

**Agency Staffing:**

The Agency does not have the same number of retirees we have in Pacific Grove, but we have a different problem. Because many of our Plant Operators reach 30 years of service at about the same time and will retire over a two to three year period, we are trying to hire, train, and preserve the memory on all of the PCA systems components. As you can imagine, this system is pretty complex - with lots of tweaks and additions over the years.

To address this potential employee shortfall, the Agency is looking at an Operator-In-Training internship program with Gavilan College for two students at a time. There will be some expenses for physicals and uniforms and equipment but, in exchange, we get a couple of people we can evaluate as future hires.

**PERS:**

Just for context, I am providing some information on how PERS affects the MRWPCA also. The Agency has four bargaining groups and has been in negotiations to develop multi-year agreements. At this time it looks like those agreement will soon be concluded.

One thing we talked about at the Budget and Personnel Committee (of which I was Chairman at the time) was setting up a "PERS Investment Stabilization Fund" to set aside money every year to be prepared for money that we know we will need to pay in some future year based on the poor investment returns that PERS has been having for some year now. Since this would be only designed to save PERS from itself, however, at the end of deliberations we rejected this idea.

**Pure Water Monterey:**

The Agency's preliminary mid-year budget report showed that – at mid-year - we are at about 50% of both expected revenues and expenditures. In addition, the project is still on-track to produce water for the Peninsula by the spring of 2018.

Anyone having questions should contact me. I will try to either answer or – if I don't know the answer – get the information for you.

Respectfully Submitted



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Councilman Rudy Fischer



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### **SUMMARY OF RECENT ACTIONS**

#### **Report for June 2016**

The MRWPCA has a water related outreach program with local schools and each year offers a Special Award at the Monterey County Science Fair. The awards support science development and projects that highlight water recycling, seawater intrusion, and pollution prevention issues. Special Awards are offered for one (1) Junior Division project and one (1) Senior Division project. Award winners are recognized with a MRWPCA plaque by our Board of Directors.

This year over 350 projects were judged to select the winners from approximately 500 participating students. We were able to acknowledge and honor two students from the International School of Monterey. The students, Aidan Carr and Niamh Burke researched and developed a science fair presentation entitled "The Battle for our Water: Which Type of Desal Plant is Better?" I continue to be amazed at the quality of work done by our young people.

#### **MRWPCA Committee Assignments:**

Every year each Board member is asked to serve on one of three Board Committees. Assignments are based upon Board Member preferences, as well as considering the best possible arrangements so that no Committee has a Board majority on that committee either by physical presence or by a majority of the "weighed" vote. Careful consideration is also given to avoid any "Brown Act" violations by having a majority of members on any one committee.

For the past several years I was on the Budget and Personnel Committee; serving as Chairman for the last year. For this next year I was assigned to the Projects and Planning Committee - and elected Chair of that committee. Dennis Allion of Del Rey Oaks, Tommy Razzeca of Moss Landing Harbor District, Dave Pendergrass of Sand City, and Linda Grier of the Boronda County Sanitation District are also on this committee.

In addition, I will serve on the Recycled Water Committee for the next year.

#### **Integrated Water Management Planning and Funding for the Central Coast:**

The Central Coast Region (of which we are a part) stretches from Santa Cruz to Santa Barbara, and there are a number of areas (watersheds) within this region. Each watershed has formed an Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) entity. These entities then apply for state or federal grant funds based on the adopted projects for their respective watersheds. In the past, the

monies awarded to each IRWM unit were based on competitively ranked projects. Several of the IRWM units have received very little funding while others in the Central Coast Region have received a bulk of the money allocated for the region. The Agency is entering into a Memorandum of Agreement to distribute funds allocated to the Central Coast in a more uniform manner. A formula using a baseline factor, a population factor and a land area factor was created to distribute funds more equitably throughout the region. This agreement is currently being circulated throughout the IRWM units for adoption

### **Regional Treatment Plant Upgrades:**

Since the completion of the Regional Treatment Plant in 1990, all of the original cast iron sanitary sewer lines constructed to convey sewage flow on the north side of the plant have failed in succession. Each line that has failed has been replaced with plastic pipe to withstand the chemical drainage that attacked the original piping with success. The north side of the treatment plant has odor scrubber drains and chemical drains from the Chlorine Building which corrode cast iron, whereas the south side of the plant conveys mostly bathroom waste. About three years ago, the last remaining segment of cast iron pipe on the north side of the treatment plant failed. Staff was able to install an above ground temporary pipe and pumping system that pumps the sewage between manholes.

This fiscal year, the replacement of the failed sewer line was budgeted, but the 6-inch cast-iron gravity sewer line has already deteriorated to the point that it can no longer convey wastewater. MRWPCA inspected the line using closed-circuit television (CCTV), and the inspection revealed significant deterioration of the pipe that made it impossible to complete inspection of the full reach of pipe between manholes. In multiple locations, corrosion had caused the bottom of the pipe to separate and a portion of the pipe has collapsed.

The MRWPCA's Operations Group set up a temporary pipeline and pumping system over a year ago to manually pump out wastewater as needed from the upstream manhole into Recycle Sump so that Staff would have time to determine the best course of action and obtain funding to fix the problem.

In consultation with HDR Engineers, staff considered various alternatives to replace the deteriorated pipeline. It was determined that the most cost effective option was to replace the sewer line using horizontal directional drilling, a trenchless construction method. Open cut was ruled out due to the depth of the sewer line and construction cost. The existing pipe is approximately 13 to 18 feet deep from the upstream and downstream manholes respectively. The new sewer line will be made of high-density polyethylene pipe that will provide excellent corrosion resistance and long-term performance.

The project was put out to bid and two bids were received. The Agency selected Monterey Peninsula Engineering (MPE) to do the work. MPE is a good local contractor with a long track record of successful completion of this type of work. The project is expected to cost approximately \$235,000; but it is emblematic of the Agency's need to look at the whole system and start upgrades in order to prevent future failures.

The Agency is already working on an updated 10 Year Coating Plan, and these two projects will total approximately \$284,554.

As part of the upgrades, the Agency is also looking at ways to protect the ocean outfall. The storms in March eroded the beach in this area and exposed the pipe. With some emergency

action this has been fixed, but a more long-term solution needs to be developed to protect this valuable asset. At this point in time, it looks like the Agency will have about \$4 million available for capital purchases and improvements.

### **Pure Water Monterey:**

The Pure Water Monterey project has been getting lots of attention and many tour groups are going through this facility. One recent visitor was State Senator Bill Monning. In addition; the Agency has been notified by the California Public Utilities Commission that they have received letters of support for the project from Senator Diane Feinstein, State Senator Monning, Congressman Sam Farr, State Assembly member Mark Stone, and County Supervisor John Phillips.

The Agency's preliminary mid-year budget report showed that – at the end of April - we are at about 61% of expected expenditures. The project is still on-track to produce water for the Peninsula by the spring of 2018. To make sure the project stays on its current timeline, the Agency has begun the process of equipment purchasing for three major portions of this project. These are the Ozone System (\$2,230,000), Membrane Filtration and Reverse Osmosis (MF/RO - \$4,070,798), and Ultraviolet Light/Advanced Oxidation System (AOP - \$834,000).

Though the Agency will have to purchase these items, it is expected that we will receive reimbursement from the State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan when actual purchases take place and construction starts.

Cal Am has been working with the MRWPCA and the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District (MPWMD) on a Water Purchase Agreement (WPA) for the Pure Water Monterey project. This agreement is an essential part of the Pure Water Monterey SRF loan as it represents the revenue stream for repaying the loan.

The three-way agreement accounts for water that is treated, conveyed and injected into the Seaside Groundwater Basin by MRWPCA, purchased by MPWMD, and then sold to Cal Am when it is extracted from the Basin. As part of the settlement agreement, the water purchase agreement was an item that needed to be completed prior to the testimony phase of the CPUC hearings on January 22, 2016.

The three parties have been exchanging draft versions of the agreement since February 2015. On January 14, 2016 a Special Joint Board meeting was held where the MRWPCA and MPWMD Board approved the Water Purchase Agreement as to form. The agreement is now in its final form and ready for final approval.

Based on best available data, the Agency provided – and believes – that water will be provided at a cost of about \$1,720 per acre foot.

In addition, as part of a settlement agreement concerning brine discharge to the ocean, Cal Am is being required to adhere to certain provisions. The Surfrider Foundation and other settling parties will allow Cal Am to discharge brine into the ocean provided they perform these duties. Examples of requirements include: monitoring of the ocean prior to the brine being discharged, monitoring after brine is being discharged, developing an alternative monitoring plan and adhering to salinity standards.

The above agreement is not the contract between Cal Am and MRPWCA that provides the water company capacity in the outfall to discharge the brine. That is another agreement. This particular

agreement is asking for agreement between the settling parties on the best method of discharge of brine to the ocean. MRWPCA was allowed to comment on the agreement and most if not all of our recommendations were accepted.

Anyone having questions should contact me. I will try to either answer or – if I don't know the answer – get the information for you.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rudy Fischer".

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Councilman Rudy Fischer