

Sanitary District No.5 of Marin County
Tiburon & Belvedere California

Spring 2023

May 1, 2023

Sewer Rate Increases proposed for first time in over 8 years



Why a Rate Increase Is Needed

FUNDS NEEDED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND TO PROTECT THE BAY. Rates must be increased to pay for operations, maintenance, facility improvements, and all other District costs. The proposed increase will ensure reliable wastewater service in the District’s service area, build reserves to meet the District’s target balance to cash fund future capital improvements, and help the District to comply with increasingly strict regulations that are designed to protect the Bay.

How Were the Proposed Rates Developed?

LONG-TERM FACILITY PLANS DEVELOPED TO LOWER COSTS. The District has developed a ten-year capital improvement program based on a thorough evaluation of its pumps, pipelines, communication systems, treatments plants, and other essential facilities. This long-range, systematic planning helps the District prioritize improvements and organize them to be completed in a cost-effective way.

Last year, the District began a detailed analysis of the District’s needs, starting with the list of specific improvements identified in the ten-year capital improvement plan. The estimated costs for maintenance, operations, and other necessary expenses were also factored in. The District then undertook a line-by-line review of virtually every budget item and carefully developed draft rates to fund the identified needs. The needs and proposed rates have been reviewed and refined by an independent financial consultant, District staff, a Board committee, and the full Board. Copies of the rate study are available online at www.sani5.org The public can also contact the District Office Manager to obtain a copy of the study.

RATE PROPOSALS DEVELOPED WITH FULL PUBLIC REVIEW. The District presented summaries of its findings to the public through the District newsletter, the press, web, and fact sheets. The District also received public input by phone and e-mail.

CUSTOMERS PAY FOR THE ACTUAL COST TO PROVIDE SERVICE. The newly proposed sewer service charge is based on the actual cost to collect, transport, and treat wastewater from customers within the District’s service area.

Community workshops will be held May 10 and May 22.

Example of Funding Needs: 2023 to 2028

The funds from the proposed increase are necessary to fund day-to-day operations and specific capital projects to be performed by the District. Increases in costs associated with continuing to provide the current high level of wastewater service our customers expect, include costs associated with Salaries, Pensions and Benefits. Over the next five years, the District plans to spend an average of \$2,710,997 annually on sanitary system repairs, maintenance, upgrades, and improvements. This includes improvements to the sewer pipelines and pump stations via the annual rehabilitation program and major treatment plant upgrades. For example, a pump station control panel replacement, rehabilitation of existing wet wells, treatment plant Digester rehabilitation project, secondary clarifier scum collector replacements, and other specific, needed replacement or repair projects.

Inside this issue:

| | |
|---|---|
| <i>Sewer Line Cleaning with treated effluent</i> | 2 |
| <i>Preventing sanitary sewer overflows</i> | 2 |
| <i>Do you have a back-flow prevention device?</i> | 3 |
| <i>Proper disposal of pharmaceuticals</i> | 3 |
| <i>Help the Planet and your cash flow</i> | 4 |
| <i>What can YOU do?</i> | 4 |
| <i>Tour Sani 5</i> | 4 |

Capital Improvements Update:

- **Pipeline repair** - the 2022 sewer rehabilitation project is just wrapping up— 5,140 lf of 6” clay pipe was replaced with HDPE pipe at a cost of \$1,216,204
- **Ongoing and upcoming Capital Improvement efforts include** -Continued performing spot-repairs and manhole rehabilitations where needed. District staff is preparing for an upcoming Main Plant Digester rehabilitation project, a project consisting of cleaning both of the Main Plant Digesters and replacing valves were required.

Sewer Line Cleaning Using Treated Effluent

The District invested \$300k on the procurement of a new combination sewer cleaning machine by Vactor back in mid 2020. This Vactor truck improved the District's ability to operate and maintain the District's 34 miles of sewer pipeline that exist in the service area. It also greatly enhanced the District Emergency response capabilities. The Vactor truck has the ability to use 500 gallons of water for every

cleaning cycle, on a typical cleaning day the truck will be filled up to 8 times in single day for sewer cleaning purposes. In the District's ongoing pursuit of seeking ways to conserve and minimize costs—staff applied for and received permission from the water board to use treated wastewater from the Main WWTP in Tiburon for the use of cleaning sewers and thus doing our part to help conserve precious potable water.



District's Vactor truck used for sewer line cleaning purposes

Preventing Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSOs)

Despite the diligence of the District's maintenance program, overflows do still occur. Culprits include: diapers and other hygiene products that should not have been flushed down the toilet; fats, oils, and grease (FOG) that should not have been poured down the drain; and construction debris introduced into the collection system. In short, overflows are usually preventable. Overflow cleanup is costly and has the potential to introduce pathogens into the environment. If an overflow reaches a storm drain or watershed, the District is required to report the incident to environmental agencies, raising the potential for fines or litigation (under provisions of the Clean Water Act) by environmental watchdog groups.

What YOU can do

Never flush solid objects down the toilets.

Don't use your toilet or sink-drain as a garbage can for household chemicals, dental floss, rags, old sponges, etc.

Never pour fats, oils, and grease down the sink or garbage disposal!

Before washing, scrape and dry-wipe pots, pans, and dishes with a paper towel and dispose of it in the trash.

Use a grease can to collect all your excess fats, oils, and grease (FOG).

Cool fats, oils, and grease and pour into the grease can.

Mix oils and grease with other absorbent material like paper towels, kitty litter, or coffee grounds and allow the contents to congeal in the refrigerator or freezer.

Once the grease can is full, place it in the trash along with other absorbent material like paper towels or kitty litter.



Don't worry, this photo was **NOT** taken in Sanitary District 5!



Sewer pipes clogged with Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) are one of the leading causes of sanitary system overflows.

Beyond the cost of cleaning up the overflow itself, sanitary system overflows (SSOs) create the potential for costly litigation by environmental groups under provisions of the Clean Water Act.

Never pour grease down the drain!

Do You Have a Backflow Prevention Device?

If a blockage occurs in the sanitary sewer system, sewage will rise through a manhole and overflow to the surrounding area. However, if your house plumbing is below the level of the overflowing manhole, the sewage can backup through your house side sewer lateral and enter your home through your plumbing drains. Backflow

prevention devices are designed to prevent sewage from entering your home and are mandated by building code as well as District ordinance. When the need for a backflow prevention device is overlooked or ignored, the consequences can be devastating.

Please call the District if you need help locating your backflow prevention device. 415-435-1501



If you are unable to locate a backflow prevention device on your property, please contact San 5 for help locating it. A backflow prevention device is required by District ordinance.

Proper Disposal of Pharmaceuticals

Prescription drugs flushed down the toilet and other chemicals introduced into the Bay Area's wastewater collection systems have been detected in the Bay's estuaries and marine life. Since wastewater treatment plants are generally not equipped to detect or remove the evolving collection of ingredients in this chemical cocktail, it makes more sense to treat the source if possible, rather than to deal with expensive and toxic downstream problems.

Please take medication as prescribed and dispose of unused portions properly. Unused medications should be taken to cvs or your local police department or put in a sturdy, securely sealed container, then in a trash can where children and animals can't reach them.

Keep products in their original containers – Pharmaceutical container caps are typically watertight and child proof.

Solid drugs – Add a small amount of water to a solid drug before recapping to discourage unintended use.

Liquid drugs – Add a small amount of some absorbent material such as kitty litter, sawdust, or flour to liquid drugs before recapping to discourage unintended use.

Double seal the container – in another container or heavy bag to prevent easy identification of the drug container or to prevent a glass container from breaking.

To reduce the amount of wasted pharmaceuticals and personal care products:

Only purchase what you need – Why waste money on pharmaceuticals to just sit on the shelf and expire over time?

Say "No" to samples – If you are not going to use them, you will only need to dispose of them later.

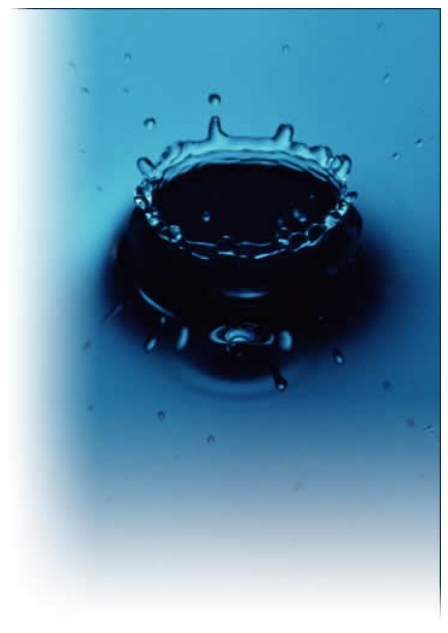
Stop junk mail – Take your name off mailing lists so you don't receive free sample products, such as pain relievers, lotions, and shampoos. If you don't use them, then you will need to dispose of them later.

Centralize all pharmaceuticals in one location – This may help to limit over purchasing of products you already have.

Read the label – Some products contain mercury-added preservatives; if you see it on the label, find an alternative product.



For more information visit <https://odfreemarin.org/safe-medicine-disposal/>



Help the Planet — and Your Cash Flow

Water conservation is critical to help meet the future needs of our communities and to lessen the strain on our fragile ecosystem. A little water conservation at home can also save you some cash.

12 ways you can reduce water consumption:

- Shut off the water while you brush your teeth.
- Don't let the water run when rinsing your dishes. Fill one sink with wash water and the other with rinse water.
- Adjust your sprinklers so they're watering your lawn—not the sidewalks.
- Run your washing machine and dishwasher only when they're full. This can save up to 1,000 gallons of water per month.
- Use your garbage disposal sparingly; use the trash can more often.
- Water your lawn and garden in the morning or evening when it's cooler to minimize evaporation.
- Wash fruits and vegetables in a pan of water instead of under running water.
- Use organic mulch around plants to retain moisture.
- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean your driveway.
- Shorten your shower time by one or two minutes to save up to 150 gallons of water per month.
- Put food coloring in your toilet tank. If you see it seep into your bowl without flushing, you've got a leak. Fix it, and you can save up to 1,000 gallons per month.
- Designate one glass for drinking water all day to reduce the number of glasses that need to be washed.



Disposing of fats, oils, and grease down the drain can quickly lead to clogs like this! Do your part to keep it out of the sewers.

What Can YOU Do?

Televise your sewer lateral and make repairs.

Clean your lateral regularly.

Locate your backflow prevention device and ensure its proper operation.

Put Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) in the trash where they belong.

Compost organic material instead of disposing of it in the garbage disposal.

Don't flush prescription or over-the-counter drugs down the drain.

Don't use your toilet as a garbage can for things like facial tissue, dental floss, or hygiene products.

Tour Sani 5

Sanitary District No. 5 invites neighbors and friends to tour our plant on Paradise Drive in Tiburon. The tour will be lead by the District Manager, Tony Rubio, or by the Operations Superintendent, Casey Cottrell. It will include an overview of the system itself and a walking tour of the main elements of the plant. A description of the daily testing and monitoring done by Sanitary District No. 5

will be given, along with an opportunity for questions and answers. We look forward to seeing you. Please phone the District at 435-1501 to schedule your tour.



*Sanitary District No. 5 of Marin County
Main Treatment Facility*