



THE ENDEAVOR

A PUBLICATION OF THE STEGE SANITARY DISTRICT OF CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

VOLUME X, NUMBER 2

SERVING EL CERRITO, KENSINGTON, AND RICHMOND ANNEX

FALL/WINTER 2001

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Douglas Bruce
Jay Z. James
Dwight Merrill
Alan C. Miller
Beatrice R. O'Keefe

DISTRICT MANAGER/ ENGINEER

Douglas C. Humphrey

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE STEGE SANITARY DISTRICT

It shall be the mission of the Stege Sanitary District to plan and operate a safe, efficient, and economical wastewater collection and transfer system for the present and future customers of the District.

INSIDE

Your Money at Work
on the Collection System
2001-2002 2

Stege Sanitary District
Reserve Fund Policy .. 2

Spotlight on Service... 3

System Improvement
Updates 3

Be Careful What You Send
Down the Drain..... 4

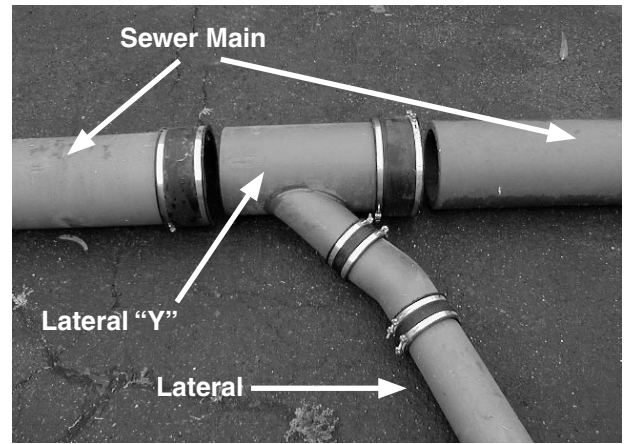
Customer Service
Survey 4

How to Contact Stege . 4

SEWER PROBLEMS? CALL STEGE FIRST

If you've ever experienced a sewer backup, you know how frustrating it can be. Drains backup; sewer cleanouts overflow. Whose responsibility is it? How do you fix the problem?

Stege is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the sewer main, which usually runs down the middle of the street, but sometimes is located in easements on private property. Property owners in the District are responsible for the lateral, the pipe that runs from the house to the sewer main. Laterals often extend beyond the property line and into the street. Homeowners are responsible for the entire length of the lateral, up to and including the lateral's "Y" connection to the sewer main.



The lateral is the sewer pipe that delivers wastewater from your property to the sewer main. The lateral "Y" is the connection that joins your lateral to the sewer main. Property owners are responsible for the maintenance of the entire length of lateral, including the "Y" connection to the main.

If you are having problems with sewer backups, CALL STEGE FIRST at (510) 524-4667, any time, day or night. If the problem is in the main, we will fix it. If we determine the problem is in your lateral, we will let you know. This service is free.

Sewer backups are caused by a variety of problems. Often a clogged lateral is the problem. Grease or other debris may have built up in the pipes over years of use, eventually plugging the pipe. Tree roots may penetrate the pipe and obstruct flow. A private plumbing contractor or "rooter" company can usually remove grease, debris, and roots. These contractors must take care to remove the material and not push it into the sewer main, which will cause larger backup problems. Occasionally, cracks and breaks in the lateral may have occurred from earth movement or deterioration of the pipe itself. Severe cracks and breaks in the lateral and its connections may necessitate replacement of a portion or the entire lateral. Many contractors now use trenchless technology for replacement of laterals and do not need to dig the entire length of the line.

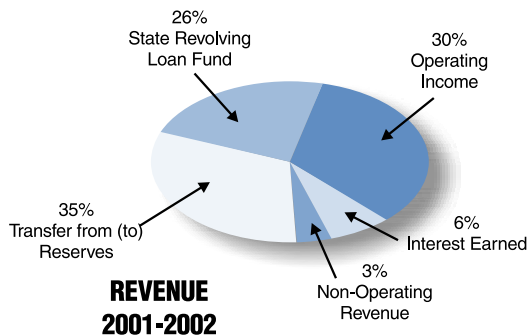
Remember — to find the cause of your problem, CALL US FIRST! It may save you the cost of a plumber's service call.

Homeowners who make repairs to or replace their lateral must first obtain a permit from the District. A list of contractors registered with the District is available on the District's Web site at <https://www.stegesd.dst.ca.us/>. Sewer permit applications are available at the Stege Sanitary District office at 7500 Schmidt Lane in El Cerrito. The codes and regulations that cover laterals and District main sewers are also available for inspection and purchase at the District Office. The District office is open 8:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday.

YOUR MONEY AT WORK ON THE COLLECTION SYSTEM 2001-2002 BUDGET

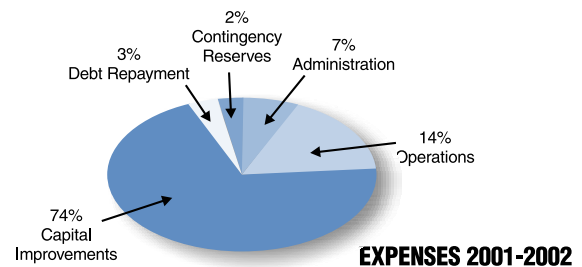
REVENUE

Non Operating Income	\$163,500
Operating Income	\$1,624,000
Interest Earned	\$336,000
Transfer from/(to) Reserves	\$1,839,646
State Revolving Loan Fund	\$1,375,000
	\$5,338,146



EXPENDITURES

Operations	\$747,948
Capital Improvements	\$3,929,700
Debt Repayment	\$160,500
Contingency	\$109,000
Administration	\$390,998
	\$5,338,146



The District adheres to an investment policy for reserve funds that complies with state statutes and stipulates safety, liquidity, and yield as the order of investment objectives. All currently invested funds are with the State Local Agency Investment Fund (LAIF).

Stege Sanitary District Reserve Fund Policy

In 1997, the Stege Sanitary District Board of Directors formally adopted target-funding levels for its operating and reserve funds, or a “reserve policy.” This policy was established to effectively manage risk, foster the continued operations of the District, and to provide financial stability.

Stege’s reserve policy designates cash reserves to:

- Stabilize wastewater collection rates in the event there are unanticipated, necessary expenditures.
- Provide funding for on-going capital improvements.
- Provide flexibility to enable Stege to meet fiscal challenges and uncertainties of an ever-changing business environment.
- Provide funding for emergencies like earthquakes that may require significant financial resources to

ensure provision of on-going service to customers.

Stege has four reserve funds. The funds and their corresponding balances as of October 1, 2001 are:

<i>Operational Expense Fund</i>	\$1,790,000
<i>Equipment Replacement Fund</i>	\$ 760,577
<i>System Rehabilitation Projects Fund</i>	\$ 692,939
<i>Emergency Fund</i>	\$2,866,076

Reserve levels of the funds and the rates charged to customers work together, and must be analyzed together. Interest income received from the investment of reserves helps to minimize rate increases. In fact, Stege has not had a rate increase since 1997. An analysis is performed each year as part of the District budget process to ensure that rates and reserves are adequate and not excessive. The District uses a twenty-year planning horizon in this financial analysis.

SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICE

Rex Delizo, Associate Civil Engineer

As Stege's Associate Civil Engineer, Rex Delizo has many responsibilities. They include contracting for the remote video inspection of the District's sewer lines and then analyzing that data to determine which sections



need to be repaired or replaced. Each year, approximately 160,000 feet of sewer lines are inspected. After cataloging and ranking the inspected lines, Rex designs a rehabilitation and repair program for the year and prepares specifications for contracting bids. The yearly budget for this program, which Rex manages under the Manager's supervision, is about \$1 million dollars.

Rex is also responsible for the District's GIS (Geographic Information System) program. Here, he identifies the site of each sewer line and of each manhole and renders a map showing their location. The GIS is based on a database, which Rex has rebuilt and which he continually updates.

In addition to his official engineering duties, Rex is also Web master of the Stege Web site (<http://www.stegesd.dst.ca.us>) and is recognized as the District's all-around computer guru.

Since he was a child, Rex excelled in math and science and knew he wanted to be an engineer. A 1995 graduate of San Jose State with a Bachelor of Science, Rex is a California-licensed civil engineer. What he likes best about his job with Stege, he says, is the level of responsibility he is afforded and the satisfaction he gets from seeing a job through from conception to completion. Prior to coming to work for Stege, Rex was employed by the San Francisco Public Works Department. He is recently married and lives on the Peninsula.

SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT UPDATES

The Capacity Upgrade Project and the annual rehabilitation project, both of which were scheduled for completion in spring 2002, have been completed ahead of schedule. Both projects also came in under budget. The reason this was possible was because of good design, the use of quality contractors, and the fact that unexpected problems encountered during construction were handled efficiently.

In the Capacity Upgrade Project, a computerized hydro-capacity model showed the need to increase the flow capacity of the pipes in the areas of Carlson Boulevard and Terrace Drive. Here, 11,000 feet of sewer pipes were replaced with larger capacity wastewater mains. Some of these pipes were

The Capacity Upgrade Project and the annual rehabilitation project, both of which were scheduled for completion in spring 2002, have been completed ahead of schedule. Both projects also came in under budget.

as large as 15-inches in diameter. The project was funded by a low-interest (about 2.6%) \$1.7 million loan from the State of California Water Resources Control Board.

The second system improvement project was part of an ongoing rehabilitation program that started in 1997. Remote video cameras survey approximately 160,000 feet of the Stege Sanitary District's 158 miles of sewer line each year. The camera provides specific information on potential sewer problems and that information is then used to determine which areas need to be rehabilitated or replaced each year. In 2001, 9,000 feet of pipes were replaced using techniques called sliplining and trenchless pipe bursting, which allowed the lines to be replaced without the need for large-scale digging and neighborhood disruption. That project cost approximately \$900,000.

The next scheduled project is the 2002 rehabilitation program. A video inspection of the sewer lines has been completed and a determination will be made shortly as to which mains to rehabilitate or repair next year.



STEGE SANITARY DISTRICT
 7500 Schmidt Lane P.O. Box 537
 El Cerrito, CA 94530-0537 (510) 524-4667

PRSRT STD
 U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
 Oakland, CA
 Permit Number 3729

Be Careful What You Send Down the Drain

Wastewater from sinks, tubs, disposals, and toilets all end up in the sewer system. Sewer mains channel that wastewater, sometimes by way of a lift station, to a wastewater treatment plant where it is treated and safely released back into the environment. The system works remarkably well, especially considering the number of homes and businesses that depend on it. Not everything that can go down the drain, however, *should* go down the drain.

Toxic chemicals, such as insecticides and solvents, are difficult to remove in the treatment process and can severely disrupt the operation of a wastewater treatment plant as they may kill the organisms that treat and stabilize sewage. In addition, such toxic chemicals pose a serious hazard for crews that need to work in the sewer mains.

Grease and oil accumulate on sewer main walls, causing sewer backups that require expensive cleanup and repair.

Rags, plastic, and meat trimmings can clog pumps at lift stations that move wastewater, thus reducing pumping capacity.

As a District resident, you can help assure the smooth operations of the wastewater system and the safety of its collection crew by making sure that nothing goes down the drain, is put into the garbage disposal, or is flushed into the system that doesn't belong there.

Customer Service Survey

HOW ARE WE DOING?

The Stege Sanitary District strives to provide courteous, timely, and professional service. You can help us maintain our high standards.

Every time a District employee makes a repair call in response to a service request, the District follows up with a *Customer Response Survey*. This survey form is mailed with a self-addressed stamped envelope.

The District uses the survey to review and establish procedures to improve customer service and as a positive incentive to improve staff performance.

It is extremely important for us to know how you feel about the service you received. Next time you receive a customer response survey, please take a moment to fill it out and return it.



How to Contact Stege

By phone: (510) 524-4667

By mail: Stege Sanitary District
 7500 Schmidt Lane, PO Box 537
 El Cerrito, CA 94530-0537

By email: Staff@StegeSD.dst.ca.us