



THE ENDEAVOR

A PUBLICATION OF THE STEGE SANITARY DISTRICT OF CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

VOLUME XIV NUMBER 2

SERVING EL CERRITO, KENSINGTON, AND RICHMOND ANNEX

WINTER 2006-2007

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Graham Brand
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

Art Schroeder 2

How to Contact
Stege..... 3

Spotlight on Service
Richmond/El Cerrito
Firefighters
Toy Program 3

Don't Flush..... 3

Stege Makes It Even
Easier to Comply
with Lateral
Requirements 4

Financial Help Is
Available 4

Keep Pipes FOG-free

What happens when Fats, Oil, or Grease (FOG) is washed down the drain? It would be nice to think it is gone forever. Unfortunately, that's not the case.

FOG sticks around, clogging household plumbing, the sewer lateral that connects a building to the sewer main, and even the main itself. Liquefied grease and animal fat will solidify when they cool and clog pipes, much like a clog in an artery. Liquid oils similarly coat pipes when cooled and contribute to blockages.

Blockages can cause sewers to back up into homes, resulting in messy and expensive cleanup costs and repairs. When sewer mains overflow in the street, untreated wastewater can run into parks and waterways, causing environmental damage and posing health risks. Failure to properly dispose of fats, oils, and grease is a health ordinance violation and property owners can be held responsible for the cost of cleanup and environmental damage resulting from blockage overflows.

Running hot water after the grease won't keep it from solidifying in the pipes once the water has cooled; neither will flushing detergent down the drain after the grease or using a garbage disposal unit. The only way to keep your pipes FOG-free is never to put fats, oils, or grease down the drain in the first place.

Small amounts of fats, oils, and grease can be wiped with disposable towels and thrown away in the trash before washing. Liquid oils and fats can also be poured into a jar or can and sealed and thrown into the garbage, if there is not too much of it. Larger amounts, from deep frying, for instance, should not be placed in the trash, as the container may leak and cause problems in the garbage truck or solid waste facility. Instead, these larger amounts of FOG should be brought to a recycling center where it is converted into livestock feed or biodiesel, a cleaner-burning alternative fuel for diesel automobiles and trucks.

Stege customers can recycle cooking oil at either the West Contra Costa County Integrated Waste Management Authority site at 101 Pittsburg Avenue, just off the Richmond Parkway, or at the EBMUD Wastewater Treatment Plant at 2020 Wake Avenue in Oakland.

For more information and for a brochure on how to keep pipes FOG-free, call EBMUD at (510) 287-1651 or visit http://www.ebmud.com/wastewater/residential_pollution_prevention.



Arthur Schroeder

October 15, 1907- November 3, 2006

Art Schroeder died on November 3, 2006 at age 99, less than three weeks after the City Council of the City of El Cerrito unanimously declared his birthday, October 15, as Art Schroeder Day. The world is a poorer place for Art's passing.

The El Cerrito proclamation is only one of many distinguished honors awarded this remarkable gentleman. In 1992, Art Schroeder was placed on the El Cerrito Wall of Fame and in 2003 he was honored with the Nancy Gans Award from the El Cerrito Democratic Club for his years of public service, political organizing, and promotion of public interest. But Art's life is distinguished not so much for what he received, but for what he gave.

Born in 1907 to German immigrant parents in Troy, New York, Art attended Brown University, where the contrast between his own background and that of his privileged classmates may have influenced subsequent decision to pursue a career in community work. After attaining a B.A. from Brown and an M.A. from New York University, Art devoted himself to working for public recreation, to settlement house youth programs, and to teaching in a vocational New York high school. It was there that he met Norma Scheinberg, whom he married in 1936. Norma was Art's beloved companion and support for 65 years until her death in 2001 at age 91.

Art and Norma moved to El Cerrito shortly after World War II, where Art took the position of Assistant Director for Federal Housing in Oakland. In 1954, when vineyards and truck farms still dotted the East Bay hills, the Schroeders bought their house on Seaview Drive for \$13,000.



Art devoted not only his professional career, but also his personal life, to working for the public good. He served with distinction on the Stege Sanitary District Board for 15 years, as well as serving on the El Cerrito Planning Commission. He worked to pass library and park bonds in the 1960s; co-chaired the El Cerrito Bicentennial Committee; served several terms as chair of the El Cerrito Historical Society; and served on several El Cerrito Citizen Task Forces. The fate of seniors in the community was a particular concern for Art. He worked to create the Hazel Shirley Manor senior housing; served as the first chair of the El Cerrito Committee on Aging; co-founded the Gray Panthers of West Contra Costa County; served on the Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging; and served as the Senior Senator in the California Legislature. Art's legacy lives on in Stege where printed material is given the "Art Schroeder test" to make sure it is easily readable and understandable to seniors. In 2001, to honor his wife Norma, Art established a \$100,000 scholarship fund in her name to help a worthy El Cerrito High School student in financial need to go to college. Art also established a counseling center at the high school and had a tree planted in Norma's name in an East Bay Regional Park.

A memorial service in celebration of Art's life was held on Sunday, December 3, at the El Cerrito Community Center. Art is survived by his son Steven Schroeder, two grandsons, and two great-grandchildren.

An extraordinary life has ended, but Art Schroeder's gift to us all will live on for many generations.

How to Contact Stege

By phone:
(510) 524-4667

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

By email:
staff@stegesd.dst.ca.us



SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICE

Richmond/El Cerrito Firefighters Toy Program

For over a decade, firefighters in Richmond and El Cerrito have been collecting toys to make the Holidays a little brighter for children in the community. Stege Sanitary District has been with them all the way, accepting donations of unwrapped new toys and monetary contributions from employees and District board members. This past Holiday Season, Stege collected over \$900 in toys, which were brought to the El Cerrito fire department for distribution. Through the combined efforts of businesses, organizations, and individuals, the Richmond/El Cerrito Firefighters Toy Program is able to add Holiday cheer to 700 families in the communities served by the Stege Sanitary District. In 2001, the District was awarded a plaque commemorating the District's efforts in this noble cause. The plaque is proudly displayed in the District office.

Storage space constraints only allow the firefighters to accept contributions for the toy program from November through December; contributions for the next season will be accepted at Stege after Thanksgiving. Toys for pre-teens and teens, including board games, puzzles, and balls, are especially needed. Donations of clothes, blankets, and

sleeping bags are accepted year-round at the following firehouses: 217 Arlington Ave., Kensington; 1520 Arlington Ave., El Cerrito; and 10900 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito.

For those families who would benefit from the program, applications are available through the Richmond YMCA.



Toys collected by Stege.



Stege Sanitary District staff, left to right: Arvin Gonzales, Doug Humphrey, Fred Bondoc, Walter Lunn, Adam Clark, Quincy McCall, Julie McDonald, John Gerletti, Connie Sylte, and Rex Delizo.

Don't Flush

In addition to fats, oils, and grease, other substances and items can cause damage to the sewer system and to the environment when washed down the drain or flushed down the toilet. Please keep the following out of the wastewater system:

- Rags and "disposable" wipes;
- Medicines;
- Toxic cleaners and chemicals;
- Motor oil;
- Oil-based paints.

For a list of ways to safely dispose of household hazardous waste and medicines, go to http://www.ebmud.com/wastewater/residential_pollution_prevention/ or call EBMUD at (510) 287-1615.



STEGE SANITARY DISTRICT

7500 Schmidt Lane
El Cerrito, CA 94530-0537 (510) 524-4667

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

Stege Makes It Even Easier to Comply with Lateral Requirements

Since September 6, 2005, when the District Ordinance Code went into effect, over 90% of homes sold in the District have complied with the requirement that a home's sewer lateral must be in good condition before the close of escrow. In addition, many homeowners have taken the opportunity to obtain a Certificate of Compliance before placing their house on the market for sale.

Now the Stege has made it even easier to comply to the ordinance by offering a six-month extension after close of escrow to obtain the necessary Certificate of Compliance. To obtain the extension, the seller must present a sales

agreement that clearly states the date of close of escrow and the party responsible for inspection and repair and replacement of the sewer lateral, if necessary. There is a \$50 administrative charge for this service.

The cost of repair or replacement of the lateral, plus administrative and legal costs incurred by the District, will be levied on homeowners who do not comply with the lateral ordinance in a timely manner.

In the District, the homeowner is responsible for maintaining the entire lateral, including the connection to the District's main sewer. Keeping a lat-

eral in good repair helps guard against wastewater overflows into the house; stops wastewater from seeping into the ground; aids in preventing sewage overflows into the surrounding yard or street; helps keep wastewater out of storm drains, creeks, and the Bay; avoids costly emergency repairs; and reduces the amount of rainwater that enters the sewer system.

A Certificate of Compliance is good for ten years. It is issued after review and approval of a video tape showing that the lateral is in good shape. There is no fee for the review or for the certificate. Homeowners who have previously replaced an entire lateral and have a permit on file with the District may ask for a Certificate of Compliance effective for ten years from the date of permit approval.

Homeowners are notified by the District when work is scheduled on the sewer mains that service their homes. This work involves exposing and reconnecting laterals to the main. If you should receive such a notice, please consider making any necessary repairs to your lateral at this time, while your lateral is exposed, since this may save you considerable expense.

Financial Help Is Available for Lateral Repair

Financial aid programs are available to some homeowners in the District who need to repair or replace their sewer lateral.

- **The Neighborhood Preservation Program**, operated by the Contra Costa County Building Inspection Department, provides loans to low- and moderate-income persons to improve and enhance the livability of their homes by correcting health and safety problems. Contact them at (925) 335-1137 for information on obtaining a loan for sewer lateral work.
- **The City of Richmond** has loans available for home improvement, including repair or replacement of a sewer lateral. Contact Evelyn Craig at (510) 307-8140 for more information.

For more information on the lateral policy, visit www.stegesd.dst.ca.us/lateral.htm