

THE HERON

Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District

Winter 2024

District Celebrates Completion of Secondary Treatment Plant Upgrade and Recycled Water Expansion Project

Major upgrade to LGVSD facilities increases treatment capacity, improves reliability, and boosts recycled water production capacity by 330%.

The Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District (LGVSD) has completed the \$68-million upgrade to its wastewater treatment and recycled water facilities in San Rafael and marked the occasion on June 8, 2023 with a ceremonial "first turn of the valve." District staff, board members, contractors, and guests from neighboring districts and regulatory agencies gathered to celebrate the major upgrade of the treatment facilities located at 300 Smith Ranch Road.

The upgrades increase the plant's secondary treatment capacity from 8 to 18 million gallons per day, improving reliability during extreme weather events, and added advanced treatment technology to ensure future regulatory requirements can be met. The improvements will also increase the District's recycled water production capacity from 1.4 to 5 million gallons per day (2 billion gallons per year), providing more recycled water for reuse throughout Marin County.

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Las Gallinas Valley Sanitation District staff and board members celebrate the completion of the major plant upgrade project.

Low-Income Assistance Program Can Help Customers in Need

10% Rate Discount for Eligible Low-Income Customers

The Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District offers a Low-Income Sewer Rate Assistance Program to help eligible low-income single-family residential homeowners by providing a 10% reduction on their sanitary sewer service charge. First approved in 2022, the District's Board of Directors authorized continuing the program through June 30, 2024.

Eligibility Requirements

Income eligibility is demonstrated by being enrolled in the PG&E CARE Program (California Alternate Rates for Energy Program). The household must also include a rate-paying customer of the District who pays the sanitary sewer charges as shown on their property tax bill. Manufactured homeowners may provide their In-Lieu fee from California Housing and Community Development or local property tax statement along with a copy of their billing statement from the mobile home park.

Acceptance into the program would result in a \$124 discount for the property tax year 2023-2024. If the homeowner has already paid

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"Our board and staff have worked hard for many years to be efficient with the district's limited resources and we will continue to do so," said Board Chair Megan Clark. "We know that we have more work to do to maintain and improve our facilities and infrastructure — and we are well aware how future projects will impact our ratepayers. As a board, we will continue to do our best to be fiscally responsible and transparent in our work and remain true to our mission to protect the public health and the environment."

The Board of Directors joined District staff in a ceremonial "first turn" of the valve signifying the

completion of the District's largest capital project. LGVSD General Manager Curtis Paxton praised the work of District staff in completing the project — and the work they do every day to keep the system running.

"I want to personally recognize and thank the Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District staff who have worked so hard to bring this project to completion — and who work tirelessly make sure our facilities operate smoothly and safely," said Paxton. "I also want to thank the Project's construction, construction management, and engineering teams for their hard work and professionalism throughout the

process. And finally, a special thanks to our Board of Directors, who had the vision and the courage to embark on a project of this magnitude and see it through to the end. We can't overstate the value of this project in terms of its benefit to the environment, to protecting public health, and expanding our recycled water supply."

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Eileen White, Executive Officer of the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, attended the event and praised the District's efforts, which will result in improved water quality for San Francisco Bay waters. Others in attendance included officials from Marin Water and the North Marin Water District, the two neighboring districts that use recycled water produced by LGVSD for use in landscape irrigation, car washes, cooling towers, commercial laundries, toilet flushing and other non-potable uses.

Aerial view shows key improvements/upgrades accomplished during the nearly four years of construction.



A state law to address climate change requires restaurants, grocery stores and food distributors to donate any surplus edible food that they generate.

Fighting Climate Change Through Organic Waste Diversion

In 2022, the state approved the Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction law (SB 1383) that affects all Californians. The law requires that everyone — residents, businesses and schools — keep compostable waste out of our landfills. Residents and certain businesses, such as grocery stores and food distributors, are already required to comply with the law that requires they donate any surplus edible food they generate.

Why Divert Surplus Food?

When food scraps and other organic matter go to the landfill, the decomposition process releases methane, a powerful greenhouse gas pollutant that contributes to climate change. Landfills are the third largest source of human-caused methane in the United States. To respond to the climate crisis, California has implemented a statewide organic waste recycling and surplus food recovery. California SB 1383 has two main goals:

- 1 Reduce the disposal of compostable waste to landfills by 75% by 2025.
- 2 Recover at least 20% of edible food currently disposed of in landfills by 2025.

Starting January 1, 2024 large restaurants, hotels, health facilities, and schools are required to comply with the law. These facilities are considered Tier 2 Generators:

- Restaurants with 250+ seats or a total facility size of 5,000+ sq. ft.
- Hotels with an on-site food facility and 200+ rooms

- Health facilities with an on-site food facility and 100+ beds
- Large venues that seat or serve 2,000+ people per day of operation
- Large events that serve 2,000+ people per day of operation
- State agencies with a cafeteria of 250+ seats or total cafeteria facility size of 5,000+ seats
- Local education agencies with an on-site food facility

Businesses that fall into these categories and generate surplus excess edible food must contract with a food recovery organization to donate it. These entities must:

- Recover the maximum amount possible of surplus edible food generated
- Partner with one or more food recovery organizations or services to pick up or receive your surplus edible food
- Have a written contract or agreement with the food recovery organization(s) or service(s).
- Track and maintain records of food recovered each month including type, frequency of collection and amounts in pounds.
- Report to Zero Waste Marin on the amount of surplus edible food recovered.



For more information on SB 1383, visit zerowastemarin.org/ and calrecycle.ca.gov/organics/slcp/education/

District Named “Recycled Water Agency of the Year”

The Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District (LGVSD) received a prestigious award late last year when it was named California's “Recycled Water Agency of the Year” (small category) by the California WaterReuse Association for the major treatment plant upgrade completed in 2023. The project increases the plant's treatment capacity and expands its ability to produce recycled water that conserves the supply of drinking water in Marin County. (See article *Completion of the Secondary Treatment Plant Upgrade and Recycled Water Expansion Project* on page 1 for more details.)



Pictured from left to right: Curtis Paxton, LGVSD General Manager, LGVSD Board Members Crystal Yezman, Megan Clark, and Ronald Ford, and David Pedersen, President of WaterReuse California.

LGVSD Board members Megan Clark, Crystal Yezman, and Ronald Ford, along with General Manager Curtis Paxton, accepted the award during the California WaterReuse Association's “Awards for Excellence” ceremony, held during the Association's annual conference in November 2023. The award recognizes agencies that have developed recycled water, on a significant level, as an alternative water source within their service area, regionally, or statewide. The recipients demonstrate leadership, creativity and persistence in developing a

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Board of Directors

Megan Clark
Ronald Ford
Craig K. Murray
Gary Robards
Crystal J. Yezman

Board Meetings are


held at 4:00 PM on
the first and third
Thursday of each month
at the District offices.

ECRWSS – Postal Customer

District Administration: Curtis Paxton, General Manager

The District received the following awards and certificates:

- Recycled Water Agency of the Year 2023 (Small Category) from the California WaterReuse Association
- District Transparency Certificate of Excellence by the Special District Leadership Foundation for 2022-2025 in recognition of its outstanding efforts to promote transparency and good governance.
- Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for 2022 was received by Government Finance Officers Association.

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"Low Income Assistance Program"
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their property tax bill, the District will issue a refund check directly to the property owner.

Application Process

If you meet the eligibility requirements above, fill out the single page Application Form on the District website, lgvsd.org/lisrap, and return it to the District with copies of:

- Current PG&E bill which shows enrollment in the PG&E CARE Program,
- Most recent County property tax bill, or documents showing manufactured home ownership and
- Proof of payment of County property tax bill (such as copy of the County payment receipt or canceled check) if applicable.

Submit the application and supporting documents via email to info@lgvsd.org, with "LISRAP" in the subject line, by mail to the District office, or deliver in-person during normal business hours, Monday through Thursday, 6 AM to 3:30 PM.

"District Named "Recycled Water Agency of the Year" continued from page 3

comprehensive program, as well as outreach to the community to expand awareness and implementation of water recycling.

"We were honored to be recognized by the WaterReuse Association as one of the top agencies in the state," said Board President Megan Clark. "Our board had the vision and perseverance to improve the reliability and safety of our treatment facilities over the course of many years. Our staff has the skills and dedication to carry out that vision. It is gratifying to receive this recognition."



Ultrafiltration membranes for additional recycled water capacity were a major component of the District's \$68-million treatment plant upgrade and expansion.



Public Invited to Review Hazard Mitigation Projects

Every few years, the County of Marin, 11 local cities and towns, and some special districts, update the Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). FEMA requires local jurisdictions to outline mitigation strategies to reduce the impacts of natural hazards, including, sea level rise, earthquakes, wildfires, floods and more. For more information, visit: emergency.marincounty.org/pages/mitigation



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