

THE HERON

Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District

Fall 2025

You Can Help Avoid PFAS and Permethrin Pollution

At Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District, protecting the environment is a key part of our mission, and it starts with preventing harmful contaminants from entering our wastewater treatment systems. Two major contaminant threats are PFAS and permethrin.



PFAS—known as “forever chemicals”—are used in products like non-stick cookware, water-repellent fabrics, some food packaging, certain household cleaning products, and many other common items.



Permethrin, a common pesticide found in insect sprays, pet treatments, and flea collars, is highly toxic to aquatic life.

These chemicals are not removed by standard wastewater treatment processes, and they eventually can flow into our local waterways. They don't break down in the environment and can accumulate in living organisms, harming ecosystems and aquatic life, and potentially human health.

Two Key Sewer Initiatives Improve LGVSD Operations

Sewer Collection System Rehabilitation Project Sewer Inflow and Infiltration Reduction Program

Ensuring Sewer Collection System Integrity

The District's *Sewer Collection System Rehabilitation Project* was designed to deliver essential upgrades to aging infrastructure and improve sewer performance. Crews broke ground last November, and are wrapping up the project as this publication goes to print.



District staff are making targeted point repairs by excavating only the affected pipe sections. In most cases, they're using trenchless methods like pipe bursting, where they insert a tool that breaks apart the old pipe while pulling in a new, larger one—without excavating entire streets.

They're also replacing outdated rodding inlets with manholes. These new access points make it easier and safer to clean the main sewer line and inspect connections and joints properly.

Reducing Inflow and Infiltration

Our *Sewer Inflow and Infiltration Reduction Program* will cut down on inflow and infiltration, which is excess water entering the sewer system from cracked pipes, broken connections, and stormwater runoff. This extra flow strains our system and drives up treatment costs. As part of this project, crews are repairing and relining existing 48-inch manholes, sealing them off from leaks and groundwater intrusion. This significantly improves efficiency, minimizes leaks, and reduces unnecessary flow to the treatment plant.



In addition, we're replacing lower lateral pipelines. The lower lateral is the part of the pipe in the public right-of-way that connects homes to the main sewer line. These improvements contribute to efficiency of the entire system within the project area.

Homeowners can take it a step further by upgrading their upper

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Department Spotlight: The Collections System Team

When you think of the District's sanitary sewer collections system, you might picture a network of pumps and pipelines doing their job both underground and on the surface. And you'd be right—but there's a lot more to the story.

Behind that network is a dedicated team of skilled professionals who keep it running smoothly to ensure continuous operation of the sewer collections system and protect public health and our environment.

The District's sizeable collections system is operated by a surprisingly small team—the Collections System Department includes four Collections System Operators, two Lead Operators, and the Collections/Maintenance/Safety Manager. Together, they take care of 105 miles of gravity sewer lines and nearly seven miles of force mains (pipelines which convey effluent by pumping)—serving close to 30,000 residents and businesses in the District.

Every day, this team tackles a wide range of important tasks, performing preventative maintenance like CCTV pipeline inspections, hydro-flushing, root-cutting, and more. They handle inspections for sewer lateral repair and replacement, respond to Underground Service Alert requests, follow up on customer inquiries and incident reports involving the collections system, maintain air release valves, and keep a close eye on the 28 pump stations located throughout the District.

The District runs three, two-person crews dedicated to Pump Station Operations and Collection System Preventative Maintenance, USA/ Lateral Construction Inspections and Collection System Preventative Maintenance, and CCTV operations.

Sewer Lateral Repair or Replacement – We Can Help with the Cost

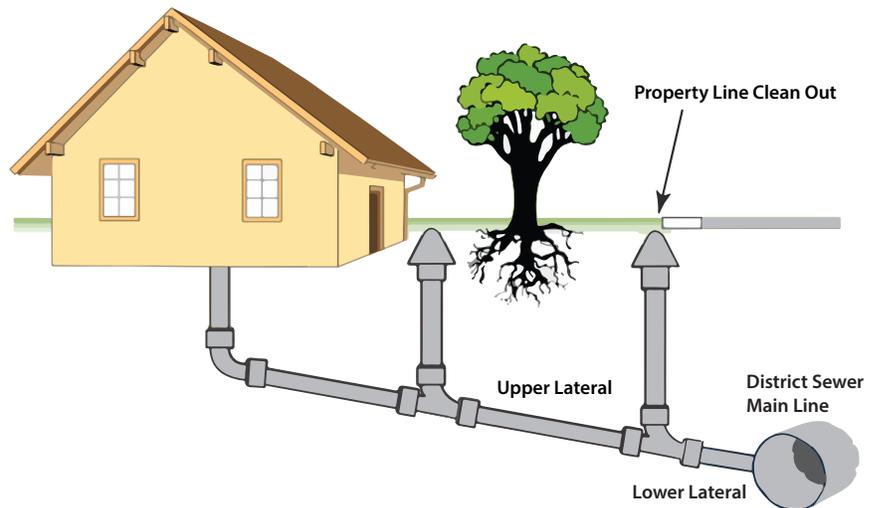
Did you know that the homeowner/property owner is responsible for maintaining the upper part of the pipe that connects your home to the main sewer line? This pipe is called a sewer lateral, and as it gets older, it can crack, leak, or get blocked (tree roots are often the culprit). This can lead to serious backups and overflows, which are messy problems that you do not want!

We know sewer lateral repairs or replacements can be costly. That's why we created the Sewer Lateral Assistance Program—to help

homeowners manage the expense. You can apply for a low-interest loan of up to \$15,000 to cover the cost of repairs or replacement. Repayment is spread out over 10 years with a low 2% interest rate.

Want to learn more or apply? Visit www.lgvsd.org/sewer-lateral-assistance-program.

If you notice signs of sewer trouble, don't wait! This program is a great way to protect your home, your neighborhood, and the environment from sewer backups and overflows.



In short, they're not just maintaining a system—they're safeguarding a critical community investment, ensuring it works exactly as it should, now and into the future.

Meet the Sewer Collections System Team

Greg Pease
Collections/
Safety Manager



Rob Fernandes
Lead Operator



Manuel
Cardenas
Operator III



Roy Tapia
Operator I



Bob Buchholz
Lead Operator



Chris Gill
Operator III



Cole Franklin
Operator III





Household Hazardous Waste in Drains Causes Multiple Problems

Disposing of Household Hazardous Waste the Right Way

Do you have old paint, batteries, cleaners, or garden chemicals sitting around your property? If so, you're not alone—and it's very important to handle them the correct way.

Household hazardous waste (HHW) contains toxic chemicals—and they must **not** be thrown in the trash or poured down the drain—in fact improper disposal of HHW is illegal. Why? Because these chemicals can be extremely harmful to public health, and to the environment.

Why Proper Disposal Matters

Protects your health

Products like bleach, pesticides, and automotive fluids can release toxic fumes or cause skin burns if mishandled. When you dispose of HHW properly, you protect yourself, your family, and your neighborhood from these health risks.

Protects the environment

Improper disposal allows hazardous chemicals to seep into soil, streams, and groundwater. Taking HHW to a designated facility helps keep our water clean and protects local ecosystems and wildlife habitats.

Prevents fires

Flammable chemicals like old gasoline, aerosols, paint, or pool chemicals can ignite if tossed in your regular trash. Dropping them off at a hazardous waste facility helps reduce the risk of fire—at home and at the landfill.

Supports recycling and safe disposal

Professionals can recycle many HHW items to reduce their impact. By using proper disposal options, you reduce waste and help keep our community green.

Residents in the Las Gallinas area have several easy, safe options for HHW disposal right here in Marin County:



Marin Household Hazardous Waste Facility

- 565 Jacoby Street, San Rafael
- www.marinhhw.com
- 415-485-6806

ZEROWASTEMARIN

Zero Waste Marin

Offers resources and information on residential hazardous waste programs

- www.zerowastemarin.org/hhw
- 415-473-6647

Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District

Drop-off site for compact fluorescent bulbs and batteries

- 300 Smith Ranch Road
- www.lgvsd.org/recycling-information
- 415-472-1734

Let's work together to keep our community and local environment clean, safe, and beautiful!

Wastewater treatment facilities are not designed to remove toxic chemicals commonly found in household hazardous waste. When people pour things like paints, solvents, medications, or pesticides down the household drain or into the storm drain, those chemicals enter the sewer system and eventually reach the wastewater treatment plant.

- They can kill the helpful bacteria used in the treatment process (which are essential for breaking down waste), and can damage treatment equipment due to corrosive or reactive chemicals.
- Toxic chemicals that standard treatment processes cannot remove will pass through the system untreated, contaminating waterways, wetlands, and marine habitats—and harming fish, wildlife, and ecosystems.
- Improper disposal increases the workload and maintenance needs at the treatment plant, raising operating costs and creating safety hazards for workers exposed to dangerous substances.

By keeping household hazardous waste out of the wastewater system, you help treatment plants operate efficiently—as well as protect public health and ecosystems.



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101 Lucas Valley Road, Suite 300, San Rafael, CA 94903
Phone (415) 472-1734 • Fax (415) 499-7715
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Megan Clark
Nicholas Lavrov
Craig K. Murray
Gary E. 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.

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 2024 from Government Finance Officers Association.

Printed on recycled paper using soy-based inks.

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"Avoid PFAS and Permethrin Pollution" continued from page 1

What can you do?

- **DO** check labels so you can make the decision to reduce your use of harmful chemicals in the products you buy.
- **DO NOT** pour permethrin-containing products (or any other chemicals!) down the drain, toilet, or storm drain.
- **DO** dispose of hazardous waste at proper collection facilities (see "Disposing" article).

Together, we can help prevent PFAS and permethrin from entering our waters—helping to keep them clean and safe for generations to come.



"Two Key Sewer Initiatives " continued from page 1

laterals, which lie on private property. Many residents have already chosen to do so by working with the District's contractor, either paying directly or through the District's Sewer Lateral Assistance Program (see article on page 2). When both lower and upper laterals get upgraded, the whole system performs better and lasts longer.

Efficient Design, Lasting Results

Our in-house team designed these projects, which helped save money and get us to construction faster by streamlining the process. Looking to the future, we're investing \$1.5 million per fiscal year (\$1 million for sewer main rehabilitation and \$500,000 for inflow and infiltration reduction). This allows us to continue with these crucial maintenance and repair efforts, ensuring we're supporting a stronger, more efficient infrastructural foundation for tomorrow, and well into the future.