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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.

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Don’t Pour Turkey Fryer Oil Down the Drain; Recycle It!

That deep-fried turkey may be delicious, but what about all that oil left over from frying? Your first instinct might be to pour it down the drain. Out-of-sight, out-of-mind, right? Wrong. When Fats, Oil, or Grease (FOG) is washed down the drain, it 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 and clog pipes, much like a clog in an artery. Liquid oils coat pipes and contribute to blockages.

Blockages in your home’s sewer lateral can cause wastewater to back up into your home, 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; 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.

Small amounts of fats, oils, and grease can be wiped up with paper towels. Larger amounts of oil from deep frying should be brought to a recycling center where it is converted into livestock feed or biodiesel. Stege customers can recycle used cooking oil at the El Cerrito Recycling Center at 7501 Schmidt Lane, El Cerrito, which is next door to the Stege Sanitary District main office. For more information on recycling cooking oil, go to www.ebmud.com and search for “residential cooking oil and grease drop-off.” For a free brochure on how to keep pipes FOG-free, call EBMUD at (510) 287-1651.

Recycle cooking oil at the El Cerrito Recycling Center.
New Combination Truck Leads Maintenance Fleet

In 2013, the District bought its first combination sewer cleaning truck. Last month, the District took possession of its second truck. The truck took a year to build and it is built to last.

Before making the purchase, staff did extensive research and the verdict is that this new GapVax truck is extremely reliable. Although in wide use in Southern California and in other parts of the state, this is the first GapVax truck operating in the Bay Area.

The combination truck uses jets of high-pressure water to cut through and disintegrate roots and other blockages in the sewer mains and then vacuums up the debris. A 50-gallon tank supplies water to a set of spinning nozzles that operate at 3,000 psi. All of this is powered by the truck engine alone, which makes the operation streamlined and very dependable.

The District continues to replace its cracked and worn vitrified clay pipes, some of which are nearly 100 years old, with more flexible and durable HDPE pipe. Since mechanical rodder blades would damage the HDPE pipes, the original combination truck will continue to operate as a backup to the new truck.

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Holiday Food Drive and Toy Program

Once again, the Stege Sanitary District will collect food donations for Thanksgiving and toys for the Holiday Toy Program. Food donations can be dropped off in the collection barrel that has been set up in the lobby of the District office on Schmidt Lane. Bring tomato sauce, canned fruit and vegetables, pasta, dried beans, rice, peanut butter, and other canned foods to the office Monday-Thursdays 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, and Friday until 4:00 pm.

New, unwrapped toys and monetary donations to the Holiday Toy Program can be dropped off at the District office anytime of the year. Toys for preteens and teens, including board games, puzzles, and balls, are especially needed.

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Sewer Service Charge

Sewer service charges cover the cost of operating and maintaining the sanitary sewer system. Stege Sanitary District collects and delivers sanitary wastewater to EBMUD for treatment. EBMUD charges a separate fee for wastewater treatment. Sewer service charges are collected through the annual property tax bills issued by the County. The line item STEGE SEWER CHG are the fees assessed to your property by Stege Sanitary District.
San Pablo Avenue Improvement Plan Update

In 2014, the City of El Cerrito adopted an improvement plan for the two and one-half mile section of San Pablo Avenue that runs from El Cerrito Plaza to the Baxter Creek Gateway Park. The new plan envisions open spaces, pedestrian walkways, and bicycle paths in addition to new shops, restaurants, offices, and housing.

Stege Sanitary District provides sewer service for the San Pablo Improvement Plan area. The level of new development proposed by the City of El Cerrito will require upgrading existing sewer lines to service the area. To pay for the necessary sewer upgrades, the District has imposed a special impact fee for the San Pablo Improvement Area, which went into effect in January 2018. The impact fee is in addition to the fees required for new sewer connections. Existing Stege ratepayers will not see any increase in their sewer charges because of these improvements.

Installation of the new sewer pipes is set to begin as early as next summer and will take approximately one month. During that time, businesses along San Pablo Avenue will be open, but parking along the corridor will be restricted, as pipes will be laid in the zone used for parking. Construction will take place from 9:00 am-3:00 pm.

New sewer pipes will be laid in San Pablo Avenue starting as early as next summer.

The San Pablo Avenue Improvement Plan will create pedestrian and bicycle pathways in addition to new shops, offices, restaurants, and housing.

Don’t Forget

Sewer Problems? CALL US FIRST!

If you see water backing up into your home, call Stege before you call a plumber. That number is (510) 524-4667. It is answered 24/7 by a real person. The problem may be in your lateral, or it may be in the sewer main. If necessary, we will send a crew out to investigate. The inspection is free and we try to respond within one hour.

Online Newsletter

Keep up to date with what is happening in your sewer service district. Sign up for the Stege online newsletter by going to the District website, www.stegesan.org, or by sending your email address to newsletter@stegesan.org.

Don’t Connect Roof or Yard Drains to the Sanitary Sewer System

Piping runoff water into the sanitary system, either from house gutters or a sump pump, is illegal. Doing so violates District regulations and other federal and local ordinances. Any illegal drain(s) must be disconnected from the sanitary sewer system and re-routed to the appropriate storm drainage system. Please contact the City (or the County for Kensington) for assistance with storm runoff requirements.

Properly Dispose of Unwanted Medications

Medications should not be flushed down the toilet. Wastewater treatment plants are not designed to remove these substances, which are harmful to the environment and may end up in the Bay. Bring unwanted medications to the El Cerrito Recycling Center (7501 Schmidt Lane).
District Wins Award for Exceptional Public Outreach and Advocacy

The California Special Districts Association (CSDA) is a statewide, not-for-profit association of independent special districts that was formed in 1969 to promote good governance and professional development in independent special districts.

Stege Sanitary District is a member of CSDA and at this year’s 50th anniversary annual conference held September 25-28, 2019 in Anaheim, the District received the association’s Exceptional Public Outreach & Advocacy Award (Small District Category) for its partnership with KIDS for the BAY Program to promote environmental awareness in elementary school children.

For the past ten years, the District has worked with KIDS for the BAY to introduce over 600 elementary school children to the Bay watershed environment that we all share.

As a condition of funding, the District worked with KIDS for the BAY to include a wastewater component to their Watershed Action Program. Students learn about the importance of preventing sanitary sewer system back-ups and how to reduce pollution entering the bay. They learn about the importance of keeping FOG (Fats, Oils, Grease) out of the sanitary sewer system and how even “flushable” wipes shouldn’t be flushed. In learning that a healthy sewer system helps our creeks and our Bay, students are empowered to become environmentalists and take action in their community.

Students learn about the Bay watershed.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5C-XPdQfS6c

Stege Sanitary District and KIDS for the BAY Video: