



# THE ENDEAVOR

A PUBLICATION OF THE STEGE SANITARY DISTRICT OF CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

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SERVING EL CERRITO, KENSINGTON, AND RICHMOND ANNEX

Summer 2019

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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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## Ten Years of Helping Local Students Become Inspired Environmentalists



Since 1992, KIDS for the BAY has been introducing San Francisco Bay Area elementary school students to the Bay watershed environment that we all share. For the past 10 years, the District has been part of that mission, supporting local students and teachers and inspiring a new generation of environmentalists with an increased awareness of watershed stewardship.

During its decade-long partnership with KIDS for the BAY, the District has helped over 500 students in the District understand that a healthy sewer system helps our creeks and our Bay. They learned that “FOGs” (Fats, Oil, and Grease) are dangerous to the sewer

because they can harden, clog pipes, and cause wastewater to overflow into neighborhood creeks, storm drains, and the Bay.

Hands-on science and nature field trips are a big part of KIDS for the BAY’s program of environmental awareness. Whether students are investigating a striped bass fish, using satellite maps to create their own estuary model, studying the rocky shore habitat, bird-watching, or cleaning up 40 gallons of trash from Keller Beach in Richmond, students learn that everyone shares responsibility for protecting their environment. **S**

*As a condition of funding, the District worked with KIDS for the BAY to include a wastewater component to their Watershed Action Program.*



*Students from Madera Elementary School in El Cerrito at Keller Beach in Richmond. Left: Studying the rocky shore habitat Right: Bird watching*

# Sewer Service Rate Increase

On June 27, the Stege Sanitary District Board of Directors will consider raising sewer service rates. This is the first time in three years that rates have been raised.




The rate increase is designed to:

1. Fund operating costs and existing debt service expenses;
2. Fund necessary capital improvements;
3. Maintain reasonable and adequate operating and capital fund working capital targets and reserves; and
4. Minimize rate impacts on customers.

Stege's most significant funding challenge over the next five years is the construction cost of the Sewer Rehabilitation Program. Under an EPA Consent Decree, which Stege entered into along with EBMUD and six other municipalities, the District must reduce the amount of storm and ground water that gets into sewer pipes. This will require Stege to replace over two miles of sewer pipe per year. Along with other planned capital projects, work over the next five years is projected to cost about \$17.8 million.

While present charges are adequate to cover operations and maintenance, and debt service expenses, they are not adequate to fund the District's capital improvement plan.

Even with the increased sewer service charges, Stege Sanitary District's rate structure remains among the lowest in the Bay Area (see chart next page.) 

## Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Budget

### REVENUE

#### Sewer Operation Fund

Non-Operating Income:	
Interest	70,000
Miscellaneous	21,000
Operating Income:	
Permit & Inspection Fees	15,000
Sewer Service Charges	2,467,000
Contracted Services	30,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2,603,000</b>

#### Capital Fund

Non-Operating Income:	
Interest	15,000
Operating Income:	
Property Tax	400,000
Capital Service Charges	2,535,000
Connection Fees	150,000
San Pablo Ave. Impact Fee	250,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>3,350,000</b>

**TOTAL REVENUE 5,953,000**

### EXPENSES

#### Operating Expenses:

Maintenance/Engineering	2,069,146
Pump Stations	16,460
Contracted Repairs	64,000
General & Administration	806,265

#### Subtotal

**Operating Expenses 2,955,871**

#### Capital Expenses

Capital Equipment	465,000
Debt Repayment -SRF Loan	148,200
Sewer Rehabilitation	3,189,000

**Subtotal Capital Expenses 3,802,200**

#### Other Expenses

Transfer from Capital Fund	-
Retiree Medical Fund	-

**TOTAL EXPENSES 6,758,071**

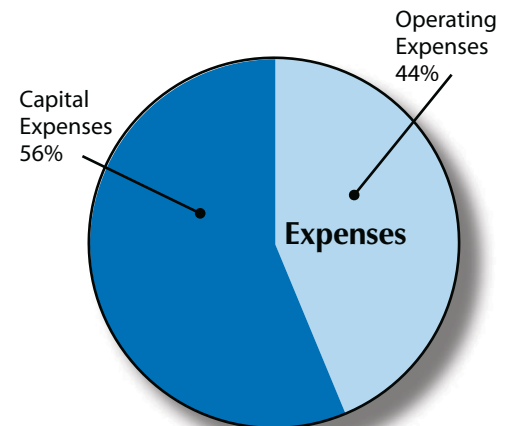
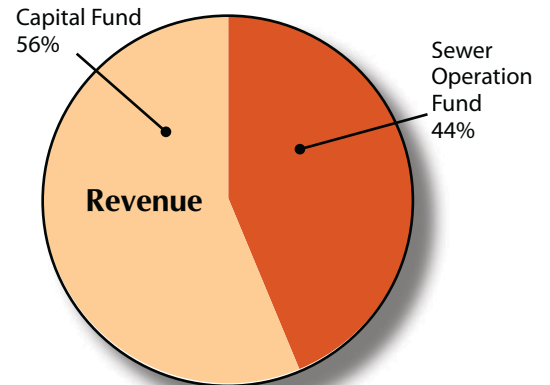
#### Transfer to/(from) Reserves

Revenue	5,953,000
Expenses	(6,758,071)

**Subtotal (805,071)**

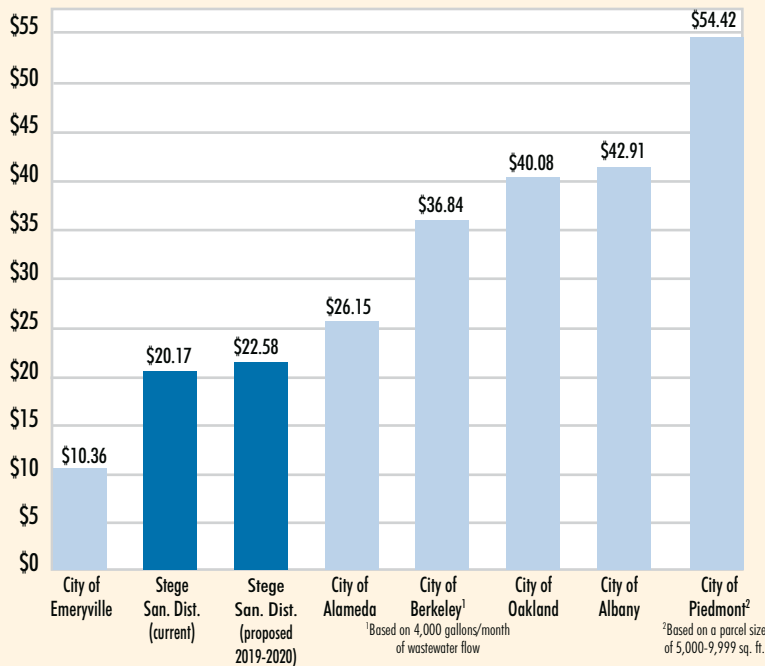
#### TRANSFER

**TO/(FROM) RESERVES (805,071)**



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

## Monthly Residential Service Rate Comparison



## Backflow Prevention Device

Raw sewage backing up through bathtubs, showers, drains, and toilets into your home is something no homeowner wants to see. But it can happen, and when it does the mess and expense to cleanup, disinfect, and repair the damage can be huge.

Backflows can happen if the home's sewer lateral is not far enough above the rim of the nearest upstream sewer manhole and there is a blockage downstream that forces sewage back upstream. Backflows can also happen if your sewer lateral has a blockage, causing wastewater from your home to flow out of the lowest drain into your home.

Luckily, there is a way to prevent a sewer backflow from entering your home. A backflow prevention device (BPD) provides an emergency escape path should wastewater back up into your home's lateral. If a backflow occurs, sewage will flow out the BPD outside your home and not come up the drains into your home.

A backflow prevention device is installed on your lateral. The District requires such devices on all new buildings, on laterals that have been repaired or replaced, and on existing buildings that have drain outlets 12" or less above the rim of the next upstream manhole. If you are unsure if you have or need a backflow prevention device, call Stege for a free inspection of your system. Installing a device requires a permit, which is available at the District's office on Schmidt Lane in El Cerrito. Homeowners may install the device themselves or use a contractor to do the work. A list of approved contractors is available on the District's website, [www.stegesan.org](http://www.stegesan.org). S



*Mushroom type backflow prevention device*

## 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. S

### Plumbing Contractors

For a list of plumbing contractors registered to work on private laterals in the District, visit [www.stegesan.org](http://www.stegesan.org). Please note, Stege recommends getting at least three bids before starting work. S

### Keep FOG out of Drains

Fats, Oils, or Grease (FOG) that is washed down the drain can clog household plumbing, sewer laterals, and sewer mains. Keep FOG out of your drains. S



### 4th of July Celebration



Join the City of El Cerrito in celebrating Independence Day at beautiful Cerrito Vista Park with arts exhibits, carnival food and games, live entertainment, and an animal-free circus.

While there, be sure to visit the District booth, where you will be able to ask questions of Board members, view maps, learn about backflow prevention devices, and pick up useful pamphlets, and past newsletters. S

[www.stegesan.org](http://www.stegesan.org)

Find the latest announcements; a list of registered plumbing contractors; sewer permit and fee information; Board meeting schedule, minutes, and agendas; and FAQs on the District's website, [www.stegesan.org](http://www.stegesan.org). S



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# Spotlight on Service

## Worker's Compensation Excellence Award

In February, the District was notified that it had completed all the requirements to be presented with the California Sanitation Risk Management Authority (CSRMA) Workers' Compensation Excellence Award.



The award recognizes agencies whose risk management training programs and procedures contribute to a safe working environment.

In order to be considered for the award, Stege needed to demonstrate above average competence in eight different categories. These included having no lost time claims due to low back strain/overexertion; having a plan in place to help injured employees return to work; recognizing situations most likely to cause injury; having a program to encourage employees to reduce health risk factors; and recognizing those items that require a team or a mechanical lifting device.

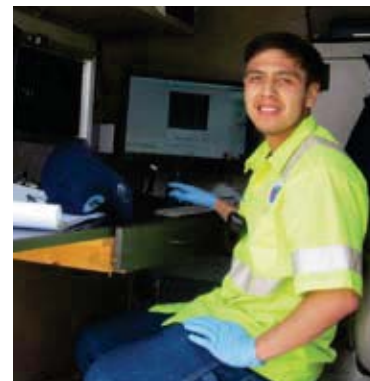
As part of the award, Stege employees received a cash gift card and a wall plaque. **S**

### 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.stegsan.org](http://www.stegsan.org), or by sending your email address to [newsletter@stegesan.org](mailto:newsletter@stegesan.org).

## Carlos Perez

Carlos Perez is Stege's newest Collection System Worker. His duties include using a Closed Circuit TV to remotely survey and record the condition of the District's sanitary sewer lines, and cleaning the lines



using a combination hydrojetter and vacuum.

Carlos' first day as a full-time employee was June 1, but he's been with Stege since March as a temporary worker.

After two years at Contra Costa College,

Carlos worked at several jobs, but decided what he enjoyed most was working outdoors with his hands. This included his time with the City of San Pablo as a maintenance worker where his duties included cleaning storm drains.

Carlos feels that his interests and experience are a good fit with Stege and he's looking forward to many years with the District.

In his free time, Carlos enjoys sports, especially soccer. **S**