General Manager’s Message

At the “State of Organics in California” press briefing on August 12, 2014 in Sacramento, Castro Valley Sanitary District (CVSan) was recognized by Assemblymember Wesley Chesbro. CVSan received this honor as a public agency that is a champion in successfully meeting the organic materials recycling challenge in partnership with Waste Management of Alameda County, Inc. We were pleased to be presented with this honor on the steps of the California State Capitol (See photo at right).

In 2002, CVSan was the first jurisdiction in Alameda County to have a curbside food scrap recycling program, which has contributed to Castro Valley’s 50 percent reduction in waste going to landfill since 2005. In 2007, CVSan produced a comprehensive Schools Food Scrap Recycling Guide and has partnered with 16 schools in implementing a sustainable and educational food scrap recycling program. In addition, 71 percent of the District’s 130 commercial businesses that are Food Service Establishments have organics collection programs. Proper organics (green waste, food waste, and oils and grease) management by the entire community helps keep our sewer pipes flowing and our landfills free from material that can be composted to benefit the environment.

Congratulations, CVSan community, and thanks for your support in this important work.

Roland P. Williams, Jr.
General Manager

Keeping an Eye on the Pipes

As drought conditions persist, folks are using less water on outdoor landscaping. That means bushes, trees, and other plants look for nourishment elsewhere. Sewer pipes are a tempting source of nutrients for thirsty plant roots, which can penetrate pipes and obstruct flow. Another challenge is excessive amounts of Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) that are present in wastewater flows. Eventually these materials form large masses that can cause blockages in the pipelines. Maintenance workers use a high-tech pipeline camera system to inspect the pipes and identify these conditions before they result in severe blockages and overflows.

Clear FOG From Holiday Cooking

As the holidays approach, CVSan asks Castro Valley community members to help keep Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) out of the drain.

Why? Because FOG is bad news for sewers and can build up over time and possibly lead to blocked sewers, overflows, and property damage. With your cooperation, we can keep our pipes clear of FOG.

Small amounts of FOG (a few ounces or so) can be placed in your green organics cart. Just mix it in or pour on top of food, food-soiled paper, and yard trimmings.

Do not dispose of large amounts of FOG at home. Instead, please visit www.stop-waste.org for large-quantity disposal locations.
CVSan Celebrates 75 Years of Service

CVSan celebrated its 75th anniversary on July 25th with an open house. Demonstrations, hands-on activities, and free ice cream were enjoyed by over 250 attendees. Many proclamations were received by dignitaries and agencies acknowledging CVSan’s important role in our community.

Since July 25, 1939, CVSan has worked to manage wastewater, as well as recycling and garbage collection. The Board of Directors, management and staff are proud of our ongoing strides toward sustaining a healthy environment for all Castro Valley residents.

The Path to Zero Waste

On August 9th, the Board of Directors approved CVSan’s Zero Waste Strategic Plan, which includes strategies for maximizing diversion from landfill over the next 15 years. Through a stakeholder and community participation process, CVSan developed 75 options to reach a goal of Zero Waste (at least 90% diversion) by the year 2029. All options will be reviewed further for approval, when applicable, according to the plan timeline. CVSan has provided leadership in Alameda County through the implementation of innovative recycling and organics diversion programs, and we look forward to continuing to partner with the community to achieve Zero Waste.

Construction Update

CVSan has kicked off a comprehensive Pump Station rehabilitation project at two of the nine pump stations within the sanitary sewer system. Construction has been underway for approximately three months and will be completed shortly. The upgrades to the two pump stations are the first significant improvements made to the stations since they were installed in 1965. The improvements will increase safety, reliability, and emergency response capabilities at both pump stations. These two pump stations currently serve approximately 275 single-family homes in Castro Valley.

CVSan’s Newest 4RStars

Congratulations to our newest 4R Star businesses: Neighborhood Church and Eden Township Healthcare District! The CVSan 4R Business, 4R Planet program certifies “4R Star” businesses that complete ongoing activities in each of the 4R categories—Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Rot (organics).

CVSan businesses that recycle and add organics service are most likely already completing all four Rs. For a limited time, businesses that get certified receive a cash incentive of up to $525, free advertising, and more! For a directory of the more than 90 businesses that have already been certified, please visit www.cvsan.org/4RStarDirectory.

Waste Free Gift Ideas

Looking for gift ideas? Consider “waste-free” gifts, such as museum or zoo passes. Did you know there are gifts that promote reuse? For example, you can give a subscription to rent clean toys and then send them back (postage paid) to be professionally sanitized in exchange for another toy. A service like this allows children to have access to a variety of toys without families having to purchase, store, and figure out what to do with toys that little ones have outgrown.

Do you have a low- or no-waste gift idea? Join the conversation and send a tweet to @CVSan.

Spotlight on Multi-family Dwellings

The County-wide Mandatory Recycling Ordinance will require property owners and managers of multi-family dwellings to provide sufficient organics service to capture food scraps and compostable paper generated on-site by 2016. CVSan is proud to report that 62 multi-family dwellings in Castro Valley already have a food scrap recycling program! Great job to all the multi-family tenants, managers, and owners for reducing waste with an organics program!

Sewer Management Success

CVSan recently updated its Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP), the State Water Board-mandated operations and organizational planning document that outlines the agency’s wastewater collection programs. New to CVSan’s SSMP is a comprehensive schedule of emergency response activities, to be implemented in the event of sanitary sewer overflows. The activities include spill mitigation, notification and coordination with the public and/or other agencies, and accurate reporting, as required by law. CVSan emergency first-responders and staff have reviewed, trained, and field-tested several key components of the updated SSMP. The results: timely and effective emergency response when overflows occur.