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# CUSTOMER FOCUS

# Union Sanitary District

○ VOLUME II | ○ WINTER | ○ 2007

## Fun Facts About USD

○ | USD crews place television cameras inside of every sewer line to look for cracks, roots, grease buildup or damage to the pipeline.

○ | The average residence sends about 200 gallons of wastewater to USD every day from sinks, showers, toilets and washing machines.

○ | A part of USD's flow is directed to Hayward Freshwater Marsh, where over 190 species of migratory birds have been spotted.



## Quiet Utility Sounds Off About Statewide Award

Union Sanitary District may be the “quietest utility” in the Tri-Cities, but we want to make some noise about winning this statewide award! We were recently selected among nine regional finalists as having the wastewater “Collection System of the Year” in California. We’re honored to have received this award for outstanding performance in 2005 in the categories of regulatory compliance, maintenance, safety, training, emergency preparedness and administration for sewer systems of 500 miles or more.



USD owns and maintains over 770 miles of sewer lines in the Tri-City area. For the statewide competition, we were evaluated by the California Water Environment Association (CWEA) and compared to agencies throughout California. CWEA is the state industry association for

wastewater professionals, with 7,700 members. The CWEA was impressed by our on-site safety training center, our use of new technologies and our emergency preparedness plans. They also admired our high level of employee

involvement. Many staff members talked to the CWEA during its visit and demonstrated the important contributions of knowledge and expertise they provide to our programs. The City of San Diego was also a finalist for this award.

All of these achievements added up to USD's fourth

statewide award since 1987, and recognition from our peers as a top performer in the wastewater industry. We're very proud of our work to safeguard public health and foster environmental protection while providing great service at a low cost. To learn more about us, and how we enhance our customers' quality of life, just take a look at the following pages!

# USD's Operations and Maintenance Teams

## Board of Directors

Pat D. Gacoscos, Vice Chair  
Representing Union City

L. Patricia Kite  
Representing Newark

Anjali Lathi  
Representing Fremont

Jennifer Toy  
Representing Fremont

Dan Wilkowsky, Chair  
Representing Fremont

## General Manager

Richard Currie



USD works closely with over 80 industries in the Tri-City area. We tell them what they can and cannot discharge to the sewer, and we monitor and sample their wastes throughout the year. Keeping industrial pollutants out of the Bay is an important element of our stewardship of the environment.

If you have questions, please call us at: (510) 477-7500.

USD operates its Alvarado treatment plant in Union City 24 hours a day, seven days a week cleaning wastewater to a safe level before it is returned to the environment. The District's Operations and Maintenance teams are an important partnership which ensures that treatment processes and equipment are running smoothly.

The Total Productive Operations (TPO) team consists of State-Certified Operators who are responsible for monitoring the processes that treat wastewater and ensure the District's compliance with federal, state and regional environmental regulations. Operators use information from instruments, laboratory tests and physical tests to keep track of these processes and determine if adjustments are needed. They also respond to "after hours" customer trouble calls and dispatch assistance.

Working with the operators are members of USD's Fabrication, Maintenance and Construction (FMC) team. The FMC Team

maintains and repairs the thousands of pieces of equipment necessary for wastewater treatment, such as pumps, compressors, valves, generators, mechanical drives and gear boxes. USD also uses the byproducts of treatment processes to generate power. The District uses this power to

save over \$500,000 per year on energy bills. Both teams monitor and maintain this power-generating equipment.

The TPO and FMC teams communicate and coordinate plans throughout the day and at the turnover of each shift. "They have pride in their craftsmanship,"

says Larry Simmers, TPO Coach. "They are also committed to learning new processes and control systems that increase their skills and help them stay current with the industry's new technologies."

"Every day brings challenges that TPO and FMC teams work together to solve with the aim of serving our customers and protecting the environment," says FMC Coach Dave Port. "They are a great asset to the community."



## USD's Pollution Prevention Program



*As part of our goal to maintain and improve the quality of water in San Francisco Bay, USD educates local businesses about ways to prevent pollution. These partnerships will help prevent sewer spills and will reduce the amount of pollutants that come to our plant for treatment.*

### Restaurant FOG Program Reduces Grease In Sewers

USD's Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) program encourages restaurants to remove grease before it goes down drains and into sewer lines. Solidified grease in sewer lines is the leading cause of overflows. If sewage from an overflow gets into storm drains it can flow to creeks and the Bay untreated.

USD works with Tri-City restaurants to promote prevention practices such as recycling excess grease used for deep frying. USD inspectors make routine visits to ensure compliance with these requirements and to educate restaurant owners about other best management practices.

# VALUE FOR YOUR UTILITY DOLLARS

We all agree that we pay a lot for utilities, and they are a big chunk of our budget. What part does USD play in the typical homeowner's utility bill? Here's how it stacks up on a monthly basis.

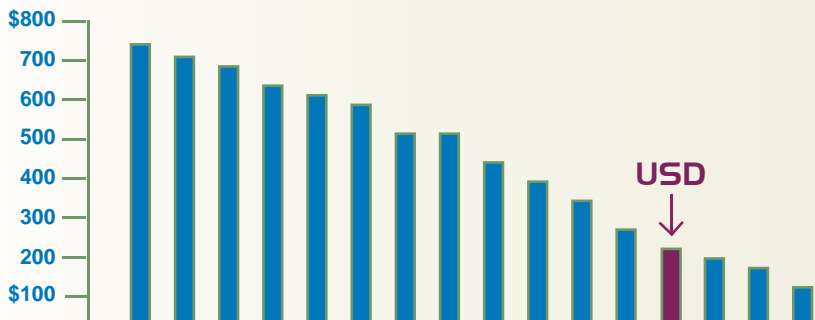


Electricity	Cable	Natural Gas	Water	Newspaper	Sewer
\$66.78	\$49.25	\$42.09	\$36.29	\$20.22	\$19.00

For \$19 per month, USD:

- Maintains more than 770 miles of sewer lines
- Operates and maintains 4,130 pieces of equipment at our treatment plant
- Keeps seven pump stations running 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Has staff available at our Union City plant 24/7 to operate the treatment plant and respond to customer trouble calls
- Meets all Clean Water and Clean Air Standards for the San Francisco Bay Area
- Operates an on-site laboratory to make sure we meet those standards

## How Do Our Rates Compare With Our Neighbors?



We annually survey 27 Bay Area wastewater agencies and communities to compare our residential sewer service charges and ensure that we're giving our customers a competitive rate. The latest survey shows charges ranging from \$119 to \$749 per year. At \$229 annually, USD is giving award-winning service while keeping rates low.

# ABOUT OUR FEES

ALTHOUGH USD's ANNUAL SEWER SERVICE CHARGES are placed on your Alameda County property tax statement, they are not a property tax and are not related to the assessed value of a property. They represent a charge for a service provided, similar to your phone and garbage bills. We simply include the yearly charges on the property tax statement to save the administrative cost of generating and mailing our own invoices, which could total more than \$500,000 annually!

The charges appear on the tax statement as a line item next to our phone number (477-7500) and are listed as "Union Sewer Svc."

**Win A Year**  
 Visit our website at [www.unionsanitary.com](http://www.unionsanitary.com) & answer a few fun questions to be eligible to win a year of FREE service - a \$229 value!!  
 For residential customers only  
**of FREE Sewer Service!**

## USD's Mission:

To safely and responsibly collect and treat wastewater for the Tri-Cities while protecting human health and improving the environment in a way that benefits our customers, employees and the community.

○ SERVICE | ○ WATER QUALITY | ○ ENVIRONMENT

Protecting Our Community and San Francisco Bay

[WWW.UNIONSANITARY.COM](http://WWW.UNIONSANITARY.COM)



## Your Views Are Welcome

Meetings of the  
USD Board of Directors  
are open to the public

- | Meetings are held on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Boardroom at our Administrative Headquarters.
- | Visit our website for the upcoming agenda: [www.unionsanitary.com](http://www.unionsanitary.com).
- | Our newsletter can also be found on our website.



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Win FREE  
Sewer Service  
For A Year!  
Details Inside

## More Tips For Helping The Environment

### Less Toxic Pest Control

Pesticides can run off into storm drains that lead to San Francisco Bay. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) provides alternatives to the use of toxic pesticides that are healthier for you, your pets and the environment.

USD partners with several local hardware stores and nurseries to give customers information about IPM:

Navlet's Garden Center  
Regan's Nursery  
Dale Hardware  
Orchard Supply Hardware  
(Fremont & Newark)  
Warm Springs Ace Hardware

Look for the "Our Water, Our World" symbol on products for a healthier yard and environment. For more information, see [www.ourwaterourworld.com](http://www.ourwaterourworld.com).

### What Should Go Down The Drain?

Pollution Prevention starts with you! Wastewater treatment can't remove all pollutants, so the best action you can take is to prevent them from entering the sewer system in the first place.

Don't put oil, grease or solids such as coffee grounds, eggshells, or other food wastes down your drain. Some food wastes can cause buildup in sewer lines even after grinding in a disposal.



Don't use your sewer as a dumping ground for medication, paint or pesticides. See [www.stopwaste.org](http://www.stopwaste.org) for information about safe disposal of household hazardous waste and dropoff schedules.

### Keep Medicines Out Of The Bay!

Don't flush those old prescription medicines down the drain! Treatment doesn't remove 100% of all substances from wastewater. Some of your expired or unwanted medication could flow into the Bay. Be on the lookout for "Safe Medicine Disposal Days" at local Walgreens drugstore locations.

USD collects controlled substances in partnership with Walgreens' pharmacists, the City of Fremont and the Bay Area Pollution Prevention Group, then turns them over to the Police Department for incineration. Bring your medicine in original containers with your personal information marked out. The fish will thank you! For more information, contact us at (510) 477-7621.

