

# DOWNSTREAM

NEWSLETTER

## Board of Directors

Allan H. Juliussen, President

Don Omsted, Vice President

Judy Hanson, Director

Elaine Sullivan, Director

David Kulchin, Director

Paul J. Bushee, General Manager

WASTEWATER AND RECYCLED WATER SERVICE TO COMMUNITIES WITHIN ENCINITAS, LA COSTA, AND LEUCADIA

## No Wipes Down the Pipes!



WIPES  
DOWN  
THE  
PIPES



CAUSE  
CLOGS  
& WASTE  
MONEY!



The Leucadia Wastewater District, like other wastewater agencies across the nation, is experiencing an increase in required maintenance due to the popularity of personal cleansing wipes that are disposed down the toilet.

**Despite misleading labels that say wipes are "flushable," our recent experience proves they are not.**

Wipes will go down the toilet when flushed, and can flow through sewer lines if the flow in the pipes is adequate and the line is free of obstructions. However, because wipes don't break down like toilet paper, they often get caught on roots or other debris in your lateral or our pipelines where they can bunch up, and cause a blockage — which could result in a sewer spill or backup into your home.

Despite our best efforts to keep wipes out of toilets, many wipes do make it through your sewer lateral and into our pipelines. When this happens, they eventually travel to our pump stations where they are either caught on protective screens or cause blockages in the pumps. It's here that the wipes must be removed by hand to allow the flow of wastewater into our pump station to prevent damage to expensive equipment.

This increased maintenance and periodic repairs to our system has caused an increase in operational costs that could affect your sewer rates.



**Recent blockage in District pump**

As a result, LWD will soon be increasing our public outreach efforts to inform and educate citizens about the hazards of putting these wipes down the toilet. Look for increased media coverage and informative environmental issue. And, as always, if you see our crews on the streets, talk to them about questions you may have and learn how you can help.

Here's the bottom line: only human waste and toilet paper should go down the toilet.

Everything else needs to go in the trashcan. If you do this, you'll not only help prevent spills in your own home, but you'll help protect our local environment from sewage spills in the main pipelines and pump stations. It's an easy solution to a growing problem.

Go to LWD's website at [lwwd.org](http://lwwd.org) or Facebook page and watch "The Interrogation", a video about wipes produced by Flora Vista Elementary students through the District's Teacher Grant Program.

# The Drought's Impact on the Sewer System

The ongoing drought in southern CA has had a dramatic impact on numerous industries throughout our area. Each day, we are reminded how important it is to conserve water. And while we struggle to adjust our daily routine to meet new goals, little did we realize the unintended consequences to the wastewater industry.

The amount of wastewater flowing through LWD's sewer system has decreased primarily due to your water conservation efforts. And, as people continue to conserve more, that flow is expected to decrease further. LWD's average flow has decreased from 4.5 MGD (million gallons per day) in 2007 to an average of less than 4 MGD today. That's a 13% decrease in wastewater flow despite a 4% increase in service area population growth.

Years ago LWD's pipeline system was designed for maximum flows based largely on projected population growth. Less water running through the District's sewer lines today means that greater efforts must be focused on maintaining lines that are free of odors and obstructions.



*This root was discovered during our routine pipeline inspection.*

Possibly the biggest "drought" related threat to your home's lateral and our sewer system is "root intrusion". During periods when rainfall is low and home watering is limited, tree roots, in particular, are a significant problem as they search for water. Even if trees are not located directly next to your lateral, their root system is still a threat as they search for water in your lateral by entering joint openings or a damaged pipe. And once they find a way in, your line may begin to slow or even clog. That's when a sewage spill or home back-up occurs.

Another ongoing concern is odors that may occur in sewer lines that are relatively flat. Limited flows in these lines may not be sufficient to ensure that waste and other debris is moved through the system properly. Be on the lookout for slow drains, cracking or raising concrete that may be caused by a root and check for odors as well.

On a larger scale, LWD is doing the same. We have increased our video inspection efforts to identify and correct odor and root intrusion problems. With two video trucks inspecting lines daily and two Vector trucks cleaning lines and removing debris, our crews are identifying and correcting problems before they occur.

Help us stay ahead of the drought. If you have an odor concern or suspect a root problem, notify your plumber and the District at (760) 753-0155. We recommend having your laterals (pipes) inspected about every five years. Check out LWD's Lateral Reimbursement Program before you begin, so we can preapprove your plan. You may be eligible for a District grant.

## LWD Receives Prestigious Award



*LWD staff members Marvin Gonzalez, Ian Riffel and Jeff Stecker are part of the team that helped the District win the Technical Innovation Award from CASA.*

The California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) awarded LWD with the 2015 CASA Achievement Award for Technical Innovation for integrating their frontline Field Services Technicians into LWD's capital project planning through the Asset Management Plan. This program is unique to the wastewater industry and it's helping to prevent spills and provide more accurate budgeting for capital repairs.



# Encina Wastewater Authority's New FOG Station Increases Energy Production

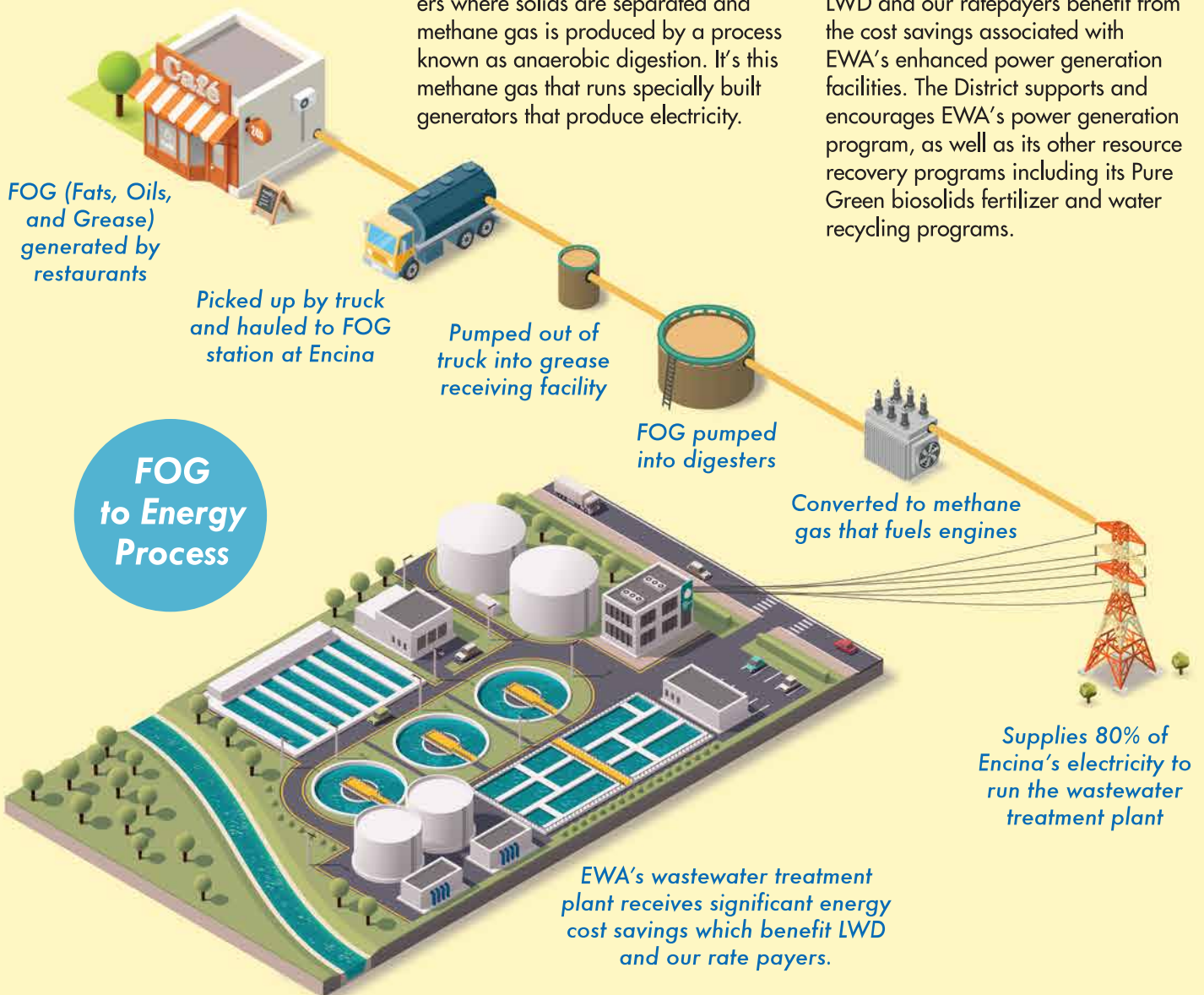
Encina Wastewater Authority (EWA) is North County's regional wastewater treatment facility owned by six public agencies including LWD. Since 1983, EWA has operated an electrical generation plant that uses methane gas from the wastewater treatment process to power large generators that produce facility electricity. In 2014, this energy producing process was significantly enhanced when EWA completed construction of a new facility specifically designed to receive fats, oils, and grease (FOG) from area restaurants.

FOG is generated by restaurants, grocery stores and other non-industrial facilities that use oils, butter and other types of grease in cooking. Regulations require that it be collected and disposed of properly—generally collected into a container that is picked up by a contractor and taken to a facility such as EWA.

The Encina facility currently receives 50,000 to 80,000 gallons of FOG (also called biofuel) per week. That amount is expected to reach up to 160,000 gallons per week in the future. This FOG is piped into digesters where solids are separated and methane gas is produced by a process known as anaerobic digestion. It's this methane gas that runs specially built generators that produce electricity.

What's the benefit of collecting FOG at Encina? Not only does this process allow restaurants and other local industries to dispose of FOG properly, but it also serves as a source of income to finance the facility through "tipping" fees paid by the industries. However, the biggest benefit is that the electricity produced from methane gas has allowed EWA to produce over 80% of its current power needs. This allows EWA to purchase additional power during off-peak hours at night, which results in a significant cost savings to the facility.

LWD and our ratepayers benefit from the cost savings associated with EWA's enhanced power generation facilities. The District supports and encourages EWA's power generation program, as well as its other resource recovery programs including its Pure Green biosolids fertilizer and water recycling programs.



# DOWNSTREAM

www.lwwd.org · Email: info@lwwd.org · Phone: 760-753-0155

## Jeff Stecker, Field Services Superintendent Celebrates 35th Anniversary

On July 14, 2015, the District's Field Services Superintendent Jeff Stecker celebrated his 35th anniversary working at District. The District would like to congratulate and thank Jeff for his years of services.

Over these years, Jeff has climbed up the ranks from the entry level Maintenance position to the District's Maintenance Supervisor and now the Superintendent, which includes overseeing the District's Water Recycling facility. In addition, Jeff has been individually recognized for several statewide awards including: Maintenance Person of the Year (1993) and Supervisor of the Year (twice 2004 & 2006). Jeff also conducted an analysis of changing how the Field Services Team operated and switched the priority to inspecting pipelines with the CCTV truck. The information gathered was incorporated into the Asset Management Plan, which in turn, helped to improve prioritization of repairs and replacement of equipment. LWD just won a Technical Innovation Award for this practice which is unique in the industry.



*"I thoroughly enjoy working at LWD because we've got such a great team of professionals and our work is so essential to living in a healthy community and protecting our local environment."*



LEADERS IN  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION

1960 LA COSTA AVENUE  
CARLSBAD, CA 92009



 Printed on FSC recycled paper  
with soy-based ink

### Prefer Email?

Contact us at [info@lwwd.org](mailto:info@lwwd.org) to start receiving electronic editions of the biannual newsletter and occasional Leucadia Wastewater District updates.

Due to Jeff's positive contributions to the industry, the California Water Environment Association invited Jeff to participate on its Awards Program Committee which is responsible for evaluating award applications statewide. As Chair of the Committee, Jeff was actively involved with the planning of CWEA's Midsummer Conference, which is a large training event designed specifically for wastewater operators.

During his spare time, Jeff spends it with his two sons, three grandkids, his companion and her two dogs. In addition, he loves to run and participate in local running events.

