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NEWSLETTER

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

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LWD's Skilled Operators Work in the Streets and Hit the Books



It's a common sight to see Leucadia Wastewater District's (LWD) operators working on our local streets with LWD's trucks and equipment.

What you may not realize is that LWD's operators are very highly trained and skilled professionals that work tirelessly to ensure that your wastewater service is provided in a safe and efficient manner and according to strict regulatory requirements.

In this edition, we'll show you a close up view of what it takes to operate, repair and maintain LWD's system, which includes over 200 miles of pipelines, 10 pump stations and the Gafner Recycled Water plant. To perform their work, our operators are cross-trained and must be proficient in four distinct areas which include: our large cleaning vehicles or "Vectors", our closed circuit television vehicles, the pump stations, and the water recycling plant.

Each area involves the use of very sophisticated electronics, equipment and computer monitoring systems. To gain the necessary knowledge and expertise to operate these systems, our operators are required to be state certified in a variety of disciplines. The certifications require our employees to pass stringent state examinations, which they study for and take on their own time.

You'll meet three of our skilled professionals – they'll describe what they do and why they chose their profession.



**Gabe Mendez -
Field Service
Technician III**

Gabe's been with LWD for about 3 ½ years, but has worked in the industry for 5 years and like all

our operators, has been trained to work in the Gafner Recycled Water plant, pump stations, on the Closed Circuit TV truck (CCTV) and on Vector trucks. Earning his certifications involves learning computer skills, hydraulics, mechanical issues, safety, and an ever-changing list of regulations.

"My favorite part of the job is working on the Gafner plant and in the CCTV truck because both require using my technical knowledge and keeping everything running smoothly. Since we're a small crew, our jobs are different every day. I really enjoy mentoring the new employees and constantly learning new aspects of the job," states Gabe.

"It's so gratifying to be monitoring for potential pipeline

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or pump station problems and fixing them before we have a spill. I get to use all my training on pumps, machinery and computers as well as interacting with our customers having problems with their lateral pipelines.”

Gabe was the 2013 Employee of the Year and CA Water Environment Association’s Collection System Person of the Year. In his own words, he is “Number 1 Dad of the Year” to his three kids and is supported by “an amazing wife”. He’s continuing to pursue his AA degree in Public Works Management at Palomar College and is working towards becoming a supervisor. ■



Todd Amos – **Field Services Technician II**

Todd’s training so far includes certifications for collection systems and pump stations and he is still taking online classes to further his job classification and to learn more. His favorite work is in the pump stations because he enjoys computer work, working outdoors and because it’s different every day. “LWD is a great place to work because there’s so much focus on maintaining the infrastructure. And it’s interesting and challenging to see what causes problems at the pump stations – grease and wipes are two of our biggest issues to deal with,” says Todd.

“Nothing stays the same at the District – there are constant improvements in how we do our jobs and to ensure safety, which requires us to constantly pursue education and training. Although I like all aspects of the job, working at the

Gafner plant and learning about new recycled water technologies is most interesting. I’ve had quite a bit of customer interaction and it’s so gratifying to help people. And LWD supports more training and education so I’m continuing to learn more about the wastewater industry.” Todd has been with the District for two years, and has three small boys who keep him and his wife extremely busy. ■

Rick Easton – **Field Services Technician I**

Rick’s been with the District for one year and is excited about the future of working in wastewater. He knew when he started taking his certification classes that the work would be multi-faceted but he’s glad that he gets to work in all areas of the operation.

“Working in the middle of the street using the Vector truck while constantly being aware of traffic and operator safety keeps my skills and attention sharp. There’s a lot to know and learn with cleaning lines because we’re operating sophisticated equipment and dealing with the hydraulics of how sewage flows in the lines, at the same time paying attention to the traffic and our own safety. It’s great having a job being outside, but even better is the constant mentoring, education and teamwork that the work allows. There’s always an objective in this work and it helps keep you focused and satisfied with the job.”

A friend recommended the wastewater industry and Rick’s glad he’s now working in the field. He is currently working on his Wastewater Technology certificate at Palomar College and plans to continue training in this ever-changing industry. ■





Highly sophisticated computer equipment, the Vector hydrocleaning truck, and CCTV truck are some of the tools used by our skilled workers to keep sewage flowing safely to the Encina wastewater treatment plant.

North San Diego Recycled Water Reuse Coalition Secures a \$3.45 Million Grant

LWD has joined 10 other public agencies in a cooperative effort to increase the future supply of recycled water. Recently, the coalition was awarded a \$3.45 million grant to help further this mission. For LWD, this means that pipelines may be constructed between member agencies that will make recycled water more readily available. We'll keep you posted as projects begin and we make more progress.

Highway 101 Construction Protects Lagoon and Beaches

You may have seen our construction project while driving north or south on Highway 101, right around Ponto Beach and the Carlsbad State Campground. The project started in November 2014 and will be completed at the end of June 2015.

LWD has a comprehensive program of preventative maintenance for its 200 miles of pipelines and other infrastructure, and operators detected some unanticipated wear and tear on the pipeline that transports raw sewage along Highway 101 from our Batiquitos Pump Station to the Encina Wastewater Authority's treatment plant. By replacing pipes before breaks or sewage spills occur, the District is proactively protecting our local beaches, lagoon and important nesting areas. Construction began at the south end of the project area to be finished by the beginning of Least Tern nesting season in the lagoon, to avoid any disturbance to the endangered birds. The new pipelines will have a useful life of approximately 40 years.



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LWD Awards

The District recently was recognized with our insurer, CSRMA, for its Workers Compensation Excellence Award, reflecting our record of no worker-related accidents. LWD has a stringent safety program for its employees and as a result of ongoing safety training, and education the District is able to keep its insurance rates low. Our ratepayers benefit from our safety record because it helps us maintain low sewer service charges and our employees work in a safe environment.

The San Diego section of the CA Water Environment Association (CWEA) awarded LWD with the Engineering Achievement Award for the Recycled Water Pipeline Repair Project. The recycled water pipeline that runs under San Marcos Creek to the Omni La Costa golf course required repairs, so as a safer alternative to traditional digging, the District used "trenchless technology" which involves tunneling a new pipeline under San Marcos creek. This method saved money, minimized construction time and had minimal impact on golf course operations.



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Contact us at info@lwwd.org to start receiving electronic editions of the biannual newsletter and occasional Leucadia Wastewater District updates.

Employee Highlights

Trisha Hill – *Employee of the Year*

Trisha is the District's Executive Assistant. She has many responsibilities including serving as the secretary to the Board of Directors. Nominated by fellow employees, Trisha is viewed as, "professional, respectful and loyal to the District. She leads by example and is a good asset to the District". Trisha has been with the District for 14 years.



Steve Krason, *San Diego CWEA – Mechanical Technician of the Year*

Steve is a Field Service Technician II and is known as the "guru and pump master" at the District. He was actively involved in the design of the Saxony Pump Station and worked countless night shifts during the Batiquitos Pump Station Rehab Project. Steve has worked at the District since 2000. Steve was awarded second place at the statewide CWEA awards.