

## UPCOMING FREE EVENTS:

Springtime means plenty of fun, free events! Check out these upcoming events sponsored in part by MVSD.

### HOME COMPOSTING WORKSHOP

**Saturday, March 21 | 10:00 am - Noon**

Ever wonder what to do with lawn clippings, leaves, and kitchen scraps that you hate to throw in the garbage? Why not compost? Finished compost improves soil structure and adds nutrients to gardens and yards. And the best part about composting is that it puts to good use waste products that might otherwise end up in a landfill. Join us for this FREE two-hour workshop by calling 925-674-7831. This workshop is a partnership between MVSD and Contra Costa County. Space is limited, so register today!

### JOHN MUIR BIRTHDAY-EARTH DAY CELEBRATION

**Saturday, April 18 | 10:00 am - 4:00 pm**

**John Muir House in Martinez**

Join us again this year for another fantastic John Muir Birthday-Earth Day Celebration at the John Muir National Historic Site in Martinez. Admission is free and there are lots of fun things to do and see! Guests will enjoy interactive activities for children and adults, live entertainment, and self-guided tours of the historic home and grounds. For more information visit the Association's website at: <http://www.johnmuirassociation.org>.

### EARTH DAY CLEANUP IN MCNABNEY MARSH

**Saturday, April 25 | 9:00 am - Noon**

In celebration of Earth Day, MVSD staff and community volunteers will be working to cleanup a section of uplands in the south end of McNabney Marsh. Participating volunteers should dress in comfortable work clothes and sturdy closed-toed shoes or boots that can get dirty. We will provide garbage bags, disposable gloves and water. Bring work gloves if you prefer. Children 10 years and up, with a parent or guardian, can participate. For more information, or to RSVP, call 925-228-5635 ext. 10.

### WETLANDS BIRDING FIELD TRIP

**Saturday, May 16 | 7:30 am - 10:00 am**

Join the District Biologist for a fun and informative hike around the wetlands complex. We will introduce you to the diversity of resident and migrant birds found in and around these historic Contra Costa marshes. Sign up by calling Kelly Davidson Chou at (925) 228-5635 ext. 19. Here is what you need to know:

- Meet at the observation platform just before the tunnel.
- Dress in layers and wear comfortable, closed-toed shoes.
- Bring binoculars if you have them; we have a few pairs to loan.
- Beginners are always welcome.
- Heavy rain cancels!

### UPCOMING BOARD MEETING DATES

MVSD Board of Directors meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at the District office at 3800 Arthur Road and are open to the public.

**Thursday, March 12, 2015, 6:30 pm**

**Thursday, April 9, 2015, 6:30 pm**

**Thursday, May 14, 2015, 6:30 pm**

## Digester Cleaning

In this newsletter, we focus on our continual efforts to keep MVSD's infrastructure in good working condition. (Be sure to check out our article about the Capital Improvement Program!) One such project that MVSD is undertaking is the cleaning of our biosolids digesters. This is a more complicated process than you might think!

What is a biosolids digester? During the process of treating wastewater, a key part of the process is separating solid mass from the liquids. The liquid is sent off for disinfection, so that it can again reenter the water supply. However, the solids must be broken down as much as possible. Much of this breaking down occurs through the process of anaerobic digestion.

During this procedure, bacteria, in an oxygen-free environment, breaks down solids producing methane gas, carbon dioxide and stabilized organic solids in the process. The methane gas is used to fuel the plant boiler which maintains the desired temperature for the bacteria to thrive.

The digesters are cylindrical tanks made of concrete. Over time the digesters accumulate a layer of grit at the bottom and a mat of sludge at the top. These layers take up space and prevent the use of the full volume of the digester. Additionally, the digestion process generates a corrosive environment that degrades the interior of the digester. Periodic cleaning and inspection of the interior is required to prevent degradation to the point of compromising the structure of the digester.

MVSD uses two digesters, a primary and a secondary digester. The secondary digester was cleaned in November 2014

## Capital Improvement Program Aims to Make Efficient Use of Funds

Making good use of your rates, and keeping the infrastructure up to date and reliable are two of MVSD's top priorities! For this reason, our Facilities Replacement and Capital Improvement Programs identify the most beneficial projects and allocate the proper funding for them. These programs have allowed MVSD to complete necessary projects while remaining debt free since 2012.

The District's primary source of revenue is the annual Sewer Service Charge. This charge is \$516.00 per single family



These digesters break down solids from the wastewater. It is an important part of the wastewater treatment process.

and resurfaced in February/March of 2015. The primary digester will be cleaned later this spring. The process of cleaning the digesters includes draining it. Then the interior is hydro-blasted. Next, the interior is inspected, and repaired by patching pitted and/or corroded concrete with epoxy. Lastly, the interior will be resurfaced. While one digester is down, the biosolids will continue to be processed by the other digester. Please note that while cleaning is underway, there may be slightly increased truck traffic in our local neighborhood. We apologize for any inconvenience.

Cleaning these digesters is just one way that MVSD uses your rates to invest back into the overall soundness of the wastewater treatment process. For more information on our wastewater treatment process, visit <http://www.mvsd.org/resources/sewage-flow-pattern/>.

dwelling or equivalent dwelling unit. The District relies primarily on this charge to fund operation and maintenance of the District's facilities and services, as well as to fund the District's Capital Improvement Program. Of the \$516.00 received from each equivalent dwelling unit, approximately \$123 goes toward current and future Capital Improvement Projects.

The District also receives a small component of property tax. This amounts to about \$27 per equivalent dwelling unit or \$290,000 total in Fiscal Year 2013-2014. This is money

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### DID YOU KNOW?

Biologists have identified 116 bird species, 69 plant species, over 20 mammals and at least 34 species of aquatic invertebrates making their homes in the McNabney and Moorhen Marshes.

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that the MVSD Board of Directors has earmarked to continue to fund the District's Facilities Rehabilitation Fund.

Over the course of the next couple of years, a number of Capital Improvement and Facilities Rehabilitation Projects will be completed, including:

- Primary and Secondary Biosolids Digester Repair and Rehabilitation (See our article in this newsletter about Digester Cleaning!)
- Influent Pump Station Rehabilitation
- Ferrous Chloride Tank Replacement
- Moorhen Marsh Improvements
- 2015 Collection System Improvements

These projects were identified in the District's 5 Year Facilities Replacement and Capital Improvement Programs for Fiscal Years 2011 through 2016. This document, available on the District's website ([www.mvsd.org](http://www.mvsd.org)), is a planning tool that identifies



The influent pump station located underneath this building is being rehabilitated in order to ensure its reliability.

the District's Capital and Facilities Rehabilitation needs for the next 20 years.

The District is currently in the process of updating these programs, identifying the projects and funding needed for the next five years, and planning for the next 20. This level of planning helps the District remain debt free by identifying the future

Capital Project funding needs and budgeting now to ensure funding is available without creating additional need for higher sewer service charges.

**Dispose of Household hazardous waste** at our free drop off facility, located at 4797 Imhoff Place in Martinez. Items accepted include:

- Batteries
- Fluorescent bulbs
- Mercury-containing devices like thermostats and thermometers
- Unwanted pesticides and fertilizers
- Paints and paint-related products
- Pool chemicals
- Household cleaning products
- Automotive waste like used motor oil and antifreeze

Residents in the MVSD service area can drop off these items for free! Properly disposing of these items prevents these pollutants from entering the water supply. For more information visit: <http://www.mvsd.org/programs/household-hazardous-waste-collection-facility/>



**MT. VIEW SANITARY DISTRICT**  
 3800 Arthur Road  
 PO Box 2757  
 Martinez, CA 94553  
 925-228-5635



Photo courtesy of Restoration Resources - [www.restoration-resources.net](http://www.restoration-resources.net).

### Meet the California Black Rail!

The Black Rail is one of our most elusive birds. There are five recognized subspecies of the Black Rail. The California Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*) is listed as both Threatened and Fully Protected in California. It was thought to breed exclusively in wetland habitats of Coastal California and Baja. Much to the delight of biologists and birders alike, a population was discovered in the Sierra Nevada foothills in 1994. Since then, many "inland" populations have been discovered.

Black Rails are secretive and tiny - only the size of a sparrow. They are charcoal grey, with a distinctive chestnut patch on the back

of the neck and white spotting on the back, wings and tail. Black Rails prefer to walk through dense vegetation and rarely flush, even when humans are nearby. As a result, they are rarely seen. They have a very distinctive call (ki-ki-keer) and a territorial "growl".

MVSD confirmed the presence of this diminutive rail in McNabney Marsh in 2014. Additional surveys are taking place in 2015 and a rail management plan for McNabney Marsh will be finalized soon.



If you would like to receive an electronic version of the Mt. View Monitor in your e-mail, please visit [www.mvsd.org](http://www.mvsd.org) to sign up.



MVSD is getting social! We are pleased to announce that we have recently created a Facebook Page! Get all the latest news and updates about MVSD by liking us! Visit [www.facebook.com/mtviewsd](http://www.facebook.com/mtviewsd)