

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### WORM COMPOSTING WORKSHOP Saturday, December 9 10:00 am - Noon

Earthworms can “recycle” your fruit and vegetable scraps into extremely rich compost called “worm casts.” Using a specialized variety of worm and a simple “worm box” you can do your part to reduce waste and at the same time make compost. Whether you live in a house with a yard or live in an apartment, condominium or townhouse you can use a worm box to “recycle” your fruit and vegetable scraps. Join us for this very popular and **FREE** two-hour workshop by contacting Contra Costa County at **925-674-7831**. Space is limited, so register today!



## KEEP FOG OUT OF OUR PIPES!

This holiday season, you will likely be enjoying some delicious food. Much of the food we enjoy around the holidays—think turkey, ham and gravy—are loaded with fats, oils and grease or FOG. When poured down the drain as a liquid or in the form of food scraps, this FOG quickly hardens in pipes, causing blockages in the sewer system. So what should you do with your leftover FOG this holiday season? Leftover FOG should always go in the trash instead of down the drain. If you have leftover drippings from meats such as turkey or ham, first allow them to cool completely and when the remnants harden, you can scrape them from the pan into another container like a Ziploc bag or empty jar and toss the leftovers in the trash. Help us keep FOG out of the sewer system!



## MOORHEN MARSH PROJECT UPDATE



Pond E levee reconstruction with geogrid

As communicated in the August 2017 edition of the *Mt. View Monitor*, the Moorhen Marsh Western Pond Turtle Habitat Enhancement Project will take place in two phases - Phase A in 2017 and Phase B in 2018 - and will include maintenance activities, wetland and riparian habitat enhancements, and improved visitor amenities. The contractor, Water Rock Construction, spent much of the summer removing vegetation from the Project area, drying and moisture conditioning the existing pond soils, and

dealing with wetter than expected soils due to high water levels in Peyton Slough. Levees were re-built in ponds C, D and E in September and October. New keyways (an excavated trench into earth material beneath the toe of the new levee slope, which is intended to reinforce and stabilize the toe of the slope) were installed. The water control structures will be repaired or replaced in November. Hardscape installation (dip net area, turtle basking logs, retaining wall, etc.) will also be installed in November. Replanting the wetland and riparian habitat areas with native species is scheduled for November and early December.

Phase A should wrap up by the end of December 2017, and Phase B construction is planned to begin in May 2018 with expected completion in December 2018. While Phase A is underway, Moorhen Marsh will continue to be closed to the public. We appreciate your patience while we make important improvements to this wetland habitat for both wildlife and human visitors alike.

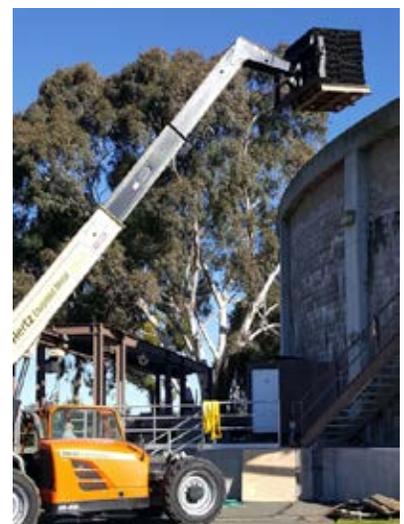
## DISTRICT BIOTOWER TO UNDERGO REHABILITATION AND MAINTENANCE

The MVSD biotower is due for major maintenance and rehabilitation and a project has been designed to begin in the summer of 2018. The rehabilitation project will include replacement of the center column and distributor arms along with the addition of a motor drive. The District will also replace the recirculation pump motor control center. A recent examination determined that the 27 year old media still has some life left and will be replaced at a later date. The improvements are expected to provide another 25-30 years of life to this extremely reliable treatment unit.

The biotower is a fixed film biological reactor, also known as a trickling filter. It was constructed in 1988 for the purpose of removing organic matter and ammonia from wastewater. The biotower is a cylindrical structure which contains high surface area corrugated plastic media. It is 22 feet high and 100 feet in diameter.

The removal of ammonia is a crucial step in wastewater treatment as the District's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination permit includes ammonia limits that require removal of approximately 95% of the influent (incoming) ammonia. Most of that ammonia removal happens in the biotower where the wastewater is distributed across the media and trickles down the corrugated plastic where the nitrifying bacteria grow. These bacteria convert the ammonia to nitrate (with some nitrite). Both nitrate and nitrite are substantially less toxic than

ammonia and helps us meet our mission to protect public health and the environment, in a safe and reliable manner, at a responsible cost.



The biotower media installation underway



A closer look at a biotower media module

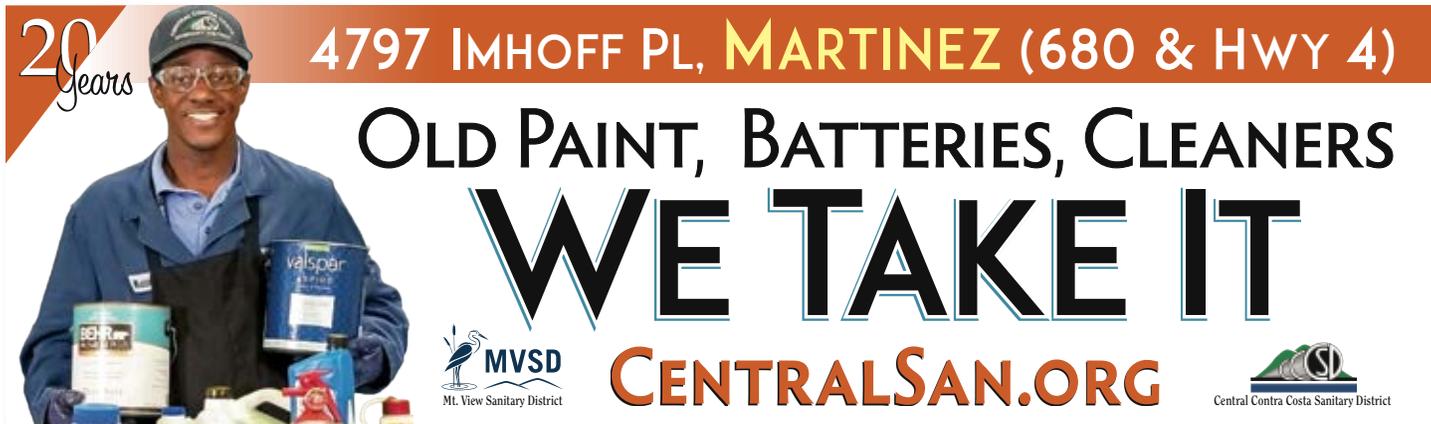
## DID YOU KNOW?

You may have noticed the two billboards situated on District property as you travel along I-680. These are Clear Channel billboards that bring in approximately \$66,000 of revenue annually for the District as land leases. This is just one way

that MVSD responsibly manages its finances to ensure our rates remain as low as possible.

In addition to the revenue, the billboards are available to the District free of charge for public service messages

twice per year for four weeks every May and September. Keep an eye out in May 2018 for our billboard celebrating American Wetlands Month!



20 Years

4797 IMHOFF PL, MARTINEZ (680 & HWY 4)

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Mt. View Sanitary District

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American Mink in Moorhen Marsh. Photo by Karen James.

## GET TO KNOW THE AMERICAN MINK!

Like its cousin the river otter, the American mink is a mustelid. It sports a magnificent sable brown coat with oily guard hairs that provide important waterproofing. This tiny but fierce carnivore spends much of its time in the water hunting for muskrats, fish, and crayfish but it also preys on terrestrial species including rodents and birds. Mating season runs January through April and the female will produce a litter of three to six kits. Young are weaned when they are about six weeks old but will stay with mom until they head out to look for their own territories in the fall. Though more secretive than otters, minks are regularly spotted in McNabney and Moorhen marshes. We recently documented females with kits in Moorhen Marsh - though we expect moms with youngsters to avoid the site until construction ends in late 2018. To see video clips of minks, visit our wildlife video page: <http://www.mvsd.org/wetlands/wildlife-videos/>.



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