

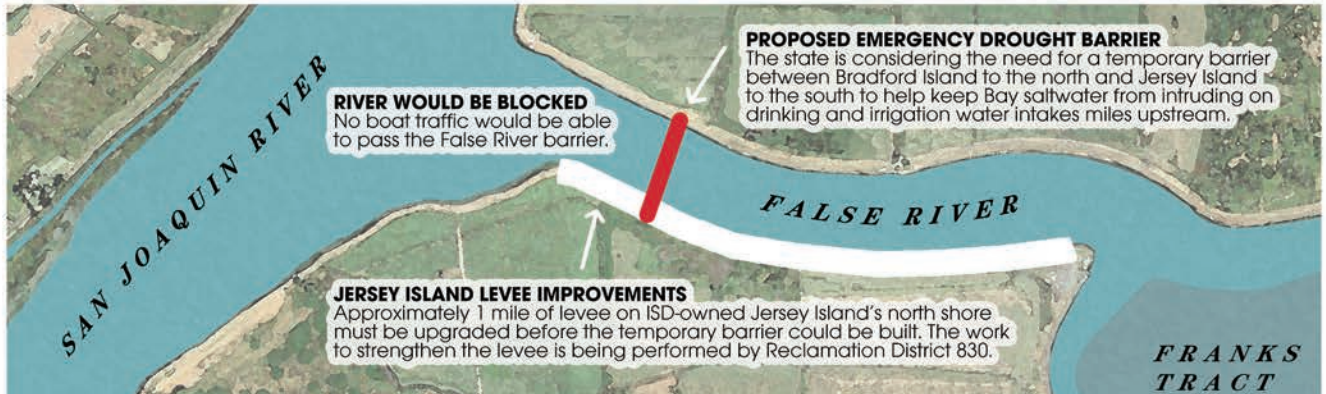
## BRIEFLY

### CASA offers scholarship

ISD is contributing to a new scholarship program being made possible by the California Association of Sanitation Agencies. The program is offering two \$5,000 scholarships to students attending an accredited California college who are pursuing a career in engineering, environmental science or public administration and have an interest in serving in the clean water field. Application deadline is May 16. For details, go to [www.casaweb.org](http://www.casaweb.org).

### Developer fee hearing

On Tuesday, May 6, the ISD board will hold a public hearing to consider an adjustment in Trunkline and Plant Capacity fees for the 2014-15 fiscal year. The proposed new construction adjustments are based on the increase in the Engineering News Record Cost of Construction Index for the Bay Area as of March 2014. The meeting will take place at 450 Walnut Meadows Drive in Oakley at 7 p.m.



# SALINE SOLUTION

## WORK STRENGTHENS JERSEY ISLAND LEVEE FOR POSSIBLE EMERGENCY DROUGHT BARRIER

Seasonal rainfall and conservation efforts by the public have postponed the need for a barrier near Jersey Island to protect the region's drinking water supply. But work continues to strengthen the levee on the north side of the island in anticipation that the state may change its plans later this year.

In March, the California Department of Water Resources reported that due to the state's third straight dry year, and the driest on record in 2013, officials were planning to guard against saltwater intrusion moving up river in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta by building three barriers along the rivers. One of those barriers was to be located in False River, adjacent to



Workers with ASTA Construction Co., Inc. haul dirt to improve 5,000 feet of levee on ISD-owned Jersey Island. The project is needed to prepare for a rock barrier on adjacent False River, visible at right.

ISD-owned Jersey Island.

Once complete at its key location, the False River barrier would reduce the intrusion of saltwater from San Francisco Bay into the central and south Delta. As part of the project, part of the Jersey Island levee would first need to be strengthened.

In mid-April, state officials elected to delay the barriers and reassess the need for them this fall and early winter, if dry conditions persist. DWR will continue to closely monitor water quality and storage capacity data.

In the meantime, 5,000 feet of levee improvements



already under way on Jersey Island will continue with the assumption that the barrier will eventually be needed.

"Work on the levee had already been started in order to be completed by May 1, when work on the barrier needed to begin," ISD General Manager Tom Williams said.

ISD became involved in the project in late March when DWR approached the district about leasing

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FOLLOW THE FLOW: KNOW YOUR COLLECTION SYSTEM – PART 2

# How to maintain your lateral line

The lateral line connects your home to the public sewer system. Water that leaves the drains from your sinks, showers, toilets, dishwashers and washing machines flows through the lateral line to Ironhouse Sanitary District’s main line and to ISD’s Water Recycling Facility.

The lateral line is engineered with a slight slope so that it carries wastewater away from the house and downhill to the district’s collection line in the street. The lateral is private property and is the property owner’s responsibility to maintain and repair.

It is important to keep the lateral line clear of obstructions and in good repair, which will greatly reduce the risk of blockages, clogs and water backups.

*“The lateral’s your responsibility to maintain.”*

Lateral lines can be obstructed by items flushed down the toilet or washed down the drain, as well as by tree roots, grease and other objects.

Some signs that your lateral is blocked or damaged include slow draining, a sewage odor inside or outside your home, wastewater leaking from cleanouts and wet ground in your yard.

How can you maintain your lateral line?

- Have the line inspected and cleaned annually by a licensed plumber.
- Do not plant trees or large shrubs near the lat-

eral line. Roots can enter the pipe and cause a blockage. If roots enter your lateral line, call a licensed plumber to clear the line.

■ Do not pour grease down the sink. When grease cools, it can build up in the lateral line and cause a blockage.

■ Do not flush diapers, so-called “disposable” wipes (non-flushable or flushable), feminine hygiene devices or any product other than toilet paper down the toilet. These items can block the lateral line.

■ Do not connect your downspout to the lateral line. Debris from the roof can wash through the gutters and into the lateral line.

■ Repair or replace damaged lateral lines as soon as possible. □

## Disintegration is not an option for one-use wipes

Everyone loves the convenience of using disposable wipes – for kids with sticky fingers and messy faces, a quick counter wipe-down, or to supplement your toilet paper. But did you know that you should dispose of wipes in the trash and not down the toilet?

Even though some wipes claim they are flushable or safe for sewers, they do not decompose properly and contribute to clogs in sewer pipes.



Understanding ISD’s Sewer System Management Plan

The use of personal care wipes is on the rise as companies look to offer consumers convenient cleaning products. For the most part they’ll flush down the toilet, but they don’t disintegrate in your pipes. Unlike toilet paper, wipes are made with synthetic materials that do not break down in water. That’s when they can cause blockages that often require you or your plumber to clean things up.

These types of wipes can easily cause a mess in ISD’s pipes as well, especially if they end up getting stuck in one of our pump lift stations where they can cause overflows in residential streets and affect the entire neighborhood. For ISD, it also means increased labor and maintenance costs to keep the system clear.

Please do your part to keep things flowing properly by throwing wipes in the trash where they belong and not in your toilet. □



The unsightly mess at left is the result of single-use wipes that became caught in one of ISD’s sewer pump lift stations, requiring manual removal.

## BARRIER

*Continued from page 1*

a piece of Jersey Island’s north shore for the barrier. ISD is also concerned about salinity as it relates to the wastewater it recycles, and was able to respond promptly to the request.

“At this time it is anyone’s guess whether the barriers will be needed, but we do know that

if too much salinity gets into False River it will impact local water quality,” Williams said. “We definitely want to do all we can to help our communities and make sure that doesn’t happen.”

Upon inspecting the Jersey Island levee, Reclamation District 830, which oversees maintenance of the island levee, and state officials determined the levee

would need to be strengthened before the barrier could be built. Since RD 830 had already designated this a high-priority levee project, it didn’t take long for this “shovel-ready” work to begin.

Within a week of DWR and RD 830 signing the funding agreement, workers were already on the island doing initial land preparation to build 5,000 feet

of levee improvements.

ISD customers benefit from water quality projects because less salt in drinking water is better for people and plants, and less salt goes down drains which helps ISD comply with its state mandates for reducing salt content in recycled water that eventually is used for crop irrigation or discharged into the Delta. □

## Public outreach efforts recognized with transparency award

ISD's efforts to operate openly and transparently were honored this month by the Special District Leadership Foundation.

The Sacramento-based non-profit gave the district its "District Transparency Certificate of Excellence" after meeting a series of requirements related to public records and open meeting laws, ethics training, financial reporting and public access to information on ISD's website.

The district provides sanitary services to residents of Oakley and Bethel Island, as well as some other unincorporated areas of the county.

"This award is a testament to Ironhouse's commitment to open government," said General Manager Tom Williams. "We are dedicated to providing the public with information to help facili-



tate engagement and oversight."

In its application for the award, the district submitted ethics training certificates for board members, its annual audit and audited financial statements, a spreadsheet of all 2012-13 expense reimbursements greater than \$100 and evidence of an award winning community engagement project – "Lighting

Your Way to Proper Grease Recycling" – among other things.

The district's website was revamped to provide information about district services, its budget and board elections, links to employee pay and more.

Williams said that the process not only helped to make the district more transparent, but also allowed the staff to take an in-depth look at how to make its website more functional.

Frequently requested items can now simply be downloaded directly from the site rather than going through a lengthy information request process.

"Spending time on the district's website will give a clear picture of ISD's transparency efforts in action," Williams said. The website can be found at [www.IronhouseSanitaryDistrict.com](http://www.IronhouseSanitaryDistrict.com). □

## Solar panels soak up the sun

Ironhouse Sanitary District retained Real Goods Solar, Inc. (RGS) to construct a 1.1-megawatt ground mount single axis solar system for ISD's Water Recycling Facility and a 60-kilowatt carport solar system for the Administration and Maintenance Buildings.

The 60-kilowatt solar system became operable in March 2014 with the 1.1-megawatt system anticipated to be operable in July 2014.

ISD's current electrical cost for these facilities is more than \$600,000 per year, but harnessing energy from the sun is expected to reduce the district's electrical bills by at least \$94,000 in the first year alone, with a total estimated savings of \$6.7 million over the next 25 years. □

## District earns 'green' certification

Ironhouse Sanitary District has been named a certified "green" business by the Contra Costa County Green Business Program. In receiving the green certification, ISD has demonstrated compliance with all regulations and program standards of a California Green Business.

The Green Business Certification Program is a multi-faceted pollution prevention effort that encourages businesses to meet and exceed environmental standards while conserving resources.

The program focuses on how a facility conducts its day-to-day operations in terms of being environmentally aware, promoting energy efficiency and reducing any and all waste streams. ISD is the first organization to be certified in Oakley.

"Pollution prevention and being environmentally aware is something we work toward every day at our business," ISD General Manager Tom Williams said. "Part of that is reaching out to our customers and talking about and providing better alternatives for waste handling." □



## Visitors hit the jets at science day

ISD's Brian Connelly explains the operations of the sewer jetter truck during Oakley Science Week. The truck uses a powerful water jet to free clogged debris.



## Did you know?...

Biosolids are mainly a mix of water and organic materials that are a by-product of the wastewater treatment process. Most wastewater comes from household kitchens, laundries and bathrooms.

Biosolids from ISD's Water Recycling Facility are currently being used as alternative daily cover (covering garbage) at a landfill. □

### ISD ADMINISTRATION

**Thomas Williams**/General Manager

**Jenny Skrel**/District Engineer

**David Dal Porto**/Ranches & Levees

**Joe Mueller**/Environmental/Process Compliance Manager

**Sue Walde**  
District Secretary

**Marc Haefke**  
Operations Superintendent

**Dave Smith**  
Maintenance Superintendent

### ISD Board of Directors

**David Huerta**/President  
**David Contreras**/Vice Pres.  
**Michael Painter**/Director  
**Chris Lauritzen**/Director  
**Doug Scheer**/Director

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Visit us online at [www.ironhousesanitarydistrict.com](http://www.ironhousesanitarydistrict.com)

**ISD board meetings**  
Public meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m.





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ECRWSS

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Oakley, CA  
Permit No. 001

**IMPORTANT UPCOMING EVENTS**

- **May 6:** Trunkline & Plant Capacity Fee hearing and regular ISD Board meeting, 7 p.m.
- **May 13:** ISD budget workshop, 6 p.m.
- **May 26:** District observed holiday.
- **June 3:** Sewer Service Charge public hearing and Board meeting, 7 p.m.
- **July 2:** ISD Board of Directors meets, 7 p.m.



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# NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

## ON SETTING THE SEWER SERVICE CHARGE FOR 2014-15

**Tuesday, June 3, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.**

Ironhouse Sanitary District Office, 450 Walnut Meadows Drive, Oakley

On Tuesday, June 3, 2014, the Ironhouse Sanitary District Board of Directors will hold a public hearing to consider setting the rate for the District's sewer service charge for fiscal year 2014-15. The proposed new annual sewer service charge of \$637 per ESU (Equivalent Service Unit) will be a 3% increase above the current rate of \$618, and will take effect on July 1, 2014. If adopted, the new rate will appear as a special assessment on your property tax bill. The Board continues to work diligently to keep the rate below the established maximum of \$680 per ESU, adopted June 5, 2007.

### KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR RATE SETTING

Over the past 7 years, the district has slowly raised the annual sewer service charge (except last year when the rate remained unchanged) to support its operating costs, and to meet obligations for construction and operation of the Water Recycling Facility. At the same time, a decline in new development has resulted in fewer new ratepayers to share the cost of the district's annual budget, and reserves have been used to help minimize rate increases. Additionally, the District recently adopted key policies to insure reserves are slowly replenished and adequate to pay for future infrastructure, replacement costs, and to slowly fund a new rate stabilization reserve.

### HOW ISD IS MINIMIZING THE RATE INCREASE

■ Phase 1 of the solar panels project, a private-public partnership, is on line with phase 2 coming

on line in June 2014, reducing costs by an estimated \$95,000 in FY 2014-15 (more each year thereafter for the next 25 years).

■ Eliminated \$70,000 annually in regulatory monitoring costs related to the district's irrigation of fields on Jersey Island and part time discharge into the San Joaquin River.

■ Eliminated approximately \$100,000 annually in office staffing costs through a combination of attrition and staff cross-training to combine positions.

■ Generating approximately \$455,000 in net income from cattle operations on Jersey Island.

■ Generating \$105,000 in revenue from hay sells and using recycled water to grow hay.

■ Receiving \$194,000 in grant funds to pay for a Recycled Water Feasibility Study.

■ Continuing to freeze Director benefit costs, implement benefit reduction programs for new hires, and phase in greater employee contribution

amounts for employee medical.

### WHY IS THE PROPOSED RATE RISING TO \$637?

The cost efficiencies mentioned above are critical in minimizing the rate increase, and in holding the rate below the established maximum of \$680 per ESU. However, increasing costs for items such as materials, supplies, insurance, fuel, and professional services, as well as the need to gradually rebuild reserves and meet debt service obligations, make the increase necessary.

### FOCUSED ON CORE SERVICES

The District's budget is focused on meeting its mission of protecting the public health, safety and the environment through responsible wastewater collection, treatment and water reuse, while also planning and preparing for the future of improved resource recovery at facilities like ours.