

**Newsletter of the Crockett Community Services District**

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**OUR DISTRICT**

The Crockett Community Services District (CCSD) provides certain municipal services for the unincorporated towns of Crockett and Port Costa including sanitary sewer services, recreation, and maintenance.

The Recreation Department offers Crockett and Port Costa residents access to the Crockett Community Center, Swimming Pool, Alexander Park, bocce ball courts and tennis courts. Upcoming events are listed on the pool schedule.

Maintenance services include maintenance of Crockett's Memorial Hall (Legion Hall), Crockett's downtown plaza, Crockett's decorative green street lights, and numerous green iron fences on either Pomona Ave. or Rolph Ave. The bridgehead entrance to Crockett is property-owned by the State but through small grants and donations to the District, along with volunteer labor, the District intervened to protect the area from decline while the future of the bridgehead is discussed by Caltrans and the District.

**OUR DISTRICT BOARD**

The 2014 Board of Directors of the Crockett Community Services District includes:

- Kristopher Vickers**, President
- Harold Burnett**, Vice-President
- Fred Clerici**
- John Mackenzie**
- Gerald Epperson**

Your elected officials receive no compensation for their service. Our District Board holds its regular meetings on the fourth Wednesday of each month. The meetings are held at the Crockett Community Center at 7 PM.

Commissioners and Committee appointees are dedicated volunteers who receive no compensation. They have been appointed to assist the District Board by recommending operational policy and overseeing staff activities. The Commissions provide an opportunity for residents to interact with our local government on issues that concern the public.

Please visit our [www.town.crockett.ca.us](http://www.town.crockett.ca.us) for a calendar of meeting dates and more information about our District.

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Greetings fellow Crockett/Port Costa residents. As we enter into a new and exciting year I would first like to take the opportunity thank Patrick Glover for his years of service

to the CCSD Board. At the March meeting, the board reluctantly accepted Pat's resignation. Pat served the District for almost 14 years, beginning in June 2002 as a Director of the Crockett-Valona Sanitary District (the precursor to the CCSD), and was instrumental in the formation of the CCSD in 2006. He helped craft the District into what it is today. I believe I speak for all of my fellow Board members and the Crockett/Port Costa community when I say "Thank You" for your years of volunteer service. You will be missed.

Speaking of volunteer service, there is no time like the present to become involved in the variety of projects and events taking place this year. Memorial Hall will be undergoing a landscaping and beautification project soon and will be looking for volunteers to assist. Check with the CCSD office to find out when and how you can volunteer. By participating in the local e-Waste events the District is able to fund maintenance work for the bridgehead area by using labor from a non-profit organization. So dispose of that old VCR and help make the town a better place! What a great idea! Residents can also help by participating in the town wide clean up days and showing up at the local events such as the upcoming summer concert series.

Lastly, after having lived in Crockett for 10 years I am constantly amazed at the amount of dedication local residents and District employees have to make Crockett and Port Costa better places to live. We should all be proud of the accomplishments and strides that have been made over these last few years and continue to look towards the future.

*Kristopher Vickers, President*

**TOILETS ARE NOT TRASH CANS**

Toilets are only meant for one activity, and you know what we're talking about! When the wrong thing is flushed, results can include costly backups on your own property or problems at your local wastewater treatment plant. That's why it's so important to treat toilets properly and flush only your personal contributions to the local wastewater treatment plant.



**Disposable Does Not Mean Flushable!**

Many household cleaning products are labeled and marketed as disposable; many baby hygiene products are labeled both disposable and flushable. And while these products may be marketed as a convenience item in this

way, the truth is that these household wipes and cleaning towelettes have the ability to clog and stop up not only the sewer line on your property, but also can cause blockage and service problems in the public sewer system and pump stations. Unlike toilet paper, these products don't break down once they are flushed. They can cause blockages in your on-site side sewer, especially older pipelines that may have grease, roots, or other obstructions already existing.

Flushing paper towels and other garbage down the toilet wastes water and can create sewer backups and overflows. Even if its label reads "flushable," you are still safer and more environmentally correct to place the item in a trashcan. And because homeowners are responsible for their property's sewer pipes, improper flushing can cost you money. **You plug it, you pay for it!**

### **AND THERE'S MORE... HAZARDOUS WASTE**

Whatever ends up in your toilet can potentially impact the water environment, so it's really important to keep household wastes such as window cleaners, unused or expired pharmaceutical products, paint thinners, fats, and fruit labels out of toilets and drains and dispose of them properly.

A drive-thru drop-off Hazardous Waste center is located at 101 Pittsburg Avenue in Richmond to dispose of common household hazardous waste that might otherwise harm the environment. There is no charge and no appointment needed! Residential drop-off is available Thursdays, Fridays, and the 1st Saturday of each month 9am - 4pm (closed 12-12:30 pm). Call 1-888-412-9277 for more information. You can also get helpful information from their web site at [www.recyclemore.com/](http://www.recyclemore.com/).

### **DRUGS, MEDICATIONS, PHARMACEUTICALS**

Never flush, pour down the drain, or put drugs, medications, or pharmaceuticals in the garbage or recycle bins. These products and many others can upset the sewage treatment process if dumped down the drain. Chemotherapy drugs and other medicines are also collected for safe disposal. Please dispose of all medicines safely at collection bins or at the drive-thru drop Hazardous Waste Center located at 101 Pittsburg Avenue in Richmond.

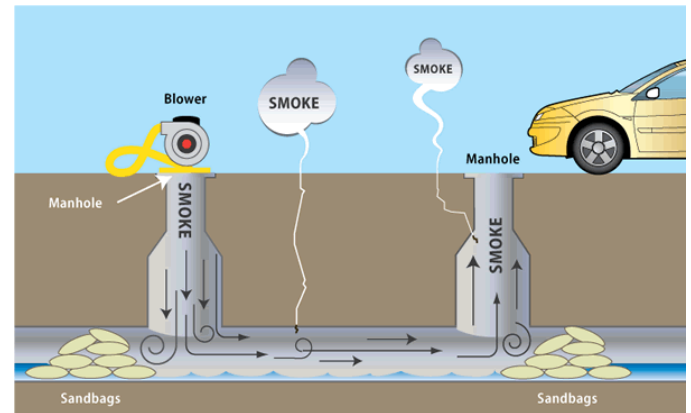
### **SMOKE TESTING IN CROCKETT / VALONA**

The Crockett Sanitary Department will begin its second year of smoke testing to identify sections of main and lateral sewers that exhibit inflow. Sewers in the downtown area of Valona will be tested this summer. Smoke blowers are placed on or in manholes and smoke is blown through the sewer system. Anywhere the smoke exits, there is potential for storm water to enter the sewer system.

Prior to beginning the smoke testing, notices will be placed on the front door of every building on the streets to be smoke tested at least 24 to 48 hours in advance. The smoke that comes out of the vent stacks on houses or holes in the ground is non-toxic, harmless, and has no odor.

### **What is the purpose of smoke testing?**

Smoke testing is important preventative maintenance that helps CCSD pinpoint the location of sewer defects that may need repairs. Inflow sources such as roof leaders, foundation drains, abandoned building sewers, faulty connections, and yard area drains contribute to this problem. It is illegal to connect these sources of inflow to the sanitary sewer system. Millions of gallons of excess water infiltrate sanitary sewers each year through these defects. This raises the cost of wastewater treatment for the entire community and increases the risk of sewage overflows during storms.



If there are defects in either the main sewer pipes or the private sewer laterals that serve individual homes and businesses, or if there are illegal cross-connections between the sewer and storm drain, smoke will rise to the surface and reveal these problems.

### **SMOKE TESTING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**What do I need to do to prepare before the smoke tests?**

Water can evaporate from drain traps of unused plumbing fixtures. Therefore, the day prior to any testing, property owners should pour water down all drains of plumbing fixtures that are not regularly used (e.g., guest bathroom, bar sink). This ensures the P-traps are full to prevent smoke from entering the house. It is also a good idea to keep bathroom doors closed during the test period.



**Will smoke enter my house?**

Smoke rarely enters a home or business during the test if the P-traps are full of water, but because a building's plumbing is connected to the sanitary sewer system, smoke could enter through a plumbing defect in the home or business. The most frequent entry point is around a bad wax ring on the toilet. If smoke does enter your home or

business, open a window. Visible smoke and odor should last no more than 15-20 minutes.

***What should I do if I have emphysema or respiratory problems? Is the smoke harmful? What should I do during a smoke test?***

Although the smoke is considered to have no adverse health effects, individuals with respiratory conditions should take special precautions. Smoke rarely enters a home, but it would be best if you sat outside for the duration of the smoke test, about 15-20 minutes. If you cannot sit outside, open the windows and shut your bathroom doors. Also, tell the CCSD contractor or call the District office that you have a respiratory condition.

***What should I do if smoke comes out of a plumbing fixture in my house?***

Open windows and doors. The smoke usually clears in 15-20 minutes. If you are home during the testing, please inform the CCSD or contracting crew member that smoke has entered your home. You also should call a professional plumber. If smoke has entered, your plumbing may have a defect that is also allowing sewer gases and odors to enter. Sewer gases can be both unpleasant and a health risk. We advise you to determine where the smoke entered and contact a plumber to correct any defects.

***I work during the day and have animals inside. What do I do during the smoke test?***

Smoke rarely enters a home, but if you have to leave your animals inside, leave windows open slightly for ventilation. On the rare occasion when smoke enters a home, it is usually through a defect in the bathroom, so do not enclose animals in the bathroom. Shut bathroom doors and leave the bathroom window open.

***Who is responsible for paying to repair plumbing problems that are discovered through smoke testing?***

Property owners are responsible for maintaining their inside plumbing, as well as for repairing cracks, breaks, and clogs in their private sewer laterals that connect their home to the District's main sewer pipeline. If you see smoke coming out of your yard this probably indicates that you have cracks in your sewer lateral that need repair. CCSD is responsible for maintaining and repairing the public wastewater collection system, the larger pipes that usually run under the street.

**SEWER INSPECTION REQUIREMENT**

In 2007, the District adopted Ordinance No. 07-1 requiring property owners to obtain a "Certificate of Compliance" for their sanitary sewer laterals prior to the sale of their property. The reasoning for this requirement is to help ensure that sanitary sewers are operating properly, are not leaching into the ground, are not connected to roof gutters or patio drains, and are not infiltrating the drainage system that flows to the Bay.

More information on this program can be found on our website at [www.town.crockett.ca.us](http://www.town.crockett.ca.us). Property owners must have their sewer lateral inspected prior to the sale of their property. You or your realtor can contact the District office

to find out if your property has already been inspected and if it is already in compliance.

**REPORTING SEWER PROBLEMS**

For all matters concerning sewer service in Crockett or Port Costa, the correct number to call is always 787-2992. Call us day or night to report any sewer problem in Crockett or Port Costa. Our staff will respond quickly to all inquiries, complaints, or reports of sewer problems. When a sewer backup occurs in your home, it may not be obvious whether the problem is in the house lateral or the public sewer. You may save yourself distress and money by calling our Sanitary Department first. Our staff will help determine where the problem is and will quickly take care of any blockage in the public sewer. There is no charge for our help.

**BEFORE YOU DIG**

Safe digging is no accident, even in your own yard. Always call 811 before your dig! It is FREE and will keep you from harm. Sewers, water and gas lines can be anywhere without your knowledge and digging without knowing what is underground can cause severe consequences, such as serious injuries, fires, or other property damage. We have public sewers through over 100 properties in Crockett and Port Costa. Some utilities in the older communities of Crockett and Port Costa are not that deep and people can hit utilities even when digging to plant shrubs or trees. All this can be easily avoided just by calling 811. Please call. Play it safe, and avoid the grief!

**FATS, OIL, AND GREASE**

Just as excess fat isn't good for our health, it's not good for our plumbing. Sewer overflows and backups can cause health hazards, damage home interiors, and threaten the environment. An increasingly common cause of overflows is sewer pipes blocked by grease. Grease gets into the sewer from household drains as well as from poorly maintained grease traps in restaurants and other businesses.

***Where does the grease come from?***

Most of us know grease as the byproduct of cooking. Grease is found in such things as:

- ▶ Meat Fats
- ▶ Lard
- ▶ Cooking Oil
- ▶ Shortening
- ▶ Butter and Margarine
- ▶ Food Scraps
- ▶ Baking Goods
- ▶ Sauces
- ▶ Dairy Products

Too often, grease is washed into the plumbing system, usually through the kitchen sink. Grease sticks to the insides of sewer pipes (both on your property and in the streets). Over time, the grease can build up and block the entire pipe.

Home garbage disposals do not keep grease out of the plumbing system. These units only shred solid material into smaller pieces and do not prevent grease from going down the drain. Commercial additives, including detergents, that

claim to dissolve grease may pass grease down the line and cause problems in other areas.

The results can be:

- ▶ Raw sewage overflowing in your home or your neighbor's home;
- ▶ An expensive and unpleasant cleanup that often must be paid by you, the homeowner;
- ▶ Raw sewage overflowing into parks, yards, and streets;
- ▶ An increase in operation and maintenance costs for local sewer departments, which causes higher sewer bills for customers.

**What we can do to help:**

The easiest way to solve the grease problems and help prevent overflows of raw sewage is to keep this material out of the sewer system in the first place. There are several ways to do this.

1. Never pour grease down sink drains or into toilets.
2. Scrape grease and food scraps from trays, plates, pots, pans, utensils, and grills and cooking surfaces into a can or the trash for disposal (or recycling where available).
3. Do not put grease down garbage disposals. Put baskets/strainers in sink drains to catch food scraps and other solids, and empty the drain baskets/strainers into the trash for disposal.
4. Speak with your friends and neighbors about the problems of grease in the sewer system and how to keep it out.

Visit our website or call the Crockett or Port Costa Sanitary Department if you have any questions.

**ELECTRONIC RECYCLING DROP OFF**

Our e-Waste recycling program has continued to be very successful. In 2013 over 12 tons of electronic waste was collected at four e-Waste events in Crockett. The District received service hour credits from our e-Waste partner which allowed the District to perform landscape maintenance at the Crockett Bridgehead at no cost to the towns of Crockett and Port Costa. In addition, the District continues to accept your old batteries, compact fluorescent light bulbs, thermometers, barometers, thermostats, and neon lighting and dispose of them properly. We will even give you a FREE easy to read digital thermometer in exchange for your old mercury thermometer.

Computers, monitors, televisions (27" or smaller), VCRs and other electronic items are also picked up upon request and held until the next e-Waste event. Keeping mercury, lead, nickel, cadmium, and other toxic metals out of the trash benefits the environment. Please play it safe by dropping off or calling us at 787-2992 to collect your small electronic or hazardous waste items.

**SUMMER JOBS**

Our Recreation Department is now hiring temporary staff for our swimming pool. Lifeguards, swim instructors and office staff are needed. Applications are available at our Community Center (Tues-Fri) and at our pool (Mon-Fri 3-5pm). For more information, call 787-2414.

**POOL AND SUMMER SCHEDULE**

The Crockett Pool opens weekends beginning May 24 and daily beginning June 14. Please see the Crockett Recreation Department 2014 Summer Schedule for program dates and events this summer. Season passes are a great value. Purchase them early to enjoy a full summer of fun!

**DISTRICT OFFICE HAS MOVED**

By the time you receive this newsletter the Crockett CSD office may have completed its move to the Crockett Community Center at 850 Pomona Street. Consolidating our offices at this one location will help control District costs, allow staff to share resources, and provide a one-stop location to serve you.

This is the place to come for sewer permits, for plan drawings to be stamped, to get a list of bonded sewer contractors, and for all local government information regarding Crockett and Port Costa. Employees are often working out in the field and it may help you to call ahead for an appointment.

**OUR WEBSITE**

Visit our website [www.town.crockett.ca.us](http://www.town.crockett.ca.us) for the latest information about the District. Residents and visitors alike will find useful information on various public services including emergency services, recreation, sewer service, garbage service, and others. Meeting dates, agendas, and minutes are available online

**Crockett Community Services District**

P.O. Box 578 / 850 Pomona Street, Crockett, CA 94525  
Phone: (510) 787-2992 Fax: (510) 787-2459

**Board of Directors**

Kris Vickers - Harold Burnett  
John Mackenzie - Fred Clerici - Gerald Epperson

**General Manager**

Dale McDonald - [manager@town.crockett.ca.us](mailto:manager@town.crockett.ca.us)

**Recreation Commission**

Jeff Airoidi - David Botta - Louise Choquette - Tom Cusack  
Elena Gomez - Karen Peterson - John Valentini

**Crockett Sanitary Commission**

Robert A. Dahl - Mary Wais - Jon Wolthuis  
Howard Adams - Ron Maria

**Port Costa Sanitary Commission**

Joe Surges - Anthony Guamieri  
Tom Cusack - John Mann - Frank Corrigan

**Bridgehead Advisory Committee**

Howard Adams - Bob Aita - Steve Carvalho  
Kent Peterson - Mary Wais - Jeff Wells

**Memorial Hall Advisory Committee**

Harvey Duran - Michael Kirker  
Scott Lawton - Kent Peterson - Ron Wilson

**Police Liaison Committee**

John Angell - Barbra Cardwell - David Botta - Mary Wais  
Elena Gomez - Elaia McDonald - John Valentini