

Newsletter of the Crockett Community Services District

OUR DISTRICT BOARD

The 2012 Board of Directors of the Crockett Community Services District includes:

John Mackenzie, President

Harold Burnett, Vice President

Pat Glover

Kristopher Vickers

Fred Clerici

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.

COMMISSIONS

All of our Commissioners 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.

Our *Recreation Commission* normally meets on the first Monday of each month at the Crockett Community Center at 7 PM. The *Crockett Sanitary Commission* normally meets on the third Wednesday of each month at the Crockett Community Center at 7 PM. The *Port Costa Sanitary Commission* normally meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7 PM at the Port Costa School. Please visit our website at www.town.crockett.ca.us for a calendar of meeting dates.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello and welcome to another year with the Crockett Community Services District!

This year I have been elected president of the board of directors and I am excited about accomplishing a lot this year with my fellow board members. First I would like to tell you a little about myself and how I came to be on the Board of Directors.

I have lived in Port Costa for about twenty one years and there raised my two children, often taking them to the "pool" in Crockett. I have been a licensed contractor for twenty two years and for the last seven years have been a project manager for a construction company in Berkeley. I have also been a member of the Crockett Carquinez Fire Department for almost seventeen years. My understanding wife Mary and I have just opened a salon/day spa in Martinez.

I started my path to Board of Directors as a member of the Port Costa Sewer District #5, which was a special district set up and overseen by Contra Costa County, when L.A.F.C.O. (Local Agency Formation Commissions) decided it was best to merge our district with Crockett.

I wanted to make sure Port Costa had a voice in decisions made concerning our small town. So here I am!

This year we had a hard decision to make. We had to move forward with increasing the recreation special tax to maintain our Recreation services. Although I don't live in Crockett and my kids are grown now and I haven't been to the pool for a while, I certainly won't mind paying a few more dollars a year so the pool and amenities such as the park and bocce courts will be enjoyed for generations to come.

We may have more hard decisions to make in the months and years ahead, but I am confident that as long as these decisions are made by residents of our district such as myself and all of the other board members and commissioners. I am confident they will be in the best interest for our community.

I would encourage all to attend our board and commission meetings and participate in the decision making process!

Sincerely, John Mackenzie, President

MEASURE R FOR RECREATION

After months of study and many public hearings, the Board unanimously supported asking the voters to consider increasing the recreation special tax as a way to continue support for Alexander Park, the Crockett Pool, the Crockett Community Center, the tennis courts, bocce, and the numerous recreation events provided by the Recreation Department (REC). The recreation complex on Rolph and Pomona is a gem of the town providing top notch facilities that rival any other country club or community. The pool is one of the last full service pools left in the area offering public swim, family swim, swim lessons, and private rentals. The pool supports the summer jobs program hiring local students to work as instructors and lifeguards giving many young people their first real job. Without an increase in funding, there is a real threat that these programs could be reduced or eliminated.

The current recreation special tax of \$50 levied on residential properties has not been raised since 1986. In today's dollars, \$104 is needed to provide the same buying power. Increasing the special tax to \$110 will allow the Recreation Department to adequately fund programs and keep the facilities open.

REC receives the majority of its income from rentals, swim fees, donations, and grants. The current recreation special tax provides only 19% of REC's income. Rental income has been down the last few years and decreased property values reduced the share of return-to-source property tax received from the County. An increase in the special tax will provide a stable source of funding needed.

The majority of REC expenses are for the ongoing operation and maintenance of the facilities. Costs for outside service providers, contractors, and utilities continue to rise. Salary and benefit costs for REC were only 19.12% of the REC budget in FY 2010/2011. For comparison, salaries and benefits for the Pleasant Hill Recreation District make up about 60% of their budget. Taking the projected net loss ending FY 11/12 into consideration, the O&M general fund needs to increase by \$72,497.46 next year to continue operating at current levels.

It is projected that increasing the recreation special tax levied on each residential parcel would generate an additional \$74,040 per year. The increase will provide REC the ability to adequately fund the pool, park, Community Center, and programs for now and into the future. It would also provide for a slow build-up of reserves for capital improvement as originally intended in the original special tax passed in 1986.

REC will be hosting a town meeting on May 24, 2012 at 7:00 PM at the Crockett Community Center to answer questions the public may have on this important ballot measure. There will be an open-house beginning at 6 PM to allow the public to see our wonderful facilities prior to the meeting. The Crockett Community Services District thanks the town for its support of our wonderful recreation facilities and programs and urges everyone to vote come June 5, 2012.

CROCKETT POOL

The Crockett Swimming Pool, built in 1966, was renovated in 2011. The renovation was paid for entirely by grants and donations. No property tax monies were used in the renovation.

Our facility features two poolside patio areas with umbrella covered tables, a lush green lawn area for sitting and a raised sun deck for enjoying the warm summer sunshine. We also have a 1' wading pool for the little ones. Our pool is staffed with Red Cross Certified Lifeguards who are on duty during pool operating hours. The pool opens Memorial Day weekend.

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.

WALK OF HONOR

The 4th Annual Walk of Honor for our Veterans will take place Saturday, May 19, 2012. You must register by May 12.

Check in for registered participants begins at 8:00 am at the Crockett Community Center, located at 850 Pomona Street, Crockett, CA 94525. The Walk will begin at 10:00 am with a BBQ lunch at noon. Transportation will be provided to and from the bridge. Please see the enclosed flyer or visit www.sfrwalkofhonor.com for more information.

Help support the restoration of the historical Crockett Memorial Hall. 100% of all sponsorship contributions will be divided evenly between the Crockett Community Services District for use on the restoration of the Crockett Memorial Hall and the Viet Nam Veterans of the Diablo Valley (VNVDV). The VNVDV is an incredible organization comprised of community volunteers who work diligently providing support services to veterans in need, including hosting the "East Bay Stand Down". We look forward to seeing you at the walk!

MEMORIAL HALL

Our restoration of Crockett's Memorial Hall is still in the planning & design phase. The engineering for seismic strengthening was completed in 2011. Preservation architect Kimberly Butt of Interactive Resources is now researching our World War I memorial's history and architectural significance. She will soon submit a Historic Resource Evaluation report to determine if the building is eligible for the California Register of Historic Resources, allowing us to use a less restrictive building code in the restoration of this building. Schematic design work and a search for grant funding will soon follow. If successful, we hope to begin actual restoration in 2013.

A committee has been appointed to advise the District Board on this restoration project. Interested residents may apply for a committee seat by contacting General Manger Dale McDonald.

OUR NEW WEBSITE

Our website www.town.crockett.ca.us has been updated to better serve the public. Residents and visitors alike will find useful information on various public services including emergency services, recreation, sewer service, garbage service, and others. Agendas and minutes for all Board and Commission meetings and are available and include a search tool as part of our District's commitment to public transparency. Please visit our website for the latest information from the District, events around town, and links to other governmental and non-profits that support the towns of Crockett and Port Costa.

CROCKETT SEWER RATES TO STAY UNCHANGED

The Crockett Community Services District (CCSD) provides sewage collection, treatment and disposal services to properties in Crockett. Property owners are charged annually for these services on their property tax bills. Every year, the Crockett Sanitary Department analyzes water use and prepares budget forecasts that help determine what, if any increase, is needed to the Sewer Use Charge (SUC) for Crockett. The Crockett Sanitary Commission and CCSD Board have chosen to leave the

current rate structure unchanged for the 2012/13 fiscal year. There will be no increase to single family residents or apartment user classifications. There will be no increase for non-residential or mixed-use user classifications rates, property owners will be charged for service based on the latest water use data available.

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, and are not infiltrating the drainage system that flows to the Bay.

The pipe that connects your building to the public sewer is called a "building sewer" or "lateral." This pipe is your property and your responsibility, up to and including the connection to the public sewer. Our website at www.town.crockett.ca.us has more information on this important program.

ILLEGAL CONNECTIONS - SMOKE TESTING

When there are heavy rains extra water entering the sewers puts an added burden on the Crockett and Port Costa treatment plants which increase the cost of sewer service to everyone. 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.

To address this problem and to identify sections of sewers which may exhibit inflow, the Crockett Sanitary Department will begin smoke testing our sanitary sewers later 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. It does not create a fire hazard. More information will be included in the notices as we get closer to beginning this important program.

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.

PORT COSTA SANITARY

Crockett Community Services District has been responsible for sewer service in Port Costa since 2008. Under the direction of the Port Costa Sanitary Commission, we have cut operating costs and raised rates to address the financial problems inherited from the County. Michael Kirker, the Department Manager, continues to look for opportunities to cut costs and keep sewer rates in check while providing a level of service required by state and regional regulations. With minimal rate adjustments this year and in the future, we intend to achieve solvency for our Port Costa Sanitary Department to ensure reliable sewer service.

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. It can be costly when an underground utility is hit. 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.

HAZARDOUS WASTE

Please never pour unwanted chemicals, paint, or medicine down the drain. Protect our treatment plants in Crockett and Port Costa as well as our Bay by safe handling and disposal of all paints, cleaning solvents, pesticides, fungicides, chemicals, paint strippers, copper algacides, dormant tree sprays, root killers, and pool and spa chemicals.

A drive-thru drop-off Hazardous Waste center is located at 101 Pittsburg Avenue in Richmond. The center will 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/.

ELECTRONIC RECYCLING DROP OFF

The District works in partnership with electronic recyclers to provide free electronic recycling service. We will accept your old batteries, compact fluorescent light bulbs, thermometers, barometers, thermostats, automobile switches, 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 pickup up on request. 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.

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 drop off at the District office for proper disposal.

DISTRICT OFFICE

The Crockett CSD office is on the main floor of the old Valona Emporium building at 628 Second Avenue, Room 206, in Crockett.

This is the place to come for sewer permits, for drawings to be stamped, to get a list of bonded sewer contractors, and for all sewer service information for Crockett and Port Costa.

You won't always find the office open, since we have few employees and are often working out in the field. It may help you to call ahead for an appointment. Our phone number is 787-2992. Our e-mail address is manager@town.crockett.ca.us.

Crockett Community Services District

P.O. Box 578 / 628 2nd Avenue, # 206, Crockett, CA 94525
Phone: (510) 787-2992 Fax: (510) 787-2459
www.town.crockett.ca.us

General Manager

Dale McDonald – manager@town.crockett.ca.us

Board of Directors

John Mackenzie - Harold Burnett
Patrick Glover – Fred Clerici – Kris Vickers

Crockett Sanitary Commission

Jon Wolhuis – Robert A. Dahl – Mary Wais
Howard Adams – Ron Maria – Don Barton (alt.)

Recreation Commission

Tom Cusack - John Angell – David Botta – John Valentini
Elena Gomez – Ruth James - Loiuise Choquette

Port Costa Sanitary Commission

Tom Cusack - John Mann – Joe Surges
Anthony Guamieri – Jeoff Chirgwin