

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT January 2016

STATE APPROVES COUNTY LIQUID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

by Chris Pace and Brenda Bongiorno

Sacramento County is the first county to receive approval from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board for its plan to meet all new State regulatory and reporting requirements for septic systems.

The State of California implemented a new policy to continue the protection of public health, groundwater, surface water and the environment. To comply with these new standards, all counties have been directed to develop a comprehensive Local Area Management Plan (LAMP) by May 2016. This plan must meet numerous specific requirements.

The Sacramento County Environmental Management Department (EMD) regulates and permits liquid waste systems in the County. In anticipation of these requirements, the Department previously updated both the County Liquid Waste Ordinance for septic systems and the Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Guidance Manual. EMD then drafted and submitted a comprehensive LAMP for State review and has now been approved.

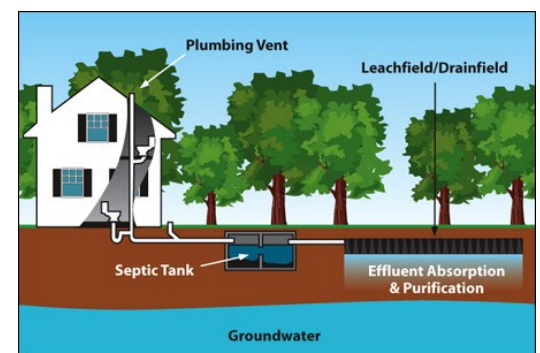
Val Siebel, Environmental Management Department Director, said, "Sacramento County has required septic tank permits since the 1960s, and currently, all key elements of the LAMP are reflected in the existing County ordinance. Therefore, cus-

tomers will not notice any procedural differences after it's officially implemented in Sacramento County."

The Environmental Management Department will report septic system related information to the State on a regular basis and the Sacramento County LAMP can be viewed by the public. The document explains by what methods Sacramento County will meet State requirements to continue to protect public health and the environment.

Going forward, the Environmental Management Department will periodically review and analyze the septic system program and will adjust or implement processes or requirements based on the conclusion of the analysis.

The picture below illustrates the close environmental relationship that septic systems have with groundwater.



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Environmental News

The City of Sacramento single use bag ban started January 1st, 2016, so remember to bring your own bags to the grocery. If you forget, you can buy recycled paper bags for 10 cents or more when you check out. Plastic bags have posed a particular environmental threat as they are of a perfect design to fly out of garbage trucks and landfills and pollute the environment, cling to trees and fences, clog recycling machinery, entangle wildlife, and will never biodegrade.



Mattress recycling fees of \$11.00 will be collected on mattress and box spring sales by all California mattress retailers beginning December 30th, 2015 to fund the statewide mattress recycling program mandated by the California Used Mattress Recovery & Recycling Act. For more detailed information you can read the [Mattress Recycling Council's Notice to Retailers](#) dated October 2015.



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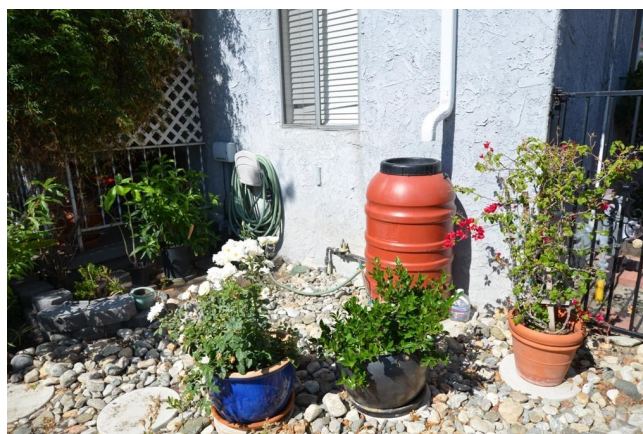
Non-potable Rainwater Catchment Systems

Safe Practices with Rain Barrels and Cisterns

Whether it is to recharge groundwater, conserve drinking water, or divert stormwater, rainwater harvesting is a viable option when living in an area such as Sacramento County that receives on average 18 inches of rain per year. Just one inch of rain, collected from a 1000 square foot roof, can produce 620 gallons of water that can be used to irrigate landscape, flush indoor toilets, or slowly be allowed to infiltrate the soil to help recharge our diminishing aquifers.

As environmentally attractive as it is, the process of rainwater harvesting, if not done correctly can have detrimental effects on public and environmental health. The collected water can breed mosquitos that can transmit disease

such as the West Nile virus, the water can contain pathogenic bacteria from bird feces deposited on roof tops, and the water can become stagnant and odorous creating nuisance conditions.



Non-potable Rainwater Catchment Systems



The County of Sacramento Environmental Management Department recommends the following safety guidelines when installing and using your rain catchment system:

Non-potable water--do not drink- Do not drink from your rain catchment device as this water has not been tested and may contain harmful bacteria, parasites, or chemicals that could cause illness or death if ingested.

Backflow protection- The system should never be connected to a potable (drinkable) water source without obtaining the proper permits and ensuring the right type of back flow prevention device is utilized. Rainwater is not considered potable water and therefore can contaminate potable water systems if connected incorrectly.

Rooftop rainwater only- Only collect rainwater from roof tops or other elevated impervious surfaces. Wastewater from appliances and sinks is considered greywater and may contain bacteria that can flourish inside the catchment device over time. Rainwater that has already contacted the ground may have picked up hazardous wastes such as lead, petroleum residual, and/or other pathogenic organisms from things such as pet waste or decaying animals.

Prevent mosquito breeding- All device openings should be screened with 1/16 inch mesh or less material to keep mosquitos, rodents, animals and larger pieces of organic matter out of the water.

Keep off of fruits and vegetables- It is not recommended that this water be used on edible vegetables and fruits as it may contain contaminants that can cause illness or death. If it is to be used on edible produce, it is recommended that a "first flush diverter" be used to remove the first water that enters the system as this water will have the highest concentration of contaminants.

Opaque in color- Lastly, the catchment device should be opaque in color or shielded from sunlight to prevent or slow algae growth.



Sacramento County Building Code adopted Chapter 17 of the 2013 California plumbing code which lists **dos and don'ts** for non-potable rainwater catchment systems. The chapter also discusses permit requirements and exemptions. For additional information on permitting requirements, contact the County Building Department at <http://building.saccounty.net>


January Safety Tip: Awareness Matters by Justin Ross

It's likely happened to most of you at one point or another. A phone call, text, or TV show distracted you from cooking dinner...until the smell of scorched chicken drifts your way. It's easy to be distracted, no matter where you are or what you're doing. Alertness and awareness are not innate behavior traits. It takes practice to become more aware of your surroundings, whether you're cooking, driving, or trying to keep your family safe.

But how do you practice becoming more aware? It's actually simpler than you may think. All it takes is to "Get your head up, open your eyes and look around." To get started, try walking into a room and giving it a quick scan as you sit down to see who is nearby, or to glance in a window as you walk down the street to see who may be walking behind you. You could also step your awareness training up a notch through more specific observation. For instance, take note of a car that passes you as you are driving and then look away. After looking away, would you know the following?

- The make, model, and color of the car?
- The number on the license plate?
- How many doors are on the car?
- The gender of the driver and any passengers?

. By using simple precautions, you can safely enjoy the time you spend outside of your home.

- Take a friend (even a furry one). Walking a dog, especially one inclined to bark at strangers, is better than venturing out alone.
- Take your cell phone with you so you can call 911 if you see something suspicious.
- Let a friend or family member know where you're going and when you plan to return.
- Avoid walking too closely to bushes or areas with any kind of tall overgrowth.
- Stay attentive to your surroundings and if listening to music, keep the volume at a low level so you can hear what's going on around you.
- If at all possible, hold all cell phone calls or texts until you are locked inside your car.
- Before heading to your destination, make sure you have enough gas to get you there and back. You don't want to be stranded alone.
- If you feel like you are being followed, drive to the nearest gas station or open business. Do not drive home until you are completely sure you are alone.
- Roll up the windows and lock all car doors every time you leave your car.
- When you approach your car, have the key ready. 
- Avoid parking in isolated areas especially at night. If possible, park your car under a lamppost.
- Make a mental note of where you parked. Would-be thieves are just looking for your vulnerability. The distressed "Where did I park my car" look is a dead giveaway that you are elsewhere in thought and not aware of your surroundings, making you an easy target. Be alert and aware of people "hanging around" parking lots/garages, or just inside or outside the store or establishment you are visiting.
- If you are attacked, noise is your most immediate defense. Not only will sound attract attention to you and make your location known but it may also cause the would-be attacker to flee.
- If you are attacked, if possible, run in the direction of help. An assailant usually will not engage in a pursuit because it could increase the possibility of detection or apprehension.



- If you are attacked, never leave the site of the attack when prompted by an attacker. Don't believe an assailant that says he or she won't hurt you if you leave with him or her. Stay where you are, fight and scream.

<https://www.usconcealedcarry.com/awareness-matters-teaching-yourself-to-become-more-aware-of-your-surroundings/>
<http://www.alarm.org/YourSafety/PersonalSafetyTips.aspx>
http://hanfordsentinel.com/news/opinion/columnists/preparedness-facts-be-aware-of-your-surroundings/article_8e06d134-17ed-11e1-a6do-001cc4c03286.html

WHAT'S A SMALL WATER SYSTEM?

More than 97% of the nation's 156,000 public water systems are small systems, meaning they serve 10,000 or fewer people. A public



water system (PWS) is a system that provides water for human consumption to at least 25 people or 15 service connections. (www.epa.gov) The Small Drinking Water Systems program's purpose is to protect public health by helping water system owners and operators to provide pure and safe drinking water by preventing waterborne diseases, identifying risks of bacteriological, chemical and/or radiological contamination, conducting inspections,

Excellent job EMD's Environmental Compliance Division for receiving a very positive evaluation from the State Water Resources Control Board for substantially meeting the program objectives as the Local Primacy Agency (LPA) and being in compliance with all requirements of the current LPA Delegation Agreement and FY 2014/15 work plan.



Food Safety Education Classes December

Attendees 103

Facilities Represented 24

Onsite 5
Offsite 1

Languages Represented

English 2
Spanish 3
Cantonese 1




Hazardous Material Plan Workshops


The Environmental Management Department offered 2 Hazardous Material Plan Workshops for 12 attendees during December 2015. EMD staff assisted each person with the process of submitting their Hazardous Waste Plans electronically, as mandated by the California Environmental Protection Agency, effective January 1, 2013.

Holiday Toy Drive and Giving Drive for Maryhouse and the Mustard Seed School

Each year during the holiday season, the Environmental Management Department's (EMD) EMSSC (employee union) sponsors a giving drive for Mustard Seed School and Maryhouse, two of the many programs that fall under the direction of Loaves and Fishes, here in Sacramento. The giving drive consists of monetary donations, toys for children of various ages, and items for general needs of adults and children.



This year EMSSC collected numerous toys and \$970.00 dollars that were taken to Maryhouse and the Mustard Seed in mid-December so that homeless families would experience an extra degree of care during the season.



Loaves and Fishes is a private charity which provides survival services to homeless men, women and children. It established Mustard Seed School in 1989 to help meet the needs of homeless children. It is a free, private school for children ages 3-15 year old. A major goal of the Program is to prepare and enroll homeless children into public schools. Mustard Seed School provides a positive learning environment, survival resources of food, clothing, shelter, medical and dental screenings, counseling and more. Maryhouse is a daytime shelter for homeless women and children and provides personal attention to women through short term guidance with a goal of helping them to take the next step from seeking assistance to independence and self-sufficiency.



EC Division offered 1 **Underground Storage Tank Workshop** in December. During the workshop, EMD staff assisted 4 people in submitting their Underground Storage Tank forms electronically through the California Environmental Reporting System.

By the Numbers December 2015	
	Dec-15
Food Facility Placards Issued	
A. Green – Pass	1075
C. Red – Closed	7
B. Yellow – Conditional Pass	63
Inspections	
Abandoned Wells	38
Above Ground Storage Tank	1
Body Art	28
Food Protection (includes reinspections and food events)	1344
Farm Labor Camps	0
Public Swimming Pools/Spas	0
Solid Waste Facilities (landfills/transfer stations)	35
Liquid Waste	51
Medical Waste	9
Small Water Systems	4
Wells and Monitoring Wells	138
Businesses/Facilities Generating Hazardous Waste	69
Businesses/Facilities Storing Hazardous Materials	130
Underground Storage Tank Facilities	29
Underground Storage Tank Removal, Installations, Upgrades, Repairs	10
Storm Water Non Food Facility	57
Waste Tire	51
Tobacco Retailer	44
Commercial/Multi-Family Recycling	55
Refuse Vehicle Inspections/	12
Septic Tank Pumper Trucks	32
Total	2137
Investigations	
Body Art	4
Consumer Complaints	56
Food Borne Illness	13
Incident Response	44
Solid Waste	0
Storm Water	3
Waste Tire	0
Childhood Lead	1
Total	121
Class Attendance	
Food Safety Education (Food School)	103
Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMP) Workshop	12
“How To Get A Green Placard For Food Inspection” Workshop Online also.	0
Underground Storage Forms Workshop	4
Total	119
Plans, Permits, and Reviews	
Abandoned Wells	17
Hazardous Materials Business Plans	112
Body Art	5
Monitoring Wells/ Water Wells	123
Food Facilities	127
Public Swimming Pools/Spas	54
Underground Storage Tanks Plans and Permit Reviews	17
Land Use	10
Local Oversight Program	3
Cross Connection Permits (Blue Tags)	1369
Total	1837
Imaging	
Document Pages Imaged	16283