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ATTENTION: Natural Resources and Culture Committee
Agenda of September 19, 2001

SUBJECT: Sanitary Sewer Spills - Status Report

REFERENCE: Manager's Report No. 01-015, dated January 24, 2001

SUMMARY

THIS IS AN INFORMATION ITEM ONLY. NO ACTION IS REQUIRED ON THE PART OF THE COMMITTEE OR THE CITY COUNCIL.

BACKGROUND

This is the fifteenth status report to the Natural Resources and Culture Committee on the subject of the City's sanitary sewer overflows (SSO=s). The last report was provided to the Committee on January 31, 2001, and provided information for the past six calendar years. These regular reports are meant to provide information on the results of measures undertaken to prevent the incidence, volume, and impact of sewer spills.

DISCUSSION

Sewer Spill Statistics

During Calendar Year (CY) 2000, through August, there were a total of 244 spills that resulted in a discharge of approximately 34,949,000 gallons. Included in this amount is a significant spill that occurred in February 2000 into the Alvarado Creek. Of the 34.9 million total gallons of sewage spilled during this period, 34.7 million gallons were spilled to public waters. During the same time period for CY 2001, there were a total of 165 spills. Of the 165 spills that occurred, 31 spills were to public waters. The total spill volume for CY 2001 year-to-date (through August) was 2.2 million gallons which includes the 1.5 million gallon spill into Tecolote Creek in February 2001. This represents a 93% decrease from the same time period of CY 2000 year-to-date. Pertinent spill statistics that compare CY 2001 with CY 2000 year-to-date are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Spill Statistics for CYs 2000 and 2001 To-Date (through August)

Statistic Measured	CY 2000 YTD	CY 2001 YTD	Difference
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Total Spills	244	165	32% decrease
Spills to Public Waters	24	31	29% increase
Total Spill Volume	34,949,195	2,285,392	93% decrease
Public Waters Spill Volume	34,721,397	1,756,554	95% decrease
Public Waters Spill Volume Minus Major Spills*	721,397	256,554	64% decrease

* Alvarado Trunk Sewer = 34 million gallons and Tecolote Trunk Sewer = 1.5 million gallons

Significant Spill Reduction Activities

Significant initiatives are underway in the City's Metropolitan Wastewater Department that focus on the long-term reduction of sewer spills. Several major components of the City's initiatives are highlighted in the following paragraphs.

Rehabilitation, Repair, and Replacement of Sewer Pipes. In May, 2001, the City Council awarded a \$4 million contract for 8 miles of pipeline rehabilitation for those sewer lines in urgent need of repair. The City's present goal is to complete 20 miles of pipeline rehabilitation per year by CY 2004. City forces make emergency repairs to sewer pipes on an on-going basis. Some repairs are considered permanent if adjacent pipelines are in good condition. The City also is working to complete 40 miles of pipeline replacement per year by CY 2004.

Inspection and Maintenance of Canyons and Open Space Infrastructure. City forces are re-establishing access in canyon areas that contain sewer pipelines. New All-Surface Vehicles are being used to establish pathways, to locate buried manholes, and to transport sewer cleaning equipment through non-Right of Way areas. This equipment provides a surface loading of only 3 pounds per square inch versus 7 pounds per square inch for traditional tractor and backhoe equipment. In this way the MWWD is protecting existing flora and fauna in canyon areas while proceeding with critical sewer maintenance activities.

Enhanced Sewer Pipeline Cleaning Activities. The Metropolitan Wastewater Department's sewer pipeline cleaning goal is to inspect and clean all 3000 miles of municipal pipelines by December, 2003. This goal translates into more than 4500 miles of pipeline being cleaned in the next 27 months. Several consultant contracts have been approved that provide for condition assessment of pipelines and manholes for about a third of the sewer system. Both City forces and consultants are televising strategic portions of the sewer system. City forces televise pipelines after cleaning to ensure that cleaning activities have been effective. They also televise troublesome sewer spots to identify infrastructure problems and to allow for the best design methods essential to correcting the problems. Consultants are televising a total of 196 miles of sewers and inspecting 5,600 manholes over the next two years at a cost approximating \$5 million.

Attached to this Manager's Report is a brief summary of on-going Metropolitan Wastewater Department activities comprising the City's Program to Reduce Sewer Spills.

CONCLUSION

For the first half of CY 2001, the total number of sewer spills has decreased, yet the number of spills reaching public waters has increased. The volume of sewage spilled significantly decreased in CY 2001 to-date, as has the sewage spill volume reaching public waters.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Tulloch
Director
Metropolitan Wastewater Director

Approved: George I. Loveland
Senior Deputy City Manager

LOVELAND/TULLOCH/CJT:oc

Attachment: City of San Diego Program to Reduce Sewer Spills (September, 2001)