

Lompoc Regional Wastewater Reclamation Plant (LRWRP) Upgrade Project

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why doesn't Vandenberg Village have its own wastewater treatment plant?

Due to the stringent waste discharge requirements enforced by State and Federal agencies, the District believes that the cost to construct, operate, and maintain a wastewater treatment plant would be more expensive for the 2,400 Village customers than participation in the regional treatment plant.

Why do I have to pay the same wastewater charge as my neighbor when I only use half as much water?

Because the District does not meter wastewater, the residential wastewater charge is calculated by dividing the budgeted amount for wastewater collection and treatment equally among all residents. This method is subject to change, however, as the District continues to research alternative calculation methods.

Does Vandenberg Village pay higher wastewater rates because self-regenerating water softeners discharge a lot of salt?

In 1991, a wastewater reclamation feasibility study discovered that Village wastewater, if treated locally, would require additional, more expensive treatment methods to remove the salt content discharged by self-regenerating softeners. The City of Lompoc, however, does not measure the salt content of the Village wastewater and, accordingly, there are no extra treatment costs for its removal.

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- 1972 – In an effort to reduce pollutants from wastewater discharge, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendment (the Clean Water Act) is adopted and provides grants for up to 75% of the funding for regional wastewater projects
- June 1974 – Park Water Company (PWC), the private water company that served Vandenberg Village until 1988, enters into an agreement with the City of Lompoc to construct a regional wastewater plant. The plant costs \$18 million to construct (\$77 million in 2009 dollars*) but Vandenberg Village's share for a 17.8% capacity right is only \$80,400, *considerably less than the cost to upgrade the existing PWC wastewater treatment plant.*
- 1974 – the City of Lompoc and its partners receive \$16.7 million in federal and state grant funds to construct the regional wastewater plant
- October 1974 through May 1977 – the Lompoc Regional Wastewater Reclamation Plant (LRWRP) is constructed
- May 1977 – Vandenberg Village is connected to the regional wastewater plant and begins paying the City of Lompoc for actual treatment costs and 17.8% of all capital costs
- 1977 through 2001 - the plant is maintained but undergoes no significant renovations
- 1988 – VVCSD purchases PWC water and wastewater facilities and accepts the existing wastewater treatment agreement
- 1991 – Lawrance, Fisk, and McFarland researches the possibility of constructing a Village wastewater reclamation plant and the VVCSD Board of Directors determines it to be cost-prohibitive
- May 2001 – the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) issues Order No. 01-87 which requires the LRWRP to meet updated discharge standards by May 2006
- 2002 – Kennedy/Jenks Consultants prepares a Master Plan recommending upgrades to meet the new standards
- 2005 – VVCSD prepays \$1.74 million for its share of the LRWRP Upgrade Project planning, design, and construction management costs, saving District residents \$1.2 million in interest payments
- July 2006 – the RWQCB issued Order No. R3-2006-0037 which extended the deadline for Order No. 01-87 to July 2011
- November 2006 – the LRWRP Upgrade Project is approved for a low-interest State Revolving Fund loan. The project is expected to cost approximately \$100 million. With the incidental increase in plant capacity, VVCSD's share of the cost is reduced to 16.18%, a savings of about \$1.6 million.
- March 2007 – the LRWRP Upgrade Project breaks ground
- June 2008 – VVCSD awarded \$4 million Prop 50 grant help pay for its share of the LRWRP project
- August 2009 – the upgraded plant is scheduled to go online

For Lompoc Regional Wastewater Reclamation Plant Upgrade Project progress reports and photos, visit the City of Lompoc's website at http://www.cityoflompoc.com/utilities/wastewater/Plant_Update.htm.