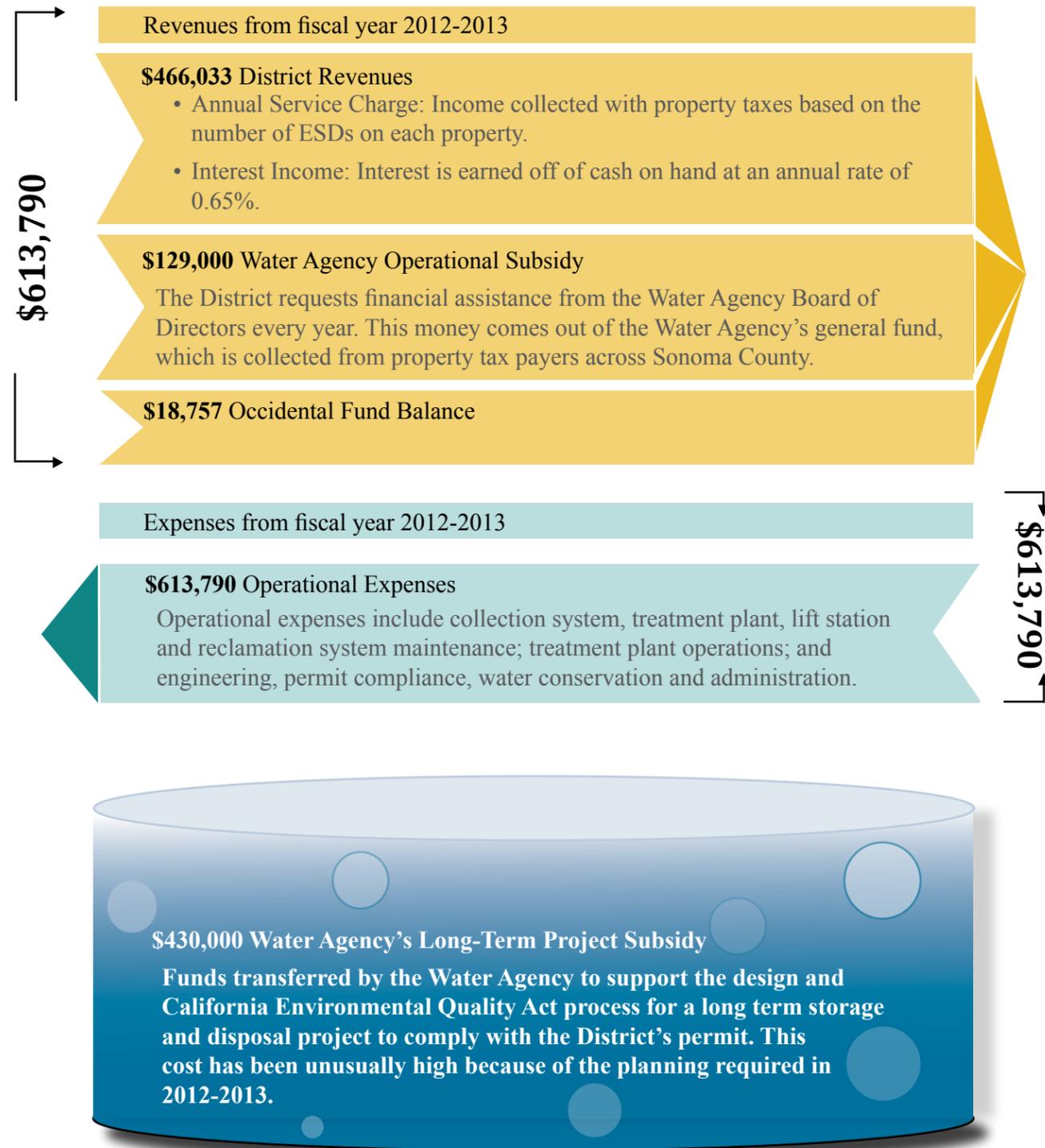


## Budget

In the 18 years the Water Agency has been operating the District the revenues collected from the ratepayers have not been sufficient to pay the cost of operating, maintaining and managing this system. The Water Agency's General Fund is used to bridge the gap between operating costs and revenues.

Translated into cost per household or ESD, this year's annual sewer rate is \$1,682 per ESD. This charge would be more than \$2,200 per ESD without subsidies from the Water Agency's General Fund.



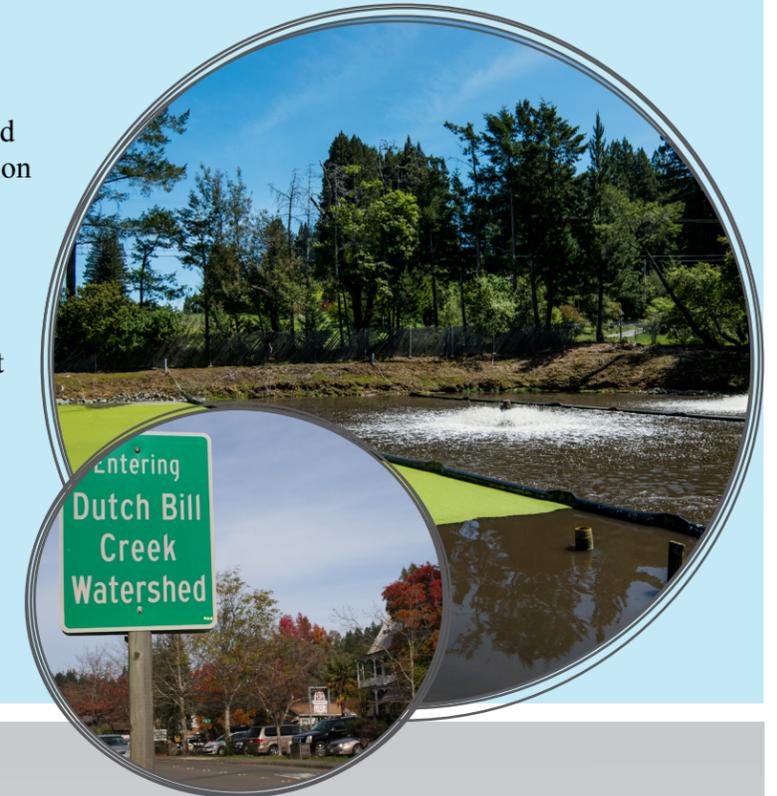
## Occidental County Sanitation District

Creating Unique Solutions

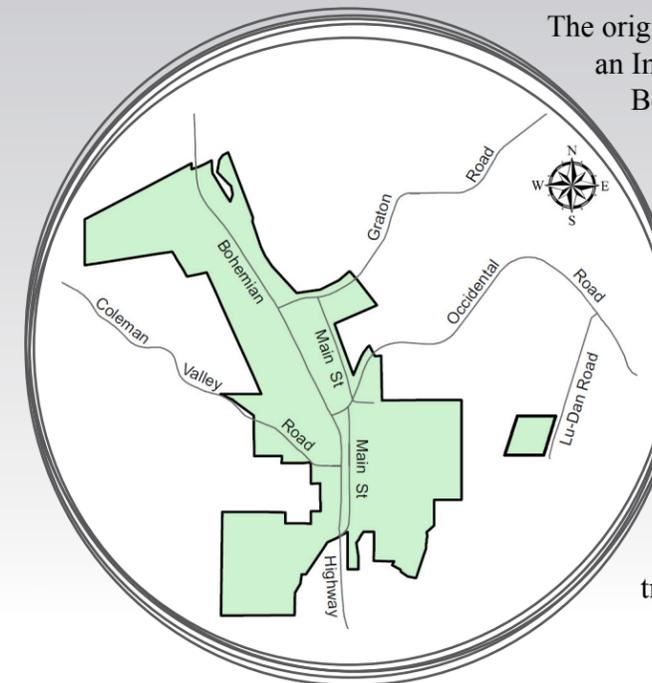
### The History of Occidental and Wastewater Treatment

The town of Occidental was founded in 1876 and currently has over 1,000 residents. This population growth combined with increasingly stringent regulations has necessitated more complex and larger waste water treatment systems over the years.

The first Occidental Wastewater Treatment Plant began operation in 1951, and served about 70 customers. The Occidental County Sanitation District (District) was managed by the Sonoma County Public Works Department until 1995. Currently, the Sonoma County Water Agency manages the District. The District serves about 100 customers representing 273 equivalent single-family dwellings (ESDs).



### Wastewater Treatment Upgrades and Changes



The original Occidental wastewater treatment facility was an Imhoff tank system, located near the intersection of Bohemian Hwy and Occidental Camp Meeker Road. This secondary treatment system discharged recycled water into Dutch Bill Creek before the current secondary treatment facility, located near the Druid's Cemetery, was built. When the new plant was built the old plant became a pump station, pumping raw waste water up to the new plant.

After the treatment plant moved to the new location, the Sonoma County Public Works Department negotiated with the Graham's to store recycled water in Graham's pond and irrigate pasture on their property. In 1995 responsibility for operating and maintaining the plant and collection system was transferred to the Sonoma County Water Agency.



## What's being looked at now?

The District is currently evaluating long-term solutions for Occidental, which may be part of a regional solution. The District is currently exploring short term solutions which may need to be implemented as soon as the District would fall out of compliance with the current Cease and Desist Order (CDO). One solution may involve trucking wastewater to a treatment plant that has the capacity to treat and recycle/discharge the amount of wastewater produced by Occidental.



## Infrastructure and Water Use Efficiency Programs

The District has offered numerous infrastructure and water use efficiency programs to the Occidental community. These programs are designed to reduce the amount of water being treated by the District, lowering the cost of operation.

### Water Use Efficiency Programs

Starting in 2008 the District has offered free water usage surveys, low flow showerheads, faucet aerators, and rebates for high-efficiency toilets, high-efficiency urinals and high-efficiency clothes washers. In 2009, the District launched a High-Efficiency Fixture Direct-Install Program, which provides free installation of high-efficiency toilets to replace inefficient toilets. All of these programs are currently available to Occidental ratepayers with the exception of residential water surveys.

### Infrastructure Improvement Programs

The District is currently offering to replace (including materials and installation) ratepayer's poor-performing laterals. The Private Building Lateral Replacement program is designed to reduce the amount of inflow and infiltration, commonly referred to as I&I, that is treated by the District at its treatment facility.

## Regulations

The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) has issued Cease and Desist Orders (CDOs) against the District for violation of the discharge requirements in its permit. In addition to the CDOs, the Regional Board has taken other enforcement measures against the District to ensure compliance with laws and regulations.

The most recent CDO requires the District to comply with the basin plan for the Russian River watershed, which states that no wastewater treatment facility is allowed to discharge waste to the Russian River or its tributaries (like Graham's pond) during the period of May 15 through September 30. Thus, the District is no longer able to release treated wastewater (secondary or tertiary) into Graham's pond from May 15 through September 30. The Regional Board has asked the District to provide a 60% design report by December 2013 for a capital improvement project that would bring the District into compliance, and have the project completed by January 2018.



## Past Efforts

Numerous efforts have been made and Environmental Impact Reports (EIR) prepared over the past two decades to address the issue of providing cost-effective sewer service for Occidental. After the first CDO was issued in 1997 the District engaged citizen advisory groups and Camp Meeker Parks and Recreation Department to evaluate solutions for Occidental and for the region. The following summarizes these efforts:

### 1999: Draft EIR by the District evaluating a pipeline and leach field

- Pipeline to the Russian River County Sanitation District (RRCSD)
  - faced public opposition and was not pursued
- Community leach field above Camp Meeker
  - leach field project was determined to be unpermittable based on loading rates

### 2002: Draft EIR by Camp Meeker and the District evaluate possible regional solutions

- Camp Meeker and Occidental's system would be connected for combined wastewater treatment at a proposed new tertiary treatment facility on the existing District site. Creation of a new storage pond and disposal via irrigation or discharge into Dutch Bill Creek
- Numerous alternatives to this project included variations in discharge levels and locations
  - the project and all alternatives were dismissed because of lack of funding

### 2006: EIR by Camp Meeker and the District for a pipeline to the Russian River County Sanitation District

- The District certified the EIR to meet obligations under the CDO
  - a project was not selected through this EIR process due to high costs and opposition

### 2013: Notice of Preparation of a Draft EIR for a zero discharge system

- District chose not to proceed based on community input

## Major Milestones for Occidental County Sanitation District

1951	The first Occidental Wastewater Treatment Plant began operation
1969	Facility upgraded to a package style plant at the lift station
1973-1984	System managers abandon the package plant and move the treatment to the Druids cemetery site
1977-1984	Graham's pond begins to be used as a storage pond
1995	Operation of the District changes hands from Sonoma County Public Works to the Sonoma County Water Agency
1999	Draft EIR: evaluates a pipe line and sub-surface disposal
2002	Draft EIR: evaluates a combined Occidental and Camp Meeker solution with tertiary treatment at the current facility site
2006	EIR: evaluates a combined Occidental and Camp Meeker solution pipe line to the Russian River County Sanitation District
2008-2009	Water Use Efficiency Program launches and offers direct installs
Feb. 2013	Regional Board issues a Cease and Desist Order to end storage of recycled water in Graham's Pond
2013	District offers to replace poor-performing laterals
Dec. 2013	Regional Board requires 60% design plans for storage and disposal project to address 2013 CDO
Dec. 2014	Regional Board requires completion of the CEQA process for storage and disposal project to address 2013 CDO

Over the past decade, the District has received CDOs and other penalties from the Regional Board. The District has responded to the degree possible, given budgetary and practical limitations, by making improvements to the plant and its operations.