



Splash

*To Protect the Beneficial Uses of
Receiving Waters While
Complying with all Pollution
Abatement Regulations*

(800) 974-9794
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CITY OF LOS ANGELES • DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS • BUREAU OF SANITATION

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Stormwater Program Carries its Campaign—

From the Canyons to the Canals

By Laurel Airica

The landscape in Los Angeles is as diverse as its population, with urban, ocean, rural and mountain communities all in close proximity to each other. Two particularly colorful regions of the City—the Santa Monica Canyon and the Venice Canals—are now receiving special attention from the Stormwater Program in an effort to dramatically reduce the pollutants that flow into the bay from the unusual features and activities that occur in these communities.

The Venice Canals Outreach

The Venice Canals are a uniquely scenic area in Los Angeles, where charming homes line long canals on which flotillas of geese and ducks float leisurely by. Canine residents walking among the strolling birds, often leave their 'calling cards' along the walkway. When rainstorms, or well-intentioned cleaning efforts, wash this waste into the canal waters, the water quality deteriorates and pollution is conveyed into the bay.



With the support of the Council District Office and the Venice Canals Residents' Association, the Stormwater Program used a number of avenues to convey the all-important 'scoop the poop' message to residents and visitors throughout the Venice area. In addition to mailing its attractive *What's the Scoop?* pet care brochure to area residents, and making it available at such local venues as the public library, Stormwater team members staffed a booth and distributed the brochure and poop scoops on Fridays in May at the Venice Farmers Market.



The Venice Canals offer residents and visitors a scenic respite from urban sprawl.

Tests of ocean water quality at the storm drain outlets in both areas have periodically shown high levels of bacteria from fecal matter. The primary 'culprits' for the Venice Canals are the dogs and the ducks while the suspected sources of the bacteria in the Santa Monica Canyon include improperly disposed of domestic animal waste, leaky septage systems, garden fertilizers, and wild birds.

Reining in Horse Waste

The Santa Monica Canyon is one of the few regions remaining in Los Angeles where people can enjoy the great outdoors from the back of a horse. But this privilege brings with it the responsibility of properly disposing of the large amounts of waste that a single horse can

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City of Los Angeles
Department of Public Works
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CABRILLO MARINE AQUARIUM

One of the brightest gems in the City of Los Angeles' array of parks and recreational facilities is the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium located on the shore at Cabrillo Beach in San Pedro (between Point Fermin and the Port of Los Angeles). Dedicated to protecting the beautiful and delicate eco-systems of Southern California's marine life—through public education and scientific research—the aquarium's exhibits make it possible to observe and to study the creatures that live in various ocean habitats, from rocky shores to the open sea.

In addition to its many exhibitions and seawater laboratories, the aquarium also offers a wide range of



fascinating classes for people from pre-school age to educators, including after school science programs, workshops in marine biology, fun with grunion, and whale watching boat trips. You can find out about these

programs and other details about the facility by visiting the aquarium on the web at www.cabrilloaq.org.

For an in-person visit, hop into your car and drive to 3720 Stephen White Drive in San Pedro. The museum, itself, charges no admission but does request a \$2 donation for adults and \$1 for children. However, beach parking adjacent to the museum is \$6.50. Museum hours are noon to 5pm Tuesday through Friday and 10am-5pm on weekends. For more information call (310) 548-7562.



A Cabrillo Marine Aquarium visitor gets an up close and personal look at Southern California marine life.

In Focus is an occasional column that highlights City programs whose activities may significantly improve storm water quality. If you would like to have your program featured in this column, please call (213) 847-4842.

Clean Community Celebration Attracts Thousands

On April 1st, close to 4,000 residents in Council District 14 gathered for a community spring-cleaning celebration. From 8 a.m. to 12:00 noon, over a thousand men, women and children scoured their neighborhoods to retrieve trash and litter while crews from the Department of Public Works carried away large, discarded bulky items and painted over graffiti-marred buildings. All told, over 45 tons of trash were collected and disposed of through the combined efforts of the residents, volunteers and City workers.

Following the cleanup, the community gathered in Mariachi Plaza to enjoy music, ballet folklórico, free giveaways, raffles, food and drinks. Councilmember Nick Pacheco and Commissioner Woody Fleming of the Board of Public Works (*right*) both welcomed the crowd and thanked everyone for their enthusiastic participation.

Dozens of city agencies, community organizations, and environmental groups set up booths to distribute information about the programs, services, and opportunities they offer for improving the beauty of the neighborhoods. Both children and adults went from booth to booth to pose with the Stormwater Monster, have their faces painted, sit in the NASCAR racing vehicle, or play with the puppies and kittens that the Animal Services Department had brought in for adoption.

The event was covered by radio and television and resulted not only in a cleaner and more informed community, but also one that felt more united in spirit and more 'plugged-in' to the services that the City of Los Angeles' Department of Public Works can provide towards achieving a higher quality of life for all residents.



Even adults got in on the fun by posing with the Stormwater Monster at the Boyle Heights Clean Community event.



Canyons

Continued from page 1

generate in a single day. If it reaches the right destination, this waste can grow flowers. But it can sicken sea life and swimmers if it reaches the ocean. Its powerful fertilizing action can also cause a proliferation of marine plants in the bay that then rob other organisms of necessary oxygen and thereby upset the balance of nature.

The Stormwater Program has developed a small brochure for horse owners that encourages them to collect soiled bedding and manure on a daily basis and then store these materials in sturdy, rain-tight containers so the City's **Bureau of Sanitation** can haul them away every week. The Bureau then delivers this mixture of straw and manure to several



Bureau of Sanitation offers weekly horse manure collection service.

schools and community gardens, like *Ocean View Farms* in West Los Angeles, where it is utilized for vegetable growing. This recycling service serves everyone and eliminates the dumping fees the City would have to pay if it took the material to landfills.

The horse owners' brochure will be distributed through direct mailing, at local equine related events and at retail stores that serve the needs of horses and their owners.

"Once residents of these beautiful, yet highly sensitive areas understand the simple precautions they can take to protect the environment, they're certain to make the little extra effort that will help improve water quality in the bay."

—Dr. John H. Dorsey,
Stormwater Program Assistant Manager

Keeping Septic Tanks from Seeping

Some homeowners in the Santa Monica Canyon have their own private sewage system either because hook-ups to the city sewer lines were not available when their homes were first built, or are still not available. The consequences of a malfunctioning system are extremely costly and unpleasant not only for the family that owns one, but for the entire



During rain events, runoff that flows down the 10,127-acre Santa Monica Canyon watershed can wash bacteria from septic systems (upper left) and manure from horse corrals (upper right) into Santa Monica Bay at Will Rogers State Beach.

community, including the ocean environment. Thus, owners are required by law to keep their system functioning properly (L.A.M.C. Sec. 94.101.15.2).

The Stormwater Program has developed a small brochure for septic tank owners in the Santa Monica Canyon that explains the importance of using a licensed contractor to maintain their system. The brochure also emphasizes practices inside the home that can reduce the frequency with which systems need to be professionally serviced.



Copies of the following bilingual brochures are available by calling the Stormwater Program at (800) 974-9794:

- *What's the Scoop? Tips for a Healthy Pet and a Healthier Environment*
- *The Ocean Begins in Your Neighborhood—For Gardeners & Landscapers*
- *The Ocean Begins in Your Neighborhood—For Horse Owners*
- *The Ocean Begins in Your Neighborhood—For Septic System Owners*

Draft LA River Trash TMDL Issued



The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board recently issued the draft Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for trash in the Los Angeles River. The TMDL requirements will set the maximum amount of trash allowed to run off from City street surfaces. These amounts are based on how much trash the river can receive and still meet water quality standards for the

river's beneficial and designated uses, such as fishing, swimming, recreation, and industrial and drinking water supplies. Currently, the draft Trash TMDL sets the numeric limit at zero (0) to be achieved by progressively reducing trash discharges over a ten-year period.

The Regional Board is scheduled to adopt the final Los Angeles River Trash TMDL in July 2000, after which it will serve as the model for the Ballona Creek Trash TMDL. Increased enforcement of litter ordinances may be forthcoming and Trash TMDL requirements may become part of the City's future municipal stormwater NPDES permits. Exceeding the allowed limits of this TMDL may result in fines of \$25,000/day.

Calendar of Events

- May 20** Operation Nice Day
Slauson Super Mall
1600 W. Slauson Avenue, LA
- May 22** Public Works Week Kick-off
Los Angeles Central Library
- June 3** Whale Fiesta
Cabrillo Marine Aquarium
3720 Stephen White Drive, San Pedro
- June 4** Festival de Maiz
Arroyo Seco Park
5568 Via Marisol, Highland Park
- June 17** Juneteenth Festival
William Grant Still Arts Center
2520 S. West View St., LA
- July 8-9** Lotus Festival
Echo Park, LA



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