

THE PIPELINE

News from the Ventura County Public Works Agency

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From the Director's Desk

Jeff Pratt,
Public Works
Agency Director



Dear Friends,

We've been very busy at the Ventura County Public Works Agency. March began with a successful State of the Agency meeting focused on safety and quality of life. Held over three days, information was shared between VCPWA's five departments, reminding us all of the key role Public Works plays in keeping our communities healthy and safe. Be sure to read on for a detailed recap of this year's State of the Agency!

March also brought recognition to two recently completed projects: the Happy Valley Bioswale in Ojai and the JJC Solar Project in Oxnard. Both of these projects were collaborative efforts between VCPWA and other entities, and exemplify our efforts to enhance sustainability and improve quality of life in Ventura County. Congratulations to the departments and staff who executed these successful projects! Congratulations is also in order for the Water and Sanitation Department for their two most recent awards! The department received the Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission Project of the Year Award and the 2016 ASCE Project of the Year award.

Everyone is hard at work preparing for National Public Works Week May 15 - 21. VCPWA will be celebrating all of our unsung heroes and first responders with a day of displays, exhibits, and fun on Tuesday, May 17th at the County Government Center. Be sure to mark your calendars and plan on attending this important day. See you there!

All the Best,



Jeff Pratt, Director

JUVENILE JUSTICE CENTER SOLAR PROJECT



Representatives from VCPWA's Engineering Services Department and the Ventura County General Services Agency spent some time on March 9th giving District 5 Supervisor John C. Zaragoza a tour of the recently completed solar project at the Juvenile Justice Center (JJC).

The project, which began construction in October 2015 and was completed in February 2016, consists of 3,620 ground-mounted solar array panels that cover over three acres of land on the JJC property. "The solar panels are expected to reduce the County's Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions by approximately 532 Metric Tons annually, which, along with previously completed County solar projects, continues toward our overall goal of reducing GHG emissions by 15% by 2020," explained Brian D'Anna, Engineering Manager with PWAESD.

The JJC property was chosen because the available land, coupled with the significant electrical load, made it a prime candidate to support a one-megawatt solar system. The tour showed Supervisor Zaragoza the solar panels and equipment located on the back portion of the property.

The County applied for the California Solar Initiative incentive and was approved for \$766,445 in rebates to be paid over the first five years of the system's operation by Southern California Edison. At the completion of the project, the construction costs stood at \$3.2 million.

This is just one of several solar projects being completed to improve sustainability and lower the ecological footprint of our County.



2016 STATE OF THE AGENCY

Safety and Quality of Life were the focus of this year's State of the Agency meeting. Held over three days, information was shared between VCPWA's five departments, reminding us all of the key role public works plays in keeping our communities healthy and safe.

The Central Services Department shared the importance of safety at home and on the job and discussed the role of VCPWA's Accident Review Council, which is to identify root causes of accidents and implement measures to mitigate those causes to reduce work-related injuries.

Engineering Services' presentation illustrated the wide scope of projects and department collaborations that improve safety in our community, including the new VCMC Hospital Wing and Ojai Fire Station. The Transportation Department's focus on their annual traffic collision analysis showed how VCPWA's diligent work leads to funding for key projects to improve safety, while reminding us of the steps PWATD's Operations and Maintenance Division takes to keep the crews that work on our roads safe every day.

The Watershed Protection District highlighted its Flood Warning System, which monitors rainfall and sends alerts of potential flooding situations; the Stormwater Pollution

Prevention program's focus on keeping pollutants from entering the stormwater that eventually flows into the ocean; and the Community Rating System (CRS) that requires increasingly difficult activities be performed in order to achieve insurance premium discounts for property owners on flood insurance – impressively, the unincorporated areas of Ventura County are at 25%.

"I AM PROUD TO SHARE KEY STATISTICS ON JUST HOW MUCH OF A ROLE THE LEAN SIX SIGMA PROGRAMS AND TEAM EFFORTS HAVE PLAYED. WE HAVE REPORTED OVER \$6 MILLION IN SAVINGS TO THE AGENCY."

Jeff Pratt,

Ventura County Public Works Agency Director

The Water and Sanitation Department provided an overview of the desalination project; a progress update on the new state-of-the-art laboratory under construction in Moorpark; and other essential Integrated Waste Management Division's efforts to reduce the County's environmental footprint.

The Game of Life theme provided an extra element of fun with trivia quizzes and a team bridge-building challenge judged by our very own David Fleisch, Director of VCPWA Transportation Department. Congratulations to all of the winning tables – you know who you are – master builders!

The breadth and depth of what was shared during this SOA was so impressive and newsworthy, we look forward to sharing many of these stories over the course of the year in future *Pipeline* issues. Keep your pictures and stories coming!



Happy Valley BIOSWALE PROJECT

Baffled by a baffle box? Wonder what the heck is a Bioswale? Read on to learn how the Happy Valley Bioswale retrofit will improve the quality of urban runoff in Meiners Oaks.

VCPWA's Watershed Protection District and the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy (OVLC) are proud to announce the completion of the Happy Valley Bioswale Project. From August 2015 through December 2015, an earthen swale planted with native shrubs, grasses, and trees was constructed on a portion of the Ojai Meadows Preserve at 380 South Lomita Avenue in Meiners Oaks. Stormwater from an adjacent underground stormdrain pipe is diverted into the swale to support the vegetation while the vegetation acts as a "biofilter" for pollutants. The discharge is pre-treated in a baffle box to separate trash, sediment, nutrients, and debris before spreading and slowing down the water for biofiltration within the swale. Bioswales are becoming a popular alternative for improving stormwater quality in urbanized areas.



Supervisor Bennett, State Water Resources Control Board, VCPWA, the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy and other dignitaries helped celebrate the recent completion of the Happy Valley Bioswale project. Thank you all who were able to join us for the ribbon cutting!

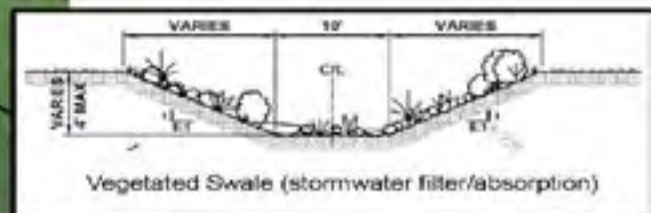
The bioswale was installed in order to meet state water-quality objectives; it was designed to remove trash, sediment, and nutrients from polluting the Ventura River, treating polluted stormwater runoff to ensure clean water is discharged to the watershed. The stormwater catchment area covers about 40% of the urban area of Meiners Oaks.

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Happy Valley Bioswale



Storm Drain Diversion Structure



VCPWA Watershed Protection District Stormwater Program Manager Ewelina Mutkowska explains, "The bioswale retrofit will improve the quality of urban runoff to the Ventura River. It will benefit aquatic life and recreational users by reducing high nitrogen levels, which can cause excessive algae growth and deplete oxygen in the water."

Brian Stark, OVLC Executive Director, notes, "This project represents the future of urban stormwater management. The swale concept blends elements of engineering and natural biological processes to remove a variety of pollutants from urban runoff while creating natural habitats and recharging groundwater. We hope this example will lead to similar projects Countywide."

Additional project activities include on-going project effectiveness monitoring and educational outreach planned for fall 2016 in collaboration with the Meiners Oaks Elementary School. A series of classroom seminars and workshops will be offered free of charge to the public to learn about Conservation, Permeability and Retention (C.P.R.) principles of Watershed Friendly Gardens™.

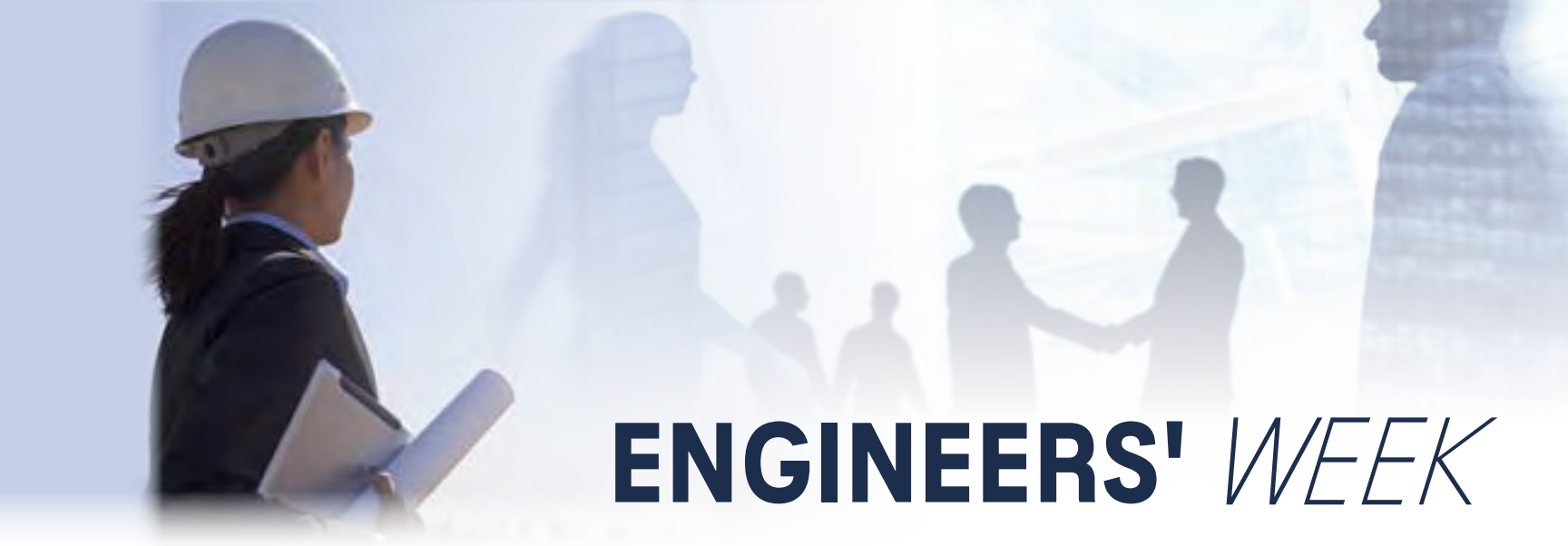
Funding for the project came from a Proposition 84 Storm Water Grant and is one of 27 projects awarded funding out of 117 submitted applications for concept projects throughout the state.

When Nordhoff High School students couldn't make it to the Happy Valley Bioswale Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony, Water Quality Engineer David Kirby gave them a private tour!



"Thank you again for taking the time to tour us around the project. It's one thing to talk about these ideas in the classroom and a completely different experience to actually see them."

— GREG LEPINE, NORDHOFF HIGH SCHOOL



ENGINEERS' WEEK

One of the key responsibilities of VCPWA is a commitment to provide safe, effective, and innovative facilities to benefit the residents of local communities.

February 21st through 27th was the 65th anniversary of national Engineers' Week. This

year's focus was Women in Engineering. VCPWA is once again ahead of the curve with a number of successful, innovative, and award-winning women engineers. We applaud all of VCPWA's innovative engineers and the integral role they play in the design and construction services in our community.



The Ventura County Public Works Agency (VCPWA) hosted the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists on March 3-4, 2016.

The meeting was attended by local licensed individuals, as well as members of the California Land Surveyors Association (CLSA), American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), and the American Council of Engineering Companies.

Ventura County staff includes over 60 registered engineers, land surveyors, and geologists among VCPWA, General Services Agency, and Resource Management Agency. The County also hosted the Board's Land Surveyor Technical Advisory Committee on March 2, and hopes to host other meetings in the future.

Congratulations...

to VCPWA's Water and Sanitation Department!

Congratulations are in order for VCPWA's Water and Sanitation Department, which was recently awarded *two* accolades!

Last month, the Santa Barbara/Ventura Branch of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) honored the team's Ventura County Waterworks District No. 19 Infrastructure Replacement and Improvements Project as 2016 Project of the Year for Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. The department also received Project of the Year from the Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission for its role in the creation and implementation of Ventura County Waterworks District 38.



National PUBLIC WORKS WEEK AWARENESS DAY

Join us at the
GOVERNMENT CENTER
TUESDAY, MAY 17TH

We are all excited for the upcoming Public Works Week May, 15 - 21, 2016! "Public Works: Always There" is this year's theme. On Tuesday, May 17th, VCPWA will be hosting over 500 high school, middle school, and elementary school-age youth! Our departments are ready with interactive activities and heavy-equipment displays that will highlight the diverse array of programs and responsibilities of VCPWA. Be sure to stop by and participate in all of the fun activities and community outreach.

