



# FY20 Strategic Performance Report

*July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020*



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**Paul Eldredge**, General Manager

## **A Note From The General Manager**

Fiscal Year 2020 ushered in an era of unprecedented challenges for the District and society. The impacts of COVID-19 have affected the San Francisco Bay region and every public agency in a variety of ways. USD responded quickly after shelter-in-place orders were mandated to create work plans protecting the health and safety of staff while maintaining necessary 24/7 operations. The District efforts to date have been highly successful with minimal disruption to services.

Even during these tumultuous times, the District has accomplished a great deal. Some of our more notable achievements include adoption of rates for Fiscal Years 21 - 25, providing accounting and payroll services remotely, refinancing existing debt for a significant savings to our ratepayers, initiating design of Phase 1A of the Enhanced Treatment and Site Upgrade (ETSU) Program, beginning construction of the new Digester 7, installation of new bar screens, and last but certainly not least, continuing to provide essential services during a world-wide pandemic as safely and efficiently as possible.

The District was recognized with several awards during fiscal year 2020:

- National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA)- Peak Performance Platinum Awards for outstanding performance.
- National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA)- Excellence in Management Silver Recognition
- National Institute for Government Purchasing (NIGP)- Achievement of Excellence in Procurement
- Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)- Excellence in Financial Reporting

Our quality and quantity of work continues to be at a high-level despite staff retirements, vacancies, and onboarding new employees. Through it all, the District's staff has pulled together to work toward a common goal of providing professional, reliable, and courteous service to all our customers.

**Paul Eldredge**  
**General Manager, P.E.**  
Union Sanitary District



Historic View of Plant, 1964



Current View of Plant, 2019

## About Union Sanitary District

Union Sanitary District operates a 33-acre wastewater treatment facility in Union City and provides collection, treatment, and disposal services for the cities of Fremont, Newark, and Union City, California.

**102  
Years**

Founded May 27, 1918

**60.2  
Sq Miles**

Service area : Fremont,  
Newark, and Union City

**356,823**

Population served

**839  
Miles**

Underground pipelines

**23.7  
Million**

Gallons of wastewater  
are treated each day

**142**

USD employees in 5  
workgroups

## Board of Directors



**Anjali Lathi**, Fremont



**Manny Fernandez**, Union City



**Pat Kite**, Newark



**Jennifer Toy**, Fremont



**Tom Handley**, Fremont

Union Sanitary District is an independent enterprise special district governed by an elected five-member Board of Directors. Day-to-day operations are managed by the Executive Team, consisting of the General Manager and five Workgroup Managers.

## Executive Team



**Paul Eldredge**  
General Manager



**James Schofield**  
Collection Services



**Robert Simonich**  
Fabrication, Maintenance, and  
Construction



**Sami Ghossain**  
Technical Services



**Mark Carlson**  
Business Services



**Armando Lopez**  
Treatment and Disposal



## Strategic Planning at the District

The District undertakes formal strategic planning every three to four years. Comprehensive planning for Fiscal Years 2019-2022 began in February 2017. The Executive Team reviewed input from stakeholders, past performance on strategic objectives, benchmarking data, new and potential regulations, industry trends, economic projections, political climate, and internal challenges.

The District prioritized driving forces and internal challenges and identified strategies, objectives, and initiatives to address them. A map of strategic objectives was developed along with measures and initiatives to support their achievement.

..... Union Sanitary District .....

# Mission & Vision

.....

To safely and responsibly collect and treat wastewater, and to recover resources from process waste streams, while protecting human health and improving the environment in a way that benefits the Tri-Cities and all USD stakeholders.

How we continue to accomplish our Vision:

### **Commitment to Safety:**

- Continually reviewing our safety program for opportunities to improve
- Focusing on protecting employees and the community in all our activities
- Allocating resources to ensure safe operations (equipment, training, staff)
- Collaboratively promoting a safe work environment

### **Responsibility:**

- Being accountable for our actions and decisions
- Being fiscally prudent
- Maintaining and upgrading infrastructure
- Anticipating and meeting future District and stakeholder needs
- Compliance with laws and regulations (local, state, federal)
- Effective asset management
- Effective use of technology
- Looking for innovative ways to reduce or reuse our waste streams

### **Collect, treat, and recover/reuse wastewater:**

- Providing capacity in the collection system and plant
- Regulating connections
- Increasing efforts for resource recovery (biogas, biosolids, etc.)
- Exploring ways to maximize water reclamation and reuse potential

### **Human health and environmental stewardship:**

- Preventing sewer spills and back-ups
- Limiting health risks through treatment of wastewater
- Responding to emergencies
- Enhancing water quality in the San Francisco Bay estuary
- Meeting or exceeding all water and air quality standards



# Strategic Objectives

## CUSTOMER

### **Stewardship**

Demonstrate responsible stewardship of District assets and the environment

### **Services**

Provide reliable high-quality service

### **Emergencies**

Be prepared for emergencies

## FINANCE

### **Fiscal Responsibility**

Ensure funding for critical programs and projects, while maintaining comparable rates

Accurately project and control costs

## INTERNAL PROCESS

### **Environmental Protection**

Implement projects & programs that benefit the environment. Ensure our ability to meet current and future regulations.

### **Efficiency**

Optimize processes; use technology and resources effectively

### **Planning**

Plan for long-term financial, project and staffing need

### **Asset Management**

Manage & maintain assets & infrastructure

## EMPLOYEE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

### **Employees**

Maintain a highly competent, flexible workforce

### **Safety**

Work safely to reduce accidents and injuries

### **Culture**

Foster a collaborative Employee-Management relationship that encourages teamwork, new ideas and continuous improvement

# Balanced Scorecard: Operational Excellence Summary

## Customer Objectives

Measures	Target	FY20 Actuals
Progress implementing outreach plan milestones: % planned events completed	>90%	87%
Response time to calls for service: % under 1 hour	>95%	98.7%
Response time to contact USD inquiries: % within 3 business days	>90%	98.5%
# Total adverse impacts on customers	<10	3
# emergency preparedness events (drills, training, debriefs, table top exercises, etc.)	3	4

## Financial Objectives

Measures	Target	FY20 Actuals
Residential sewer service charges (SSC) compared to other agencies	<33rd percentile	5.8th
% Budget expended, Operating Expenditures	95-103%	96%
% expended Priority 1 Special Projects	80-110%	42%
# regional projects/initiatives with financial benefit	>3	3

## Internal Process Objectives

Measures	Target	FY20 Actuals
# Critical asset failures wo negative impacts	<2	0
# critical asset failures with negative impacts	0	0
% asset renewal/year: Plant	Track & Report	5.03%
% asset renewal/year: Collection System	Track & Report	.04%
Priority capital improvement project (CIP) project milestones met vs. planned (annual average)	85%	84%
# adverse impacts on environment (Cat 1- sanitary sewer overflow, SSO)	0	0
Category 2/3 SSOs	< 10	1
# regional projects/initiatives with environmental benefit	>3	3

## Employee Growth & Development Objectives

Measures	Target	FY20 Actuals
Employee Turnover Rate- total	Track and report	5.11%
Employee Turnover Rate- nonretirement	Track and report	2.19%
% Training System Milestones Completed (accumulative total)	90%	50%
# competency assessments completed	52	30
Ave % non-mgmt. employees participating in District committees and taskforces	45-55%	44%
% non-mgmt. employees participating in alternative compensation program (accumulative total)	Track & Report	66%

# Balanced Scorecard: Safety Summary

Measurements	Target	YTD Actual
Total accidents with lost days	0	0
Other OSHA reportable accidents	<4	1
# Incidents of vehicle or equipment accidents/damage	<2	6
Cost associated with vehicle/equipment accidents	<\$5000	0
Ave full-time employee (FTE) lost time	<0.5	0.66
Total Costs: Lost time Wages only	<\$46,883	\$70,759
Ave FTE limited duty time	<0.5	0
Total costs: Limited duty/Other 1/2 wages	<\$23,441	0
X-Mod	<1.0	0.94
# Facility inspections completed (SIT)	4	1
% of areas of concern identified during internal facility inspections that are resolved within 45 days of report	>90%	1
# work site inspections completed	278	335
# site visits (for potential BMPS) completed and discussed by Executive Team	>2	0
# General Manager communications on status of safety program and performance	>4	19
# safety strategy reviews conducted by Executive Team and Environmental Health and Safety Programs Manager	4	12
# of major safety training events offered	7	9
Ave % of targeted employees trained vs. plan	>90%	89.8%
% Positive responses on the employees safety survey (ave)	>75%	Postponed



# Operational Excellence

# Operational Excellence Measures



- Percent of progress implementing outreach plan milestones
- Response time to customer calls for service
- Response time to “Contact USD” email inquiries
- Adverse impacts USD activities have on external customers
- Number of planned emergency preparedness activities



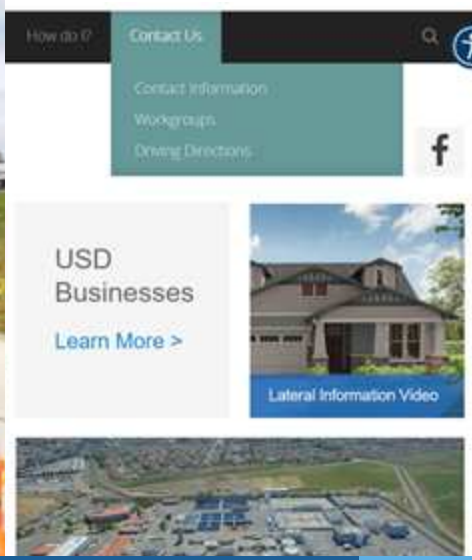
- Residential SSC compared to other agencies in the surrounding areas
- Percent of operating budget expended against plan
- Percent of priority 1 special project expenditures against plan
- Number of regional projects and initiatives with financial benefit



- Number of critical asset failures with or without negative impacts
- Percent of annual asset renewal- for Plant and Collection System
- Percent of priority capital improvement projects milestones met vs. planned
- Number of adverse impacts on the environment, including Category 1 sanitary sewer overflows (SSO's), and 2/3 SSO's
- Number of regional projects and initiatives with environmental benefit



- Percent of employee turnover including non retirement
- Number of training milestones completed and updated
- Number of competency assessments completed in Collection Services
- Average percent employees participating in District task forces and committees
- Percent employees participating in the alternative compensation program



# Customer Perspective

**Customer objectives** focus on both short and long-term customer service and stewardship of public assets and the environment. Measures target the provisions of high-quality reliable service, outreach activities, and maintaining an emergency preparedness program.

## Response to Calls and Inquiries



**98.78%**

Response to emergency calls under 1 hour



**98.50%**

Response to USD Website inquiries under 3 days

## Outreach at USD

Our Customer Service and Environmental Compliance Teams are deeply involved with communication and outreach to local residents and industry partners. While COVID-19 did impact our ability to offer events in 2020, we completed 27 activities; including:

- Annual Newsletter
- Website Maintenance
- Community Outreach
- Local Civic Outreach
- Industrial Advisory Council Meetings
- Plant Tours

## Plant Tours and Classroom Visits



**5 Tours**  
**110 visitors**

Plant tours completed



**84 Classes**  
**Avg. of 24 students per class**

Elementary school presentations completed

## Annual Newsletter



One of our outreach initiatives is to provide an [annual newsletter](#) for our residents. In 2019 we highlighted:

- Managing Nutrients in the San Francisco Bay
- Budget in Brief
- USD's Enhanced Treatment and Site Upgrade Program
- Easy Ways to Protect Your Sewer and the Environment
- Sewer Lateral Questions? [Watch The Video](#)



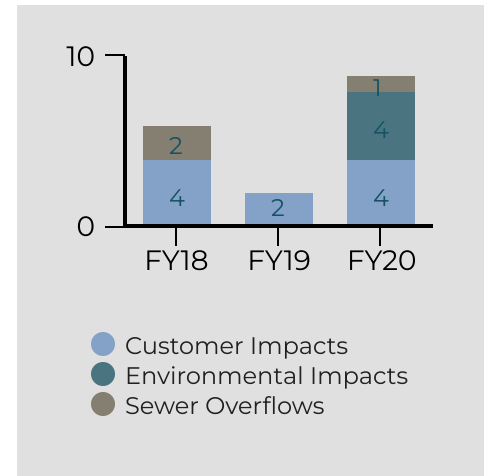
# Customer Perspective

## Impacts on Customers and the Environment

Our District ensures immediate response, investigation, and follow-up to all inquiries that impact our customers and the environment. We monitor and respond to a variety of claims reported and strive to remain under 10 impacts or less per year.

The impacts may include:

- Customer Impact- vehicle damage, fee concerns, odor and other substantiated complaints
- Environmental impacts
- Sewer overflows caused by our system.



## Emergency Preparedness



The goal of disaster preparedness is to lessen the impact of disasters on vulnerable populations, ready an organization for an influx of activity, and design a coordinated plan that reduces the waste of resources, time, and efforts.

In October of FY20, the District participated in the Great Shake Out with 21 million other organizations by completing a drop, cover, and hold drill with all employees.

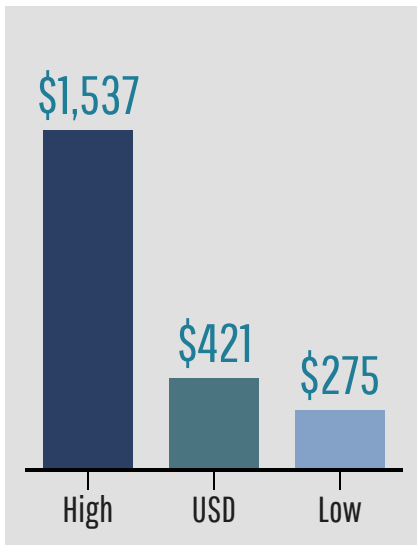
In January, the District provided employees a deeper understanding of the response steps of the agency. USD’s Emergency Operations Center was set up and staff completed a short tabletop exercise that considered potential treatment plant vulnerabilities during a disaster.



# Finance Perspective

**Financial objectives** focus on the prudent and responsible management of public funds entrusted to the District, with measures focused on maintaining sewer service charges (SSC) at rates comparable to other local agencies with similar treatment processes, accurately controlling and tracking project and program costs against planned budgets, and ensuring the District is always compliant with the ethical, legal, and regulatory requirements associated with finance.

## Bay Area Annual Sewer Service Charges 2019-2020



Currently, USD's rates are in the lowest 5.8% of the Bay Area sanitary sewer providers surveyed annually.

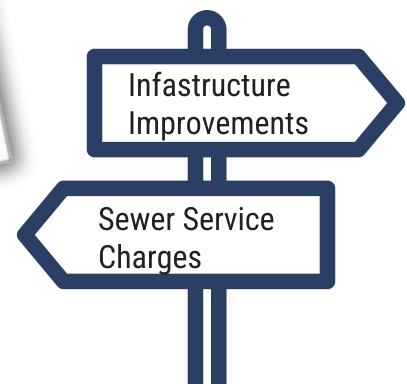
Criteria used for Agencies to Survey:

1. Within a 30 mile radius of USD
2. Having at least 100 miles of Collection System and/or 5 MGD of Treatment

## Comprehensive Annual Financial Report

The District prepares a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) summarizing and explaining USD's initiatives, accomplishments, and financial activities during each fiscal year.

For more details, review the [FY20 report](#).

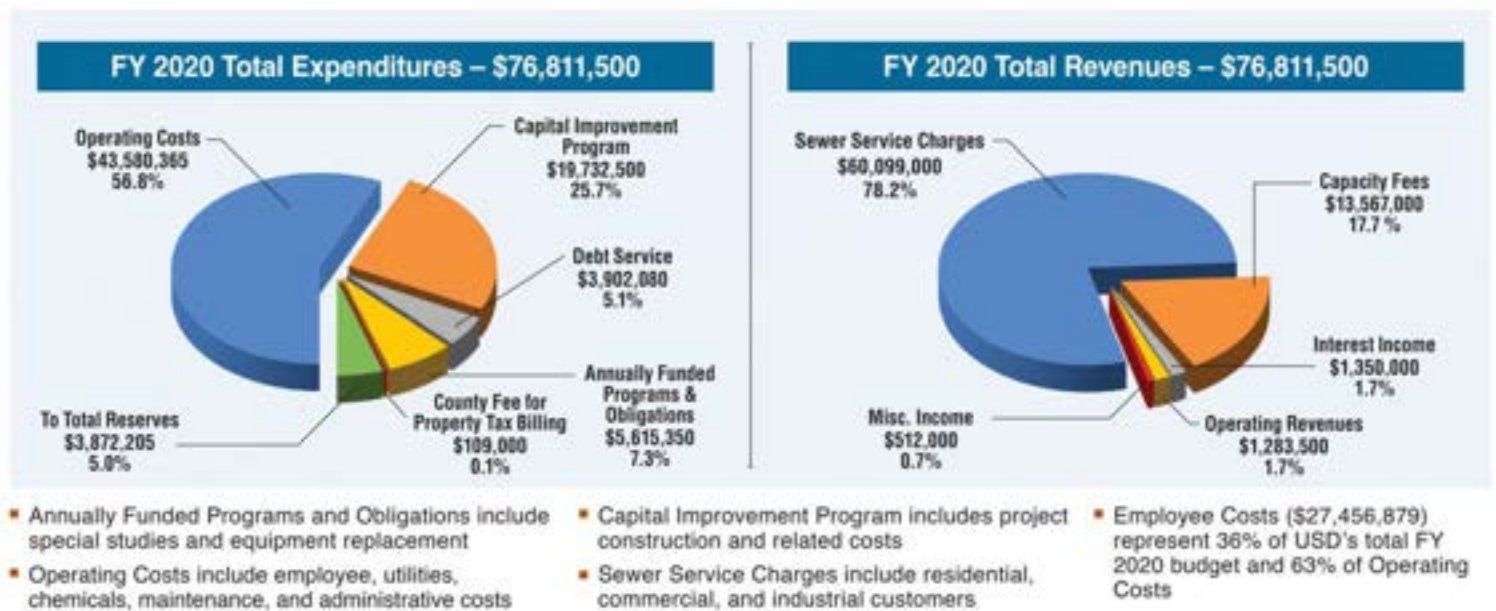




# Finance Perspective

## 2019-2020 Union Sanitary District Total Revenues and Expenditures

The District's current operating budget is approximately \$76.8 million. Revenue is raised from two primary sources: (1) Sewer service charges paid by residential customers, businesses, and other users of the system; and (2) Charging new development their proportionate share of infrastructure costs.



## Proud Members

Through continued participation in several Bay Area consortiums focused on the water and wastewater industry, the District leverages these partnerships to reduce costs via the sharing of training resources/events and taking advantage of collective bargaining power related to the purchase of chemicals necessary for our treatment processes.





Digester 7 Timelapse

# Internal Process Perspective

**Internal process objectives** focus on processes critical to achieving the District’s Mission, including long-term project, financial, and workforce planning activities, management and maintenance of District assets and infrastructure, treatment process optimization, and environmental stewardship.

## Capital Improvement Projects

Project Name	On Schedule	Delayed
Campus Buildings (Admin, FMC, Ops)		
Central Avenue Sanitary Sewer Relocation		
Cherry St. Pump Station		
Digester No. 2 Inspection and Rehabilitation		
Digester 7		
Force Main corrosion Repairs – Phase 3		
Headworks Screens Replacement		
Aeration Basin Modifications		
Standby Power Generation System Upgrade		
WAS Thickeners		
Wet Weather Flow Management		



Headworks Screen Replacement

= In construction  
 = In design

Engineers and staff coordinate construction of critical infrastructure while keeping processes running smoothly. Staff focuses on managing and maintaining assets and infrastructure through development of master plans. Project schedules are tracked and reported quarterly with a goal of 85% of projects on schedule.




# Internal Process Perspective


## Enhanced Treatment and Site Upgrade (ETSU)

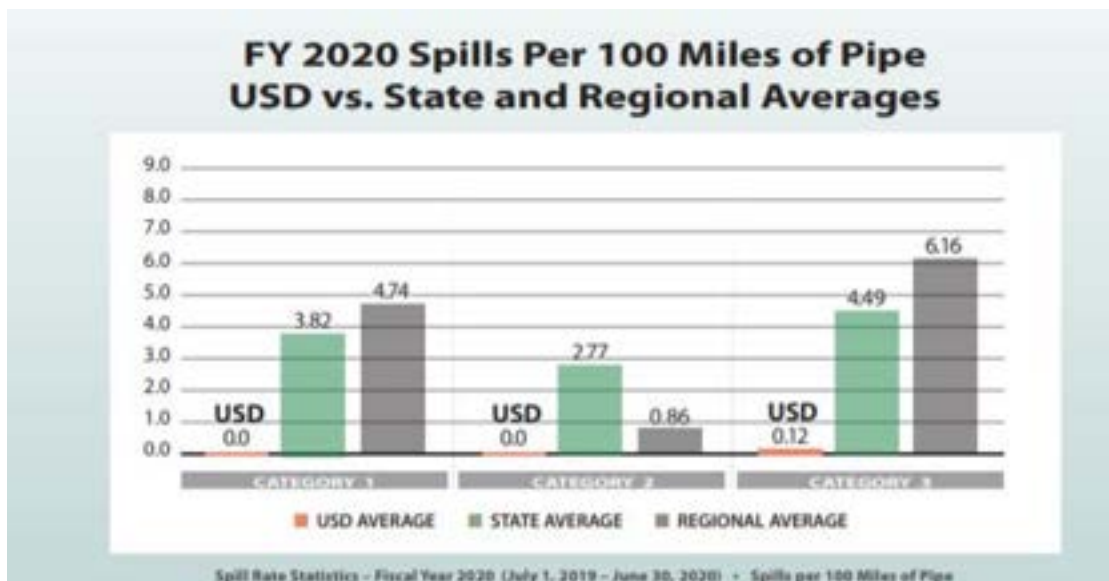
USD developed the Enhanced Treatment and Site Upgrade (ETSU) program to serve as a roadmap for the treatment plant’s infrastructure over the next 40 years. ETSU considers impending regulatory requirements such as nutrient restrictions, site layout possibilities, and capacity needed to meet the General Plans of the cities served. Phase One began during this fiscal year. The graphic above illustrates the facilities that will be built in Phase One.

## Asset Renewal and Maintenance

Processes are regularly evaluated to maintain our ability to meet current and future regulations. USD implements practices that benefit the environment by conserving resources, reducing waste, and minimizing environmental impacts. Proactive cleaning of the collection system prevents sewer overflows and associated impacts.

 **\$681 Million** District owned assets

 **\$12.7 Million** spent to maintain assets in FY 20





# Employee Growth & Development Perspective

**Employee growth and development objectives** focus on employee training and maintaining a highly competent and flexible workforce, as well as protecting labor relations via the collaborative employee-management culture of the District. This is accomplished by involving employees in planning and decision-making activities.

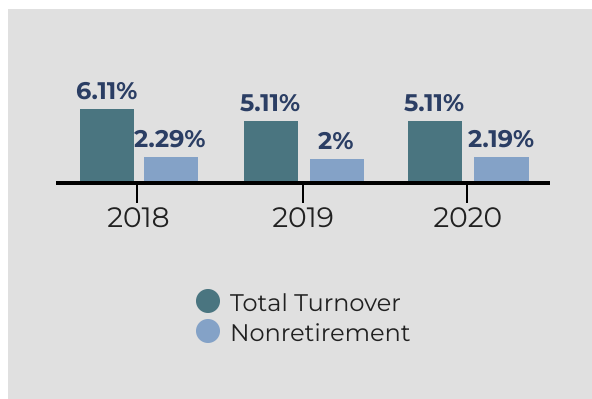
## Developing Leaders at USD

In FY20, USD began its 4th Leadership School program with seven participants representing all workgroups. Our leadership program includes a variety of current leadership competencies:

- 📖 Transition to Management Panel
- 📖 Finance, Budget and Purchasing

- 📖 Coaches' Role in Safety
- 📖 Strategic Planning

## Staff Turnover



The District tracks staff turnover, both through planned retirements and other separations. Hiring practices are designed to hire the best candidate by including multiple methods of evaluation and interviews conducted by subject matter experts, and potential team members.

## Welcome New USD Employees

USD was pleased to recently welcome nine new employees who have fulfilled roles such as mechanic, engineer, inspector, and administrative support.

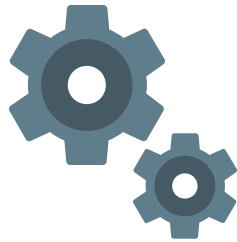




# Employee Growth & Development Perspective

65

Employees participated in process improvement projects



Team	Process Improvement Project
Capital Improvement	Customer Awareness Program
Electrical & Support	Asset Information capture and update
Environmental Compliance	Field pH Sampling and Calibration
Financial Acquisition & Support	Service PO Payment Authorization Process
Maintenance and TV	Hose Check and Replacement
Mechanical	Irvington Emergency Pump Station Bypass
Organizational Support	Reduction of Waste
Treatment and Disposal	Thickener Valving Setup
Research and Support	Laboratory Traceability

## Training & Competency Assessments

Maintaining a highly competent, flexible workforce is of critical importance. Routine training activities have been disrupted by the COVID-19 Pandemic with several shift changes making it difficult to administer training.

The District accomplished:

- 11 trainings
- 8 modules
- 30 assessments

Trainings completed this year included: Sampling procedures, diagnosing hydraulic systems, ergonomics, harassment prevention, Excel basics, and defensive driving.

## Committees & Taskforces

The District involves employees in most critical decisions and encourages participation in standing committees and taskforces which cover a variety of focal areas. Several new committees began this year with accomplishments including a revamp of performance metrics, creation of a new program to recognize innovation, and spearheading a new wellness focus at the District.





# Safety at USD

# Safety Measures



- Number of total accidents with lost days
- Number of other OSHA reportable accidents
- Number of incidents of vehicle or equipment accidents/damage



- Costs associated with vehicle and equipment accidents
- Average full-time equivalent lost time
- Total costs: Lost time wages only
- Average full-time equivalent limited duty lost time
- Total costs: Limited duty/other ½ wages
- X-Mod



- Number of facility safety inspections completed
- Percent of areas identified in inspections resolved within 45 days
- Number of work site inspections completed
- Number of benchmarking and best management practice site visits
- Number of safety related communications from the General Manager



- Number of major safety training events offered
- Average percentage of targeted employees trained versus plan
- Average percentage of positive responses on the employee safety survey



# Safety

**Safety objectives** focus on reducing the number of staff injuries as well as vehicle and equipment accidents/damage. These activities support the positive safety culture and attitude exhibited throughout the District. During the fiscal year, priorities shifted from USD's standard safety strategy to concentrating efforts to minimize risk of coronavirus exposure to employees and prevent disruption in the treatment of wastewater.

## Reduce employee and equipment accidents



0

No accidents with lost days, 1 OSHA reportable



6

Total vehicle/equipment incidents\*

\*In FY20 we experienced an unusual increase in vehicle incidents. Root cause analysis found the opportunity to provide additional training to employees without previous heavy equipment experience; as well as, increasing the observation period.

## Safety Training at USD

USD's priority is to ensure employees are educated in safe work practices. The District adjusted training to include computer-based tutorials to limit potential COVID-19 exposure. Almost 90% of employees completed a total of seven safety trainings, including:

- Traffic Flagging
- Excavation
- Electrical Safety for Non-Electricians
- Confined Space Entry

## Identify and correct potential hazards



1

Facility inspection(s) completed



335

Coach observations completed

## Workers Compensation Modifier

Our workers compensation modifier, often recognized as the X-Mod, is .94 against the target of 1.0 in FY20. The District's continued low numbers in this measurement reflect its focus on maintaining a safe workplace and results in reduced insurance premiums.



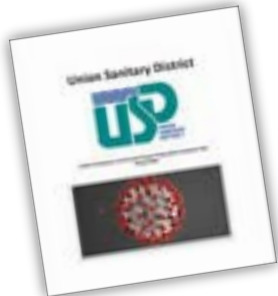


# Safety

## Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

On Tuesday, March 17, 2020, we responded to our County’s Shelter in Place orders by reducing the risk of the coronavirus (COVID-19) spread at the District.

Per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), standard practices associated with wastewater treatment plant operations are sufficient to protect wastewater workers from the virus COVID-19 virus. These standard practices include engineering and administrative controls, hygiene precautions, specific safe work practices, and use of personal protective equipment (PPE) normally required when handling untreated wastewater. No additional COVID-19–specific protections are recommended for workers involved in wastewater management, including those at wastewater treatment facilities.



Challenges	Response
Shelter In Place Order	Teams implemented work from home strategies, improved technology and systems, improved processes, conducted meetings virtually (including Board Meetings), and adjusted work shifts for essential on-site staff
Personal Protective Equipment	Worked with County and other agencies to acquire necessary PPE, implemented a safety inventory system, and updated emergency supply policy
Workplace Health and Safety Guidance	Completed risk assessments, limited entry of non-employees to specified areas of the plant, developed the COVID-19 Exposure Plan and Policy, implemented employee and contractor health screening process, and increased disinfection practices
Communication	Established an ongoing communication strategy that would inform employees of county updates and response to requirements, the potential of exposure at the District, and new policies and processes implemented

.....Union Sanitary District.....

# **FY20 Initiatives**

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## **Collection System Lateral Video**

Created an educational video for the public about sewer laterals  
[Lateral Video](#)

## **East Bay Discharge Authority (EBDA) Renewal**

Negotiated new terms for the Joint Powers Agreement

## **Enhanced Treatment and Site Upgrade (ETSU)**

USD adopted the ETSU Program and hired two limited-term employees to oversee the program

## **Digester 7**

Broke ground for construction of this critical piece of infrastructure  
[Time Lapse Video](#)

## **Old Alameda Creek NPDES Permit Renewal**

Completed the reapplication process for renewal of the emergency outfall permit

## **Operational Excellence Balanced Scorecard Revision**

An improvement team was assembled to revise the metrics used to measure performance

## **Newark Basin Masterplan**

Completed a condition and capacity assessment of the collection system

## **Collection System Preventative Maintenance Schedule**

Reviewed and modified business practices

# Appendix

**a**

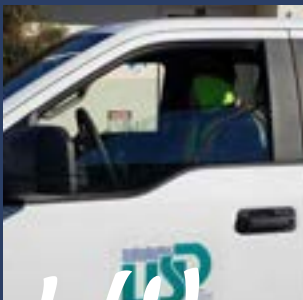
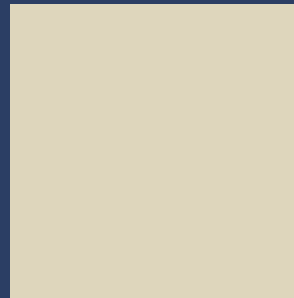
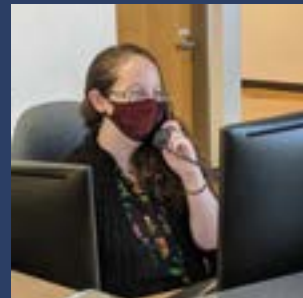
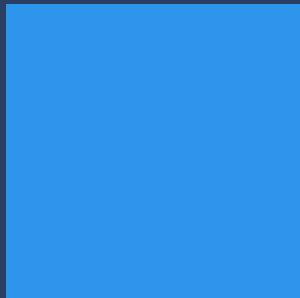
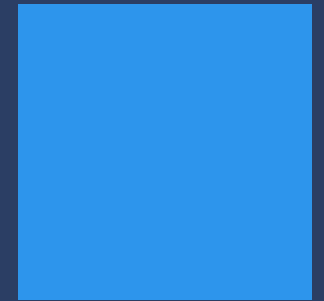
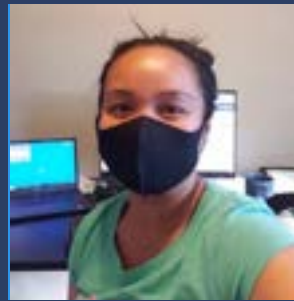
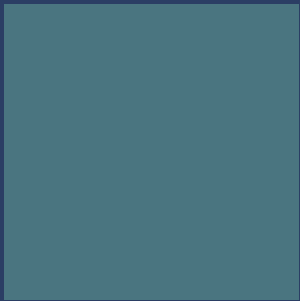
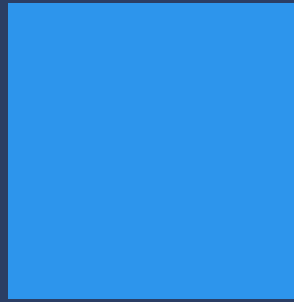
**Operational Excellence BSC Measures**

**b**

**Operational Excellence BSC Measures**

**c**

**Safety BSC Measures**



*Essential Workers Since 1918*

