



LOS TRANCOS WOODS & VISTA VERDE

Newsletter – February/March 2014

Clean Your Drain, and Pray for Rain

With the lack of rainfall over the past several months, it is hard to think of what will happen when we see rain falling from the sky again. However, now is the time to take preventative action against flooding we experienced during the severe rainfalls we had back in December. Specifically, we should work now to ensure leaves and other debris are cleared from the pipes that run under our driveway (it is the homeowner's responsibility) and the culverts alongside the road (it is the County's responsibility). Insofar as the County Dept. of Public Works goes, they have been diligent in keeping to their street sweeping schedule on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month. Insofar as the homeowners go, most of the driveway culverts are clear, but a few could use some cleaning with a long stick and a rake to remove rocks and leaves. Clogged drains and culverts have been the main reason for the flooding we have experienced in recent years. With a little weekend effort, we can minimize one of the reasons for the flooding that affects our neighborhood.

The following pictures are not meant to single out any individual, but simply to point out the need for driveway pipe maintenance to allow rainwater to flow properly through our culvert system.



Examples of clogged driveway pipes throughout our neighborhood

Submitted by Ken Kormanak

Los Trancos County Water District News

Charlie Krenz, Stan Gage and Bill Coats replaced the outgoing Board Directors, Tracy Sherman, David Smernoff and Tom Uridel, on December 6, 2013. Susan Coons and Claudia Mazzetti will continue on the Board of Directors. We all want to thank those retiring Board Directors for their service over the years.

Probably the most important Board development that directly impacts residents of the Water District is the status of the Residential Incentive Programs. At the January 9, 2014 Board meeting, the Board voted to continue the suspension of all Residential Incentive Programs until further notice, except for those in-play projects. We will be reviewing the structure of Incentive Programs after the District's investigation of different governance alternatives is completed.

LTCWD has revised its website (www.ltcwd.org) with new sections about District news (highlights from the previous Board of Directors meeting), Governance Alternatives, and updates from the Ad Hoc Storm Drain Master Plan Committee. The President's message will also be there. Draft meeting minutes and audio recordings of every regular Board meeting will be posted about 10 days following the meetings. We intend to keep the community informed by updating the web site monthly. We welcome your comments at ltcwd.feedback@gmail.com.

Submitted by Claudia Mazzetti, President of LTCWB

Fire Season in January?

Fire Season has traditionally been during the summer and early fall months of June thru October. Fire agencies such as Cal Fire reduce their seasonal staffing and other state firefighting resources at the end of October just in time for our rainy season. Last year we experienced an extended fire season and this year, as of Jan 27th, we remain in a heightened state with grass fires still occurring in San Mateo County. Fuel moistures are at a record low and fire agencies have now succumbed to the reality of a twelve month Fire Season. Our lack of rain is now a forefront issue of unease for fire and water agencies around the state.

To keep your neighborhood safe:

1. Be careful with **outdoor construction and maintenance** projects.
2. Use **safety precautions** with chain saws, welding, barbecuing, etc.
3. Keep a **garden hose ready** at all times and know where your fire extinguisher is.
4. During low humidity days **cigarettes can ignite** vegetative fuels.

To decrease your home's vulnerability from fire:

1. **Clean gutters and roofs** of leaf debris and needles.
2. **Clean wood decks** of all leaf litter (including underneath).
3. **Close any openings** in your home where even the smallest embers may enter (crawl space vents, roof eaves).
4. **Remove** any accumulation of flammable debris away from wood sided structures.

The Woodside Fire Protection District offers free home/property fire safety inspections. Please contact Fire Marshal Denise Enea for more info or to schedule an inspection. denea@woodsidefire.org

Submitted by Denise Enea, Woodside FPD Fire Marshal

Drat, a Drought

Here are some simple tips we can all use to help save water for plants and animals and fire fighting:

- 1) **Go Native!** Landscape/plant your garden with CA natives accustomed to droughts.
- 2) **A shower-a-day?** Maybe not, in the winter it is not often we get dirty enough to warrant a daily shower.
- 3) **Head changes** Changing to a low-flow showerhead is incredibly effective since you are not changing a shower duration habit.
- 4) **Load up** Now is especially important to only run full loads in the clothes washer and dishwasher.
- 5) **A dab (or dribble) will do** Run just a dribble to wash hands and rinse dishes. No need for full force.
- 6) **Pitchers full** Collect clean kitchen water for potted plants.
- 7) **Remember the '80s** We curtailed toilet water use by using this refrain, "If it's brown, flush it down; if it's yellow, let it mellow."

Neighborhood Notes

- The Portola Valley Town Nature and Science Committee will be having a **Bird Field Day on April 5**. We will gather in the Buckeye activity room at the Town Center to view some exhibit material and then head out to local fields and trails to find birds on the wing or building nests. It will be an opportunity to learn to identify our native birds as well as discover interesting things about the birds that call this area home.

Submitted by Yvonne Tryce

- **Rainfall data** as reported by Gene Hunner: Dec. - 1.0", Jan. - negligible. The total to date from July 1, 2013 is 3.0".

2014 Community Resource Guide

We are in the process of updating the Resource Guide. We should be working hard on it in February and expect it out soon thereafter. Contact Linda. 851-1787 or dreynight@aol.com with questions.

Community Associations' Web Sites

The web site addresses are:
<http://lostancoswoods.org/>
<http://www.vistaverdepv.org>

The group e-mail list is:
VistaVerdeLTW@yahoogroups.com
VistaVerdeCommunityAssoc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.