



Montara Water & Sanitary District

Staying Ahead of our Local Community Needs

Montara Water and Sanitary District (MWSD) works every day to deliver water, garbage and sewer services for the residents of Montara and Moss Beach. Over 6,000 residents rely on our services for their homes and businesses.

March 31, 2025

Seal Cove Critical Geotechnical Hazards Area Resident Update

What Has MWSD Seen Occurring in Seal Cove?

Starting in mid-February, land movement in Seal Cove caused a series of leaks on water and sewer services, and our water mains. This new movement occurred on San Lucas Avenue west of Del Mar Avenue, and Ocean Boulevard between San Lucas and Madrone, in an area of known coastal bluff landslide activity. The Park Street and Beach Street intersection was also affected.

MWSD staff – who are on call 24 hours a day to repair leaks – took quick action to fix these leaks, and also relocate a water connection for 1 home, and provide above ground connections for 2 homes on San Lucas. Above ground connections are a safer means to provide water when land movement can continue to cause leaks. Staff are working to further protect our water and sewer infrastructure in this geologic hazard area, to reduce the potential for any future water or sewage leaks. **Please check and properly maintain your sewer lateral, sewer sump and grinder pumps.**

All existing Seal Cove customers are connected for both water and sewer services.

MWSD is committed to providing continued updates to our Seal Cove customers, and during MWSD Board Meetings.

MWSD and San Mateo County

MWSD works with San Mateo County in various ways as we operate and maintain MWSD's water and sewer systems.

San Mateo County's Planning and Building Department establishes land use policies and development regulations that protect public health and safety. This includes oversight of County streets and structures on private property.

The County maintains the public streets and rights of way where MWSD infrastructure is located. MWSD must receive an encroachment permit from the County for any work in public streets. MWSD continues to work with the County to address MWSD assets in closed streets in the Seal Cove area.

During this emergency, MWSD is working with the County to identify any grant opportunities that could fund MWSD emergency work, and funding opportunities the County can access to support impacted residents.

MWSD Board Action on March 27

On March 27th, the MWSD Board took several actions to support fast response in the Seal Cove area:

- Declare a District Emergency, which allows for faster contracting and response to emerging issues in the Seal Cove area
- Authorized specialized investigations to assess and recommend safe solutions for Seal Cove water and sewer infrastructure;
- Temporarily suspend issuing new service permits in the Seal Cove Area for 60 days;
- Authorize seeking state and federal financial assistance;
- Submit a letter to the County of San Mateo requesting collaboration and assistance; and requesting the County proclaim a local emergency, and thus help secure additional financial assistance, if available.

These actions are the standard means for a public agency to rapidly respond to emergencies.

History of Land Movement

Since the 1960's there have been numerous, geotechnical studies of the Seal Cove area by San Mateo County, the land use authority for this area.

Study started in the 1960's, when the U.S. Geological Survey slowed Seal Cove development due to active landsliding and accelerated coastal erosion. In 1971 and 1984 San Mateo County studies confirmed continued instability and geologic hazards. Structural damage due to landslide activity has been documented throughout this time.

MWSD is reviewing existing County geotechnical reports to determine a plan to safeguard MWSD water and sewer infrastructure.

Providing safe public access via ZOOM teleconference for our regularly scheduled public meetings.

Board Meetings on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at 8888 Cabrillo Highway, Montara.

Call: (650) 728-3545

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