Environmental Resources: A Year in Review

2017 was a busy year for the Public Works Department’s Environmental Resources Division (ERD) staff. Some of the division’s outreach activities this year included the following:

**Environmental Resources Division Guide:** The booklet mailer sent in January to customers contained information and resources on ERD programs.

**Environmental Workshop Series:** Eight community workshops were held in April that covered a range of environmental topics. Videos from the workshops are posted at GreenerDavis.org.

**GreenerDavis Newsletter:** This monthly e-mail newsletter reaches 16,000+ residents regarding greener living in Davis. Email PWWeb@CityofDavis.org to receive the newsletter.

**Environmental School Assemblies:** Contracting with the educational performing arts group ZunZun, environmental assemblies were provided to public elementary schools in Davis covering water conservation, stormwater, recycling and other conservation topics.

Highlighted below are some of ERD’s accomplishments in 2017 and the key staff member responsible for those tasks:

**Environmental Enforcement:** Adam Morrill, Environmental Program Specialist
The City has an “outreach first” approach to environmental enforcement however, there are instances where additional reminders and enforcement actions are necessary:
- From January to October, 1,259 enforcement actions were taken for incorrect placement of yard material piles
- From January to November, 218 enforcement actions were taken for water waste.

**Solid Waste and Recycling:** Jennifer Gilbert, Conservation Coordinator
-- Environmentally Acceptable Food Packaging and Beverage Straw Ordinances became effective as of September 1.
-- Staff worked with computer science students from Sacramento State University to design and create two online games as part of their senior project: Zero Waste Sorting and Zero Waste Matching. The students provided the design and computer coding for staff to review and approve the content. The purpose of the project is for students to create products for real world applications. Both recycling games are available on DavisRecycling.org.
-- The Apartment Move-Out Waste Reduction Program celebrated its 18th year with more than 50 community volunteers and 5 local non-profit groups working to reduce waste at 39 apartment properties during the August turnover.
-- The first ever compost give-away event was held in April and the first mattress recycling event was held in August (120 mattresses and box springs were recycled!)
-- From January to October, residents and businesses increased the amount of material sent for composting by 13%, increased recycling by 2% and reduced the amount of trash sent to the landfill by 4%, compared to the same months in 2016.

**Stormwater Pollution Prevention:** Rhys Rowland, Environmental Program Specialist
--Conducted a stormwater survey to assess attitudes and knowledge of stormwater quality in Davis. Over 100 responses to the survey were collected.
--Highlighted the Our Water Our World program to promote the use of less toxic methods of pest control in homes and gardens to improve overall water quality in our local waterways.
--Distributed over 1,500 public outreach information fliers at 10 different events.
--Developed and distributed waterless carwash kits to draw awareness for water conservation and the stormwater pollution effects of traditional at-home car washing.
--134 City staff members were trained in Stormwater pollution prevention detection, elimination and hazmat response procedures.

Urban Wildlife: John McNerney, Wildlife Resource Specialist
--Conducted wetland trash clean-up events with participation from over 80 community volunteers.
  -- Implemented the Urban Wild Turkey Management Plan with the successful trap and relocation of 25 wild turkeys from the east area of Davis.
  -- Responded to and mitigated an avian cholera outbreak on the City’s Clayton Ranch property. Nearly 4000 coot carcasses were collected and incinerated, helping to prevent the spread of the disease to other habitats in the region.
  -- Received 81 nuisance wildlife complaints from Davis residents and provided consultation on conflict resolution.
  -- Worked with local volunteers to remove noxious tree species from the West Area Drainage/Habitat Basin.
  -- Conducted Selenium bioaccumulation monitoring at the Davis Wetlands.
  -- Produced and began implementation of an updated citywide Integrated Pest Management Plan.

Wastewater Pretreatment: Kirk Freeman, Environmental Program Specialist
Continued to implement the City’s Industrial Pretreatment Program as required under the City’s National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit issued by the federal government. The program reviews all dental facilities, food service establishments, sand/oil separators, permitted industrial users and building plans for proposed facilities in the City’s service area.

Wastewater Quality: Josie Tellers, Water Quality Coordinator
--Participated collaboratively through the Central Valley Clean Water Association (CVCWA), various stakeholder groups within Central Valley Salinity Coalition (CVSC) and with other publicly owned wastewater treatment facilities/agencies within the Central Valley region on various special studies for NPDES permit/regulatory compliance purposes and basin planning process.
--Participated in the on-going regulatory activities related to State of California’s Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (CA-ELAP) impacting the laboratory stakeholder community statewide.
-- Coordinated the completion and submittal of the Notice of Intent for the City’s first Recycled Water Permit

Water Conservation: Dawn Calciano, Conservation Coordinator
-- Participated in the National Mayor’s Challenge for Water Conservation
--Promoted “Life After Lawn” homes in Davis in partnership with the UC Davis Arboretum and Public Garden (visit SaveDavisWater.org for more information)
--Participated in various outreach partnerships and events with Cool Davis and the Yolo County Master Gardeners.
-- Began outreach for the Water Meter Upgrade Project, scheduled to begin in early 2018. This project will exchange the current water meters for new meters with Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) which transmits hourly water usage information. Read more about the project at CityofDavis.org/WaterMeterUpgradeProject.

Water Quality and Quantity: Marie Graham, Utility Program Coordinator
--This is the first full year Davis received its allotment of 10.2 million gallons of Sacramento River water each day.
--The City’s water supplies averaged from 80% to 99% river water, with the rest of the water coming from the City’s deep wells.
--The State repealed the Hexavalent Chromium drinking water standard in September 2016, and since then, all of the City’s sources of drinking water meet all State and Federal standards for drinking water.

The Environmental Resources Division has a number of goals and plans for 2018, including increasing participation in the City’s green business program, Partners for a Greener Davis. As part of the Water Meter Upgrade Project, City will launch the AquaHawk Customer Water Portal to provide hourly water usage and leak alerts for Davis water users. Staff will be finalizing and bringing to City Council a draft ordinance prohibiting the feeding of certain wildlife.

The City’s Public Works Department thanks all the residents and businesses that participate in our environmental programs. Without this community effort, success would be difficult. The City’s Public Works Department also wishes to thank the volunteers and commissioners that have served as conservation stewards for their continued support of our programs.

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