

SANITARY SEWER OVERFLOWS HIT RECORD LOW IN CITY OF LOS ANGELES

City Achieves 77% Reduction in Sewer Overflows

Contact: Lauren M. Skinner**(213) 978-0327****(213) 978-0333****Email: Lauren.Skinner@lacity.org**

LOS ANGELES (July 27, 2009)—The Bureau of Sanitation has reduced the number of sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) by 77% since the baseline fiscal year (FY) 2000/2001, and reached a record low number of SSOs this year. SSOs in the City of Los Angeles wastewater collection system, operated and maintained by the Department of Public Works Bureau of Sanitation (BOS), were recorded at 687 in 2000/2001, 444 in 2003/2004, 200 in FY 2007/2008, and just 159 in FY 2008/2009. The Bureau serves a population of more than four million people, 29 contract agencies, 100,000 businesses and industrial users located within a 525 square mile service area.

“These numbers show that the Bureau of Sanitation has taken an aggressive approach in developing and executing programs to reduce SSOs. I am very proud of our wastewater conveyance and collections staff and crew. Rain or shine, day or night, our committed staff is in the community, keeping the pipes flowing,” said Enrique C. Zaldivar, director for the Bureau of Sanitation. “These excellent results demonstrate the City’s continued commitment to the protection of public health and the environment.”

The reduction in SSOs is a direct result of the effective implementation of proactive programs by the Bureau, including enhanced and increased sewer cleaning and inspection; expansion of the Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) control program; the focused tree root control program and improved sewer planning and renewal. More sewers are being inspected; many sewers are being cleaned; and older sewers are being upgraded. This strategic progress is the result of strong partnerships with the Bureaus of Contract Administration and Engineering.

The environmental and regulatory communities are thrilled with these results as well. “My congratulations to the Bureau for consistently designing, constructing and maintaining the sewerage infrastructure that protects our communities and our coast; the 77% reduction in spills is a wonderful accomplishment,” said Tom Ford, Executive Director, Santa Monica Baykeeper.

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“By significantly reducing the number of spills, the Bureau has made an important contribution towards protecting human health and the environment and improving the City’s livability. The Bureau deserves much applause for its hard work and achievement,” said Mary Ann Lutz, Chair of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board.

The Department of Public Works is the second largest municipal agency in the City, focused on essential needs for a better quality of life and environmental protection. With 5,700 employees and a \$1 billion annual budget, the department is responsible for construction, renovation and operation of public facilities and infrastructure including: municipal buildings and treatment facilities; streets, street lights, and the urban forest; bridges and sidewalks; sewers, catch basins and storm drains; recycling and integrated solid waste management.

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