

WINTER 2026 NEWSLETTER



Happy New Year! Your volunteer sewer board and paid staff send you their best wishes for 2026. Last year was a particularly busy one for the District.

2025 Accomplishments. We made great progress on our capital improvement program, more than meeting our goals for the year. We scheduled nine pump control upgrades and completed 10. We had scheduled only seven mainline connector upgrades but wound up doing 16. The reason for the additional connector upgrades was primarily due to location. Where you have co-located lateral connections, it's more cost-effective to replace them both. We still have more than 100 connections to go. As promised, we also replaced the asphalt disturbed by our upgrades on East Bottle Bay Road.

Permits & Compliance. We processed 16 sewer permit applications in 2025, and 11 are still active. Believe me, that's a lot to handle because our Board Vice-Chair, Rob Behrens, who doubles as our Compliance Officer, must review each facility plan, make a site visit and often hold discussions with the landowner. Then there are inspections, advice and oversight by Brent Binnall, one of our licensed operators. We also dealt with a major hillside collapse that nearly exposed and could have ruptured the mainline serving a portion of our system. We had soil piled on our mainline easement and, after much discussion, negotiated its removal. And, we resolved a long-standing issue of a garage built over our mainline easement.

We try very hard in these compliance matters to act like neighbors protecting our bay and not like bureaucratic regulators enforcing unnecessary requirements. Still, a reminder to all: New regulations are being forced upon us by the Idaho Dept of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and more stringent and expensive requirements are on the way.

Information and Transparency. Thanks to board member, Steve Shearer, and our recording secretary, RuthAnn Zigler, we've continued to make improvements to our website, bottlebaydistrict.org. We hope online bill-pay in the coming months. A reminder: we're a public agency and our meetings are open to the public. You can join a board meeting via Zoom, and the website contains our agenda, minutes, and financial data.

Financial Management. Our treasurer, board member Jon Davis, and our controller, Susan Shea, have worked hard to streamline the approval process for paying invoices, and of course, keeping us on track financially. Susan worked with our auditor, and we received a clean audit for 2024. Jon worked with our insurance company to revalue our real and personal property to gain better financial protection in the event of loss.

Slightly Over-Budget. The final profit & loss statement for FY 2025 (ending Nov. 30th) is not yet complete but very close. We received more income than budgeted due to increased inspection fee income and more Basic Fee income than budgeted (we purposely underestimate Basic and Service Fee income in case of recession and payment deficiencies). We also added one lot to the District and thus received an unanticipated \$6,800 capitalization fee. But, we overspent on our capital improvement program and other costs exceeded budget. The paving repair, which necessarily came at the end of the year, was more expensive than anticipated. Also, we stocked up on sewer pumps, which we've been treating as an expense even though they represent inventory. We're planning to correct that accounting treatment this year. And, the cost of chemicals for our treatment operation exploded this past year. Bottom line: Because we budgeted a deficit and planned to dip into savings for capital improvement by \$40,000, we ended the fiscal year just \$850 (.2%) over our planned budget

Fee Increase. A reminder that last summer the board voted to increase fees to cover our capital improvement program. Our savings are now down to our minimum policy level, which is designed to cover emergencies only. All of our capital improvement must now come from current income. The Basic Fee is now \$117/quarter and the Service Fee is \$153/quarter. The debt service on the Wastewater Expansion Project remains at \$60/quarter.

A sincere thanks to all of you for your continued support of our sewer district.

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