

Committee Request for Board Action: None

48 attendees (including 1 guest speaker) from 27 member agencies

Presentation on Smoke Testing Using Drones

[Michelle Beason](#) from [National Plant](#) presented on lessons learned from a pilot project conducted in Oakland in November 2023 to use drones during smoke testing ([link to slides](#)). Smoke testing can be a cost-effective complement to CCTV inspections for assessing the condition of sewers, and for detecting connections to stormwater and drainage systems. This pilot project compared the ability to detect smoke using drone footage with typical visual inspections performed from the city street. The presentation also provided information about the rules surrounding the use of drones for visual surveying. FAA airspace rules and authorizations can be managed within apps such as [Aloft Air Control](#). Some of the lessons learned included:

- Drones worked well for detecting large areas of smoke along easements and within yards, as long as there was not dense tree cover. These areas are typically difficult to see from the street.
- Visual inspections were better than drones for detecting smaller defects, as it was not possible to see small amounts of smoke in the drone footage.
- Ideally, the drone should be flown as low as possible, and the drone should take footage at multiple angles, since some lighting conditions can make the smoke more difficult to see. Having a breeze is helpful since the smoke will be easier to spot.

Results of BACWA Sewer Lateral Ordinance Survey

BACWA staff shared results from the recently completed member survey regarding private sewer lateral ordinances ([link to slides](#)). Of the agencies that responded to the survey, about 1/3 own and operate lower laterals. About 1/2 of survey respondents have a private sewer lateral inspection and repair program, which together cover about 20% of the private sewer laterals in the Bay Area. Grants and loan programs also remain popular. The survey provided details about private sewer lateral inspection programs, including who performs the inspections, method of inspections, and the amount of staff time required for the programs. Full survey results, including links to example ordinances, are available upon request from [Mary Cousins](#).

Implementation of [Reissued SSS-WDR](#)

- BACWA's consultant team is continuing to prepare a SSMP guidance document. The draft was circulated for committee review and a revised draft will be available soon to share with State Water Board staff.
- Make sure to check the State Water Board's schedule for SSMP due dates and audit end dates ([link to lookup tool](#)). Audit reports are due six months after the audit period end date shown in the table.

Announcements

Attendees discussed litigation and enforcement, including USEPA's recent complaint against SFPUC ([link](#)) joining a similar complaint by [Baykeeper](#); USEPA's recent settlement with [Guam Waterworks](#); and recent actions by [River Watch](#) in San Jose and San Diego.

Upcoming Events

- CWEA Webinar on [New Technologies Enabling Condition-Based Maintenance for Collection Systems](#) (RH Borden and Company) – May 29th, Online
- [SSMP Auditing to Comply with June 2022 SSS-WDR](#) (Paul Causey) – June 5th, Online
- CWEA CS Committee Mid-Summer Meeting & Operations Workshop – Wednesday July 10th- Friday July 12th, San Luis Obispo
- [CWEA TCP Prep Course for Collection System Maintenance](#) (Sam Rose) – Grade 1 and 2 – July 14th and July 24th, Online

Next Collection System Committee Meeting: August 8, 2024