

# District News

Spring/Summer 2024

Newsletter of  
Pebble Beach  
Community  
Services District



Fire protection and  
emergency medical services  
Wastewater collection,  
treatment and recycling  
Recycled water storage  
and distribution  
Garbage collection,  
disposal, and recycling  
Supplemental law  
enforcement  
Undergrounding utilities

## High honors for District GM

Be proud Pebble Beach! Your District's General Manager Mike Niccum was recently honored as Public Works Person of the Year by the American Public Works Association (APWA), Monterey Bay Chapter, which includes Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito Counties. This prestigious lifetime achievement award recognizes

outstanding career accomplishments that benefit communities in the long term.

It was 30 years ago when PBCSD hired Mike as its first engineer. At the time, nobody could know what a long-term positive impact his stewardship would have on our community. During his 14 years as District engineer, Mike led the charge to implement over \$20 million of water system improvements to ensure fire safety after the devastating 1987 Morse Fire. He also replaced 20 percent of sewer lines to reduce overflows, resurrected the Forest Lake Reservoir, and managed our local water reclamation project—one of the first recycled water projects in California. In 2008 Mike took the reins as general manager, prioritizing fuel reduction programs and spearheading the *(Cont. on page 2)*



PBCSD staff  
congratulates  
General Manager  
Mike Niccum for  
his 30 years of  
stellar service.

## Install a Knoxbox to protect your home

Every second counts during a fire or medical emergency. Installing a Knoxbox allows firefighters and paramedics to access your home quickly with a key or access code, decreasing response time and avoiding forced entry which causes costly damage to windows, doors, and locks. The quick entry system is also invaluable when out of town family members want local responders to check on a loved one.

The Knoxbox is an impenetrable steel box that is mounted near the entrance to your home or business; it can be equipped to hold multiple keys and disable alarms. A Knoxbox is mandatory for all electronic or locked driveway gates. Your local fire department safeguards the only keys to the *(Cont. on back page)*

**Knoxboxes on driveway gates allow quick emergency access and are required for all locked gates.**



**Don't miss the District's free  
Open House Safety Day and BBQ!**

Sat. June 29, 10 am-2 pm,  
Forest Lake and Lopez Roads, P.B.

Meet your neighbors, entertain the kids,  
enjoy a delicious buffet, and pick up  
the safety information you need  
to protect home and family. Watch  
your mailbox for more details!

### Top plant pick:

**TRY THIS FIRESAFE, DEER-RESISTANT NATIVE PLANT IN YOUR YARD!**



California flannelbush flowers resemble hibiscus.

Our native flannel bush, *Fremontodendron californicum*, is a unique showstopper that is actually a remnant plant from millions of years ago when California was tropical. Bees and butterflies are attracted to its vibrant yellow flowers which cover the plant in spectacular

3-inch blooms during spring.

This fast-growing evergreen shrub typically grows 8-18 feet tall and 6-10 feet wide, and can be pruned into a tree or hedge. Named for the fuzzy hairs that cover its leaves (and which can be irritating to some people), the flannel bush is native to dry slopes; it needs good drainage and does not need or tolerate irrigation once established.



**Pebble Beach Community Services District**

PBCSD is a multi-purpose local government voted into existence by Del Monte Forest residents on July 1, 1982.

**PBCSD administrative office**  
(831) 373-1274

3101 Forest Lake Road,  
Pebble Beach, CA 93953

PBCSD.org  
tinyurl.com/PBCSD-Facebook  
tinyurl.com/PBCSD-Twitter

**Garbage collection and recycling**  
GreenWaste Recovery: 920-6707

**Free 24-hour sewer service: 373-1274**  
If water is overflowing into your home it is an emergency. Call us immediately, day or night.

**Fire and medical emergencies**  
Call 911

#### PBCSD Board of Directors

President	Leo M. Laska
Vice President	Richard B. Gebhart
Director	Jeffery B. Froke, Ph.D
Director	Peter B. McKee
Director	Rick D. Verbanec
General Manager	Mike Niccum

## Firesafe house inspections underway

The District has mailed Fire Inspection Notices to all addresses in Pebble Beach. Please make sure that your property adheres to all listed firesafe guidelines. Mail in your compliance form as soon as possible, no later than July 1. You can also visit PBCSD.org and click on the fire inspection link to quickly and easily sign off on your property.

The District's friendly Defensible Space Inspectors will be visiting every residence and business to check for fire safety. You can recognize them by their bright yellow vests (see photo) and credentials, which are displayed on the front of their vests. Inspectors can advise you on firesafe landscaping, and how to harden your home against wildfire (see related article on back page). They will leave a notice on your home only if there is a fire safety issue that needs attention. *If you have questions, please contact Fire Captain Shayon Ascarie at (831)594-1427. Thank you for helping to keep the forest firesafe!*



**Friendly District inspectors like Elaine Kavrakis help safeguard your home.**

## District GM honored *(Cont. from front page)*

Underground Overhead Utilities Program to improve reliability of electrical and communication systems in the forest.

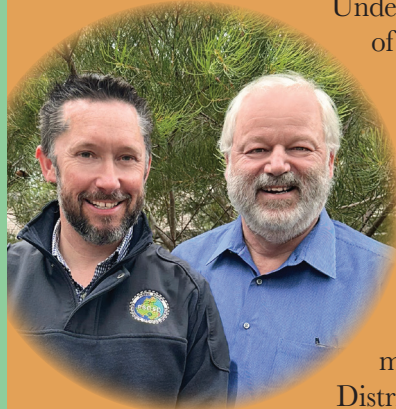
Throughout his career, Mike has shared his expertise with many committees, boards, and associations, serving as an invaluable resource not only for Pebble Beach, but for the entire Monterey Peninsula and county. He is well-known for being a trusted advisor, for taking the heat but never taking credit, and for "knowing the answer before the question is asked."

"We are all overjoyed to see Mike receive this much-deserved award," said Deputy General Manager/District Engineer Nick Becker. "Mike has been my mentor for many years, and I've met countless colleagues and constituents who have expressed great admiration for his leadership and spirit of generosity."

### Retirement on the horizon

Mike's award is a fitting tribute to his career, especially with his retirement approaching at the end of June. At that time, Mike's protégé Nick Becker will step into the general manager role (watch your next issue for more about Nick's outstanding qualifications).

"Working at the District changed my life," said Mike Niccum. "It has been an honor to work with our phenomenal Board of Directors. Their contributions, and the dedication of our staff and partner agencies, have allowed the District to secure top-notch services for the community. I'm also grateful for the support of my deputy Nick Becker, and look forward to seeing him shine as our new general manager. After working side by side for 10 years, I am fully confident that his leadership will continue to safeguard the community and support a high quality of life for Del Monte Forest residents."



**Deputy General Manager and District Engineer Nick Becker (left) will step into the general manager role after Mike retires in June.**

## Pump rehab protects the bay

If you've driven 17-Mile Drive recently you may have noticed construction near Fanshell Beach and the Crocker Grove. In our ongoing commitment to protect public health and the environment, the District recently rehabilitated two wastewater pump stations at these locations. Diligent maintenance allowed us to get over 50 years of use before replacement.

"Like most coastal municipalities, our sewer mains use a gravity feed system with wastewater flowing down toward the ocean," said District Associate Engineer Chris Simmons. "With five of our eight pump stations located nearshore it's vital that equipment is reliable to prevent spills, protect the nearby marine ecosystem, and convey the nonstop flow of wastewater."

Besides being more reliable, the new pumps can be pulled to the surface for servicing. Previously, District personnel had to descend a 15-foot ladder into a confined underground space three times a week to ensure that equipment was operating at peak efficiency. Now all controls are above the surface so they can perform preventative maintenance much more safely.

The pumps move wastewater over the hill to the Carmel Area Wastewater District for treatment—but that's not the end of the story. Read on below to learn how our wastewater is recycled and returned to Pebble Beach to be used for irrigation.



**PBCSD maintenance staff use a crane truck to move a new motor control panel into position during the rehabilitation of the Fanshell Beach pump station. The panel allows them to service the station more safely above ground, instead of 15 feet beneath the surface.**

## Conserving water for 30 years

Water shortages have been a way of life on the Monterey Peninsula for decades, but since 1994 the District's water reclamation project has been recycling millions of gallons of water annually. Through a public-private partnership with PBCSD, Pebble Beach Company, the Carmel Area Wastewater District (CAWD), and the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, all wastewater from Pebble Beach and Carmel is transformed into pristine recycled water using a sophisticated microfiltration/reverse osmosis (MF/RO) system at the CAWD treatment plant. (The same MF/RO technology is now being used by Monterey One Water's Pure Water Monterey project to reclaim wastewater for household use.) The reclaimed water is used to irrigate all seven golf courses in Pebble Beach, as well as the Stevenson School athletic fields.

The reclamation project saves potable water, reduces drawdown on the overpumped Carmel River, and reduces wastewater outfall into Carmel Bay—all at no cost to the public. Fully funded by Pebble Beach Company and the Independent Recycled Water Users Group, the project uses an

average of 1,000 acre-feet of water for irrigation each year, saving that same amount of potable water annually—about 326 million gallons—for use in residential homes and gardens.

**PBCSD's Forest Lake Reservoir stores recycled water for golf course irrigation and serves as a fill station for CAL FIRE helicopters fighting wildfires.**



*Meet the new Staff*

**Mark Sullivan**

We welcome Mark Sullivan, Accounting Technician, to the PBCSD team. Mark maintains our payroll,

handles accounts payable and receivable, and helps with contract billing analysis and financial reporting.

During his 19-year career he has served as an accountant for multiple municipalities, including the City of Capitola and the Santa Cruz Port District. Mark's deep knowledge of specialized city and district finances, as well as his accounting skills, make him well-qualified to maintain the integrity of the District's fiscal records.

"The best part about working here is the people," said Mark. "The District takes care of its employees, and it's great to work in an environment where everyone supports each other and works as a team.

Also the natural beauty on the Monterey Peninsula is breathtaking, and the weather can't be beat!"





**Pebble Beach Community Services District**

3101 Forest Lake Road

Pebble Beach, CA 93953

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



**A District Defensible Space Inspector discusses fire safety with a resident during her rounds in the forest.**

## Prepare now for wildfires

Record rainfall the past two years has been a welcome respite from extreme drought, but wet winters are a double-edged sword in California: as the explosion of rain-fed grasses and brush dries out during summer, the glut of combustible fine fuel can increase risk of fast-moving wildfire. PBCSD'S fuel reduction

programs greatly reduce risk, but we rely on the cooperation of property owners as a key component of our Fire Defense Plan.

### Hardening your home against wildfire

Most houses that burn in wildfires are ignited by embers that float in on the wind—not from fire reaching the structure. Safeguard your property by completing your Defensible Space Compliance Form (see page 2), and checking out these additional tips:

Do not store flammable objects under or on decks, and choose metal outdoor furniture over wood or wicker. Put away flammable jute doormats during the dry season. Make sure that house vents have firesafe 1/8- or 1/16-inch mesh screens to keep embers out—1/4-inch screens are not small enough. Consider replacing flammable wooden roof shingles with concrete tile or asphalt shingles, and opt for dual pane windows instead of single pane.

When landscaping, choose native, firesafe shrubs and trees such as coffeeberry and Toyon instead of non-native flammable species like eucalyptus and acacia. Visit [calscape.org](http://calscape.org) where you can search for native firesafe plants and set parameters for size, sun/shade, soil type etc. to meet your yard's needs.

*For more advice, visit [readyforwildfire.org](http://readyforwildfire.org), or call the District at (831) 594-1427. Working together we can protect our families, neighbors, firefighters, and the forest.*

### Knoxbox *(Cont. from front page)*

device in a password-protected security box inside responding fire engines.

Knoxboxes are available at [knoxbox.com](http://knoxbox.com) or through a local locksmith. Please call the District fire department at (831) 375-9644 for help in selecting the best model for your needs. After installation we will visit your property to unlock your box and ensure that it is in good working order.

*Save the date!*



### Free Household Hazardous Waste and Electronics Collection Event

Saturday, September 14, 2024

9:00 am - 2:00 pm

PBCSD parking lot

3101 Forest Lake Rd., Pebble Beach

It's time to start collecting those unwanted items from your home, office, and garage to take advantage of this convenient annual event. We will transform the District parking areas into a drive-through recycling center with drop-off sites for all your old electronics, unused pharmaceuticals, and household hazardous waste. District staff will even unload your car for you, so don't miss this chance to declutter and go green! Watch your mailbox for more information closer to the event date.

### Bookmobile has a new location!

The Monterey County Free Library bookmobile now visits two locations

in the Forest every Wednesday. The new location is in the parking area for Rip Van Winkle Open Space at the intersection of Congress and Forest Lodge Roads, where you can check out books from 3:15 to 3:45 pm. You can also still visit the bookmobile in the District parking lot, 3101 Forest Lake Road, from 2:30 to 3:00 pm on Wednesdays. Questions? Please call Scott Nichols, library assistant, at 796-3080, or email him at [nicholsss@countyofmonterey.gov](mailto:nicholsss@countyofmonterey.gov).

