



COUNTY OF MONTEREY

CAO Weekly Report

In This Edition:

- > Monterey County gray water system approval a first
- > Foster parent information
- > What a difference a chip makes for one lucky lost dog

SPECIALREPORT



Disinfection, filtration and pre-filtration components (l-r above) of the indoor gray water reuse system given first-ever approval by Environmental Health staff.

County Notes

- > The Zika virus is getting a lot of attention. [The Health Department has more information, including travel cautions.](#)

Gray Water Approval a First for Monterey County, Nation

Monterey County is getting some notice for innovative water conservation and the Health Department has played a major role. The department's Environmental Health Bureau is the first agency in the nation to approve a gray water reuse system for indoor use.

Gray water is any household wastewater with the exception of wastewater from toilets, kitchen sinks and dishwashers. Typically, 50-80% of household wastewater is gray water from washing machines, bathroom sinks, tubs and showers.

Generally, gray water reuse systems are for outdoor irrigation purposes, and the Environmental Health Bureau reviews and approves such applications. Last year however, bureau staff gave the first approval, both locally and nationally, for the installation of the Nexus eWater System in a county home. This system is specifically designed for *indoor* use and can treat up to 200 gallons of laundry and bathing wastewater per day for reuse. On average, the system has the potential to save up to 20% of indoor water used and can also be used for outdoor irrigation purposes.

During its review, staff noted provisions in the system that ensure public health and safety is maintained, such as:

- Non-potable (not appropriate for human consumption) notification signage inside the toilet tank and on the Nexus unit, including flow direction on the distribution piping
- If there is not enough water produced for flushing, to prevent cross-connections there is an air gap between the finished water storage feed tank that supplies water for flushing
- A reverse pressure backflow device is installed between the unit and the potable (drinkable) water meter that will be tested annually per California-American Water requirements to prevent cross-contamination of the potable water supply, disinfection (UV and ozone) and filtration
- The holding tank for finished water recirculates back through a UV disinfection unit every two hours to ensure purity



The process for approval began in late 2014. Roger Van Horn, Monterey County Environmental Health Specialist VI, met with the project applicant and system designer to evaluate Monterey County regulations pertaining to the new system. While innovative, the indoor system had to be thoroughly reviewed for compliance with county regulations, conformance with Chapter 16 and 16A of the California Plumbing Code for alternate water sources for non-potable applications and had to be certified by the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) for Onsite Residential and Commercial Water Reuse Treatment Systems.



Gray water system components in place both inside and outside of the home (above and at left).

Van Horn also consulted with California-American Water Company to identify any concerns about impacts the installation would have to the potable water system and bureau staff developed guidelines for completion prior to the final system inspection.

The final step came when the NSF certified the system for use after a rigorous testing process. That certification allowed county approval of the system, in July 2015. Bureau staff says it was exciting to be part of this process and encourages this type of application in more homes for the conservation of our precious water supply.

Social Services Offers Informational Meetings about Foster Parenting

The Department of Social Services is getting the word out about the need for foster parents in Monterey County. Did you know Monterey County has more than 400 local children in foster care?

Every child deserves a safe and loving home. There are many kind-hearted local families who open their homes and hearts to local children, more are needed.

If you or someone you know would like to find out about how to become a local Resource Family, you can attend one of the ongoing Informational meetings which are held every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Department of Social Services, 1000 South Main Street, Suite 110 in Salinas. Information is available in both English and Spanish. You may also call 1-800-850-0006, visit the Family to Family website at www.f2fmc.org.



Resource Families are the safety nets that support the most fragile of all, children. They open their homes to a child in need as staff and agencies work towards a safe reunification. Without them, it would not be possible to help keep children connected to their communities, schools, churches, clubs - all important components to preventing additional trauma.

There are many ways to help support a local child in foster care. Family to Family and Monterey County Family and Children Services make it possible for everyone to make a difference at many levels in the life of a local child. For additional information on how to become involved, please contact Community Liaison for Salinas Valley and South Monterey County, Mayra Guzman at mguzman@chservcies.org or by phone 757-7915 ext. 71.



Tail Waggin' Happy Ending at Animal Services Thanks to a 'Chip'

Animals Services staff are celebrating a happy ending for one lucky dog thanks to something as small as a grain of rice - a microchip. If you ever wondered if those chips really work, listen to Odin's story.

On January 26th, Animal Control Officers picked up a stray dog in North County on Old Natividad Road. The dog, a handsome, pure bred German Shepherd, was showing signs of aggression and had to be brought in on a pole. All stray animals are scanned for microchips when they come into the shelter, but this dog was so fearful and aggressive that shelter staff was unable to get close enough to do so.

For a week, the dog continued to be fearful and exhibit aggression. Dogs in such a situation are extremely hard to find homes for and face euthanasia, but luckily for this dog, shelter staff does not give up easily. They persisted in trying to get close enough for a microchip scan and finally did, and got a positive read. His owner, Yair Valle of Salinas, was identified and was at the shelter within an hour of being called.

Once reunited with his family, the dog - whose name is Odin - was transformed from fearful and aggressive to happy and calm. He recognized his family right away and rolled over for a belly rub.



Odin is now back where he belongs, at home with his family.

How did this lovable family dog get into this predicament? His owners filled in some of the blanks: last July 4th, Odin was frightened by fireworks in his neighborhood and managed to climb over a very tall fence and run. His owners searched for him with no luck.

No one knows exactly where Odin was over the last seven months or what may have happened to him, but thanks to a smart owner who gave him a microchip and the hardworking, persistent staff at Animal Services, he is home and safe.

Odin is reunited with his owner at Monterey County Animal Services (left). Odin at home with his family (right)

save lives as well,” says Mike Richards, Animal Services Operations Manager. “A recent study reports that the presence of a microchip more than doubles the chance of a dog or cat being returned to its owner.”

“The clear message is that licensing and microchips work. They not only reunite pets with their owners, but