Studies show that customers of special districts are more satisfied with their level of service than customers of municipalities with a myriad of functions, such as city government that must look out for the general welfare of the entire community, including police and fire protection, street and park maintenance and redevelopment.

Special districts are governed by boards of directors who are elected or appointed for fixed terms. Boards are subject to initiative, referendum and recall as well as the Brown Act, which means they cannot hold secret meetings. The directors must live or own property within their respective service area.

Independent special districts have consistently shown the slowest rate of spending growth for local governments, according to the State Legislative Analyst. These districts are independently audited and subject to state and public scrutiny just like other forms of local government.
Your private sewer lateral. Lateral lines are property of the resident.

Many customers do not realize that they own the sewer lateral that connects their property to the Vallecitos Water District’s sewer system.

A private sewer lateral is the pipe that drains sinks, showers and toilets from your home or building to the Vallecitos Water District’s main sewer line. Sewer laterals transport wastewater from all of the drains in your home or building to the public sewer main.

Property owners are responsible for the operation, maintenance and the repair of their property’s sewer lateral from the home or building and including the point of connection to the Vallecitos Water District’s sewer main line.

Why maintaining a private sewer line is important.

Everything you put down your private drains reaches the District’s sewer system. Proper maintenance of a private sewer lateral is important because they can clog with roots and grease and can cause a backup inside your property or spill from the line.

A sewer spill can cause damage to your property that is expensive to fix. In addition, a spill may cause public and environmental health concerns.

What are signs I may have a sewer lateral problem?

- Drains backup inside your home or building.
- Sink holes in your yard over the sewer lateral.
- Wet or soggy ground in your yard or near your sewer lateral.
- Water standing in or coming out of your sewer cleanout.

What are some things you can do for preventive maintenance?

- Have your sewer lateral video inspected and cleaned regularly.
- Repair and replace deteriorated or damaged lateral pipes as soon as possible.
- Have cleanouts installed on laterals.
- Prevent FOG (Fats, Oils, and Grease) from going down drains.
- Do not flush diapers, wipes or feminine hygiene products down the sewer.

Home Owner’s Responsibility to clean and maintain lateral from House to Sewer Main.
Vallecitos’ Sustainable Demonstration Garden is now an **OCEAN FRIENDLY GARDEN** too!

Most landscapes are planted for vibrant plants. Vallecitos’ Sustainable Demonstration Garden, located at the District’s headquarters, is also planted for vibrant marine life. Already recognized as a “Certified Wildlife Habitat” by the National Wildlife Federation and an “Earth Friendly Garden” by the Master Gardeners Association, Vallecitos’ garden was recently recognized as an “Ocean Friendly Garden” by the Surfrider Foundation.

Why are Ocean Friendly Gardens good?

Since urban water runoff is the main source of ocean pollution, much good can come by retaining this water and keeping it out of our watershed. Captured runoff can be used to irrigate landscapes and recharge groundwater. In addition, climate appropriate and native plants are used in Ocean Friendly Gardens, which don’t need chemicals and commercial fertilizers, two of the main water pollutants.

What features of Vallecitos’ garden make it good for the ocean?

One of the first features visitors notice about our garden is the rain water harvesting system, which collects rain from the roof that would otherwise runoff into the ocean, and stores it in three tanks with a combined 2,500 gallons of capacity. The captured runoff supplies water to decorative water fountains located throughout the garden.

Further environmental benefits are demonstrated through the use of California-friendly plants. When combined with the garden’s mulch, compost and biosolid pellets (a fertilizer made from recycled wastewater solids produced at a treatment plant partially owned by Vallecitos) the plants are bolstered with healthy nutrients, eliminating the need for harmful chemical fertilizers which could flow off the garden during wet weather. To further reduce runoff to the ocean, the plants are irrigated through a weather-based irrigation controller and micro-irrigation, which applies only the minimal amount of water that the plants will use.

How can I visit the Sustainable Garden?

Vallecitos’ Sustainable Demonstration Garden can be seen during business hours at 201 Vallecitos de Oro in San Marcos. For more information or to schedule a tour, go to [www.vwd.org/sustainable-garden](http://www.vwd.org/sustainable-garden) or contact our Conservation Department at (760) 744-0460. To learn more about Ocean Friendly Gardens, go to [https://sandiego.surfrider.org/ofg/](https://sandiego.surfrider.org/ofg/).
At a regular meeting held on Wednesday, December 6, 2017, the Vallecitos Water District Board of Directors voted to move forward with their annual reorganization. Jim Hernandez was elected to serve as president and Hal Martin was elected to serve as vice president for 2018.

Hernandez and Martin are joined by three Directors who round out the Vallecitos Board: Directors Betty Evans, Division 1; Craig Elitharp, Division 3; and Mike Sannella, Division 4.

The Board meets regularly the first and third Wednesday of the month at 5:00 p.m. in Vallecitos’ Administration Building, located at 201 Vallecitos de Oro, in San Marcos.