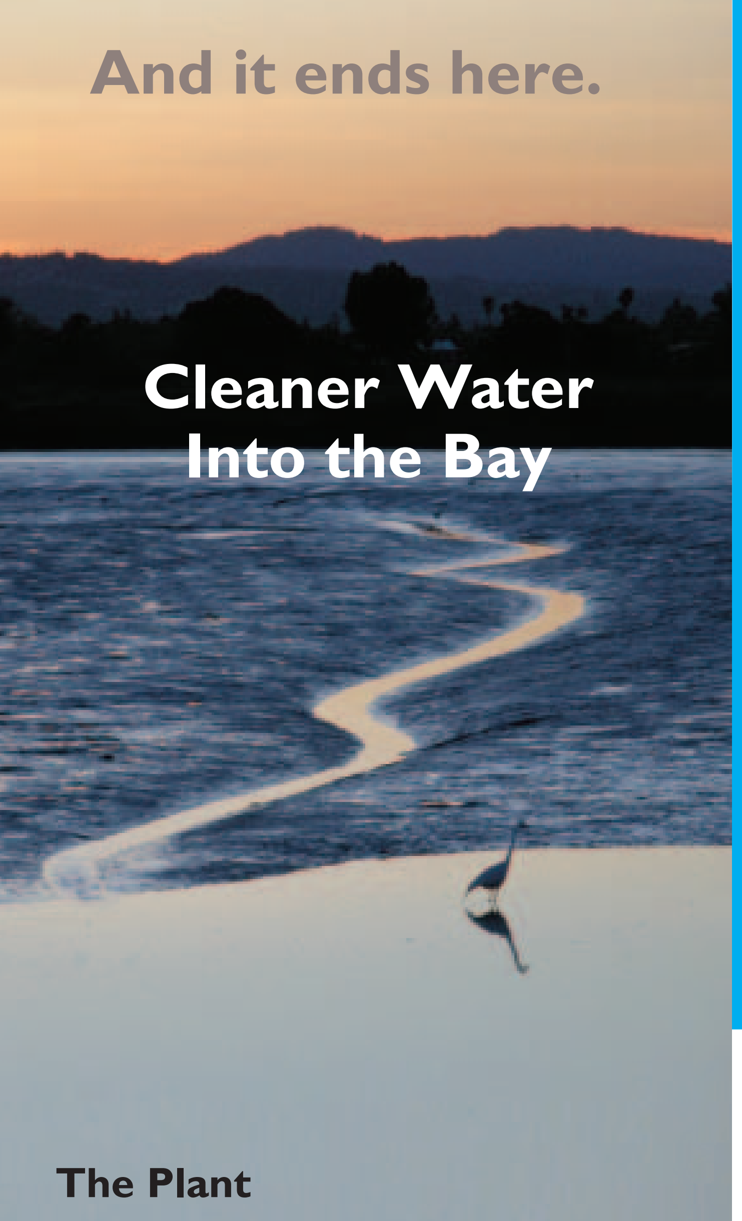
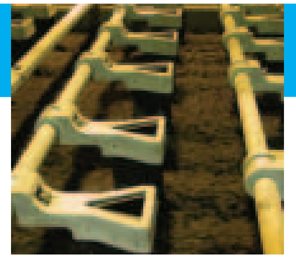
And it ends here.



Cleaner Water Into the Bay

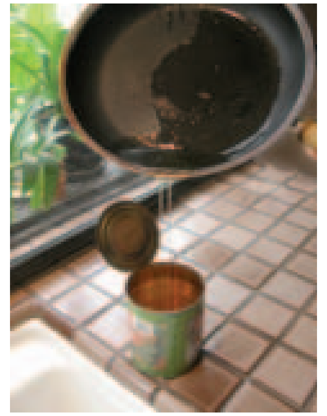
The Plant

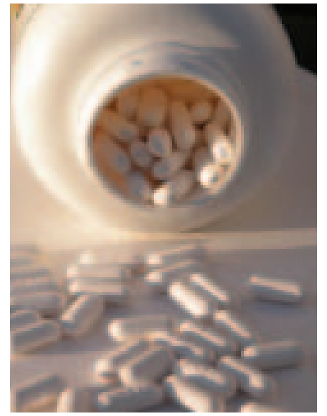
Solids for Many Uses



After extracting solids from the wastewater, we pump them from the blend tank, remove excess water in a belt press, and burn them in a multi-hearth furnace, while controlling air pollution. The resulting brown ash is highly useful as a soil amendment or masonry additive.

Your South Bay. Please keep it clean.





Fats, Oil, and Grease

Don't pour grease down the drain. Instead, pour grease into a container and dispose into the trash. Compost food scraps, and limit garbage disposal use.

Pharmaceuticals

Dispose of expired or unused pharmaceuticals at a household hazardous waste event – never down your toilet or sink!

Pesticides, Solvents, etc.

Drop off unwanted pesticides, photochemicals, cleaners, and other products at a household hazardous waste event (held monthly in most Bay Area counties). Never dispose of these products down the drain.

Stormwater

Stormdrain water flows directly to creeks and the Bay! Keep streets clear of leaves, and prevent toxic runoff from fertilizer, pesticides, motor oil, and antifreeze.

Regional Water Quality Control Plant

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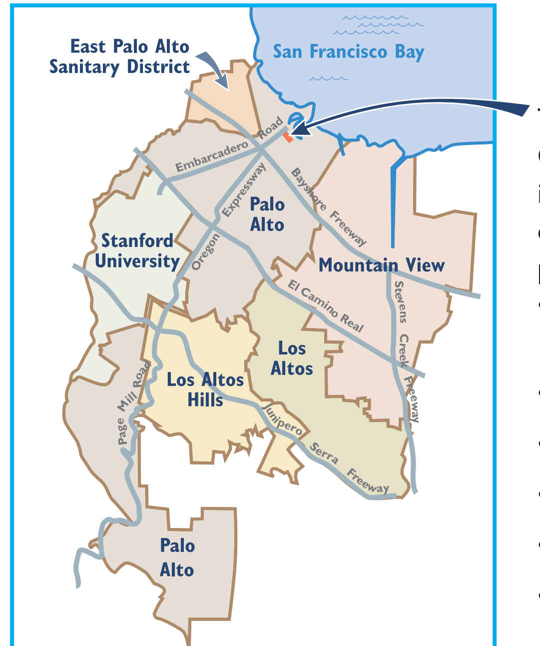
Palo Alto, CA 94303
650-329-2598
Email: water.quality@cityofpaloalto.org
www.parwqcp.org



The Regional Water Quality Control Plant is operated by the City of Palo Alto and is a partnership among:

- East Palo Alto Sanitary District
- Los Altos
- Los Altos Hills
- Mountain View
- Palo Alto
- Stanford University

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Working for a Cleaner Bay

Regional Water Quality Control Plant

Each morning
when you step into the shower or flush the toilet, the **Regional Water Quality Control Plant** is already hard at work for you.

We clean the wastewater from showers, sinks, toilets, and industrial and laboratory processes before we let it enter the Bay. We treat 25 million gallons of wastewater daily, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

The many skilled people responsible for this difficult and complex task are proud to help achieve a much cleaner Bay.

It all begins here.

The Treatment Process

Step 1

a

The treatment process begins as raw wastewater passes through a **bar screen** to remove roots, rags, plastic, and other large items.

b

The wastewater is pumped into **sedimentation tanks**, where floating material such as hair and grease are skimmed off. The thick sludge settles to the bottom. Both the sludge and floating material are pumped to blend tanks for processing.

Step 2

c

The water trickles through two-story towers called **fixed film reactors**. Inside the towers, microorganisms, forming a film on a plastic honeycomb, eat the organic matter in the wastewater.

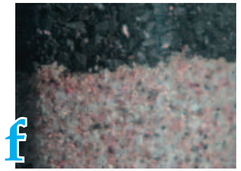
d

Air bubbles up through the wastewater in **aeration basins** like giant aquariums. The air supports microorganisms that remove the remaining dissolved solids and ammonia, a chemical toxic to fish.

e

The water clarifies as the microorganisms fall to the bottom of the **settling basins**. The settled organisms are pumped to the blend tank or the aeration basins for reuse.

Step 3

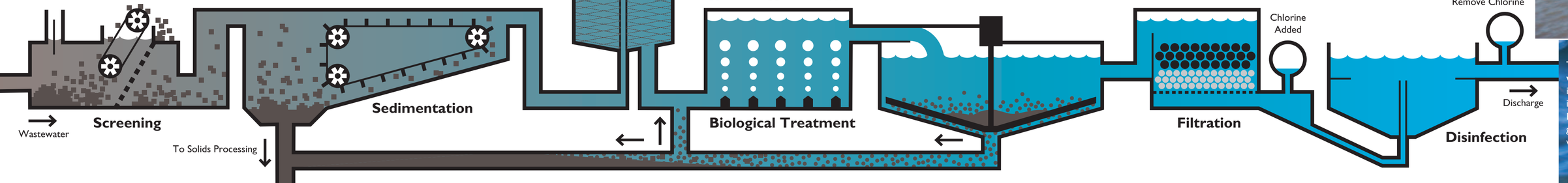


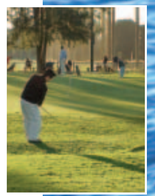
f

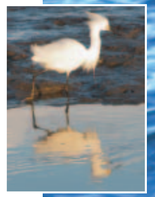
The clarified water flows through **filter beds** made from layers of anthracite coal and sand to remove small particles. Chlorine disinfects the water pathogens. Then sulfur dioxide removes residual chlorine from the water, since it would harm marine life.

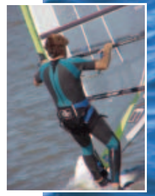
g

Quality Assurance is emphasized at each step in the process. We conduct chemical and biological analyses to ensure that the cleaning processes are successful.









The **treated wastewater** is either discharged into the San Francisco Bay or reused at parks, golf courses, and wetland areas.