

# USD'S TREATMENT PLANT at the BAY'S EDGE



**USD's 33- acre Treatment Plant is located near the edge of San Francisco Bay.** Low tides and warm weather often expose decomposing organic material in nearby shallow waters such as the ecological reserve and salt ponds, creating strong odors that some consider unpleasant. Prevailing winds can carry those odors further inland.

**The wetlands adjacent to USD's treatment plant are important to the health of the Bay ecosystem.** Dead plant matter is transformed into usable nutrients when bacteria and fungi break down organic material creating, among other things, hydrogen sulfide and methane gas which are the cause of pungent odors.

**Because wetlands are submerged by the tides and contain a lot of decomposing plant material,** oxygen levels in the mud and soil can be extremely low—a condition called hypoxia. Hypoxia is caused by the growth of bacteria which produce the sulfurous rotten-egg smell that is often associated with marshes and mud flats.



## USD takes many steps at the Union City Treatment Plant to isolate and treat process odors.

The majority of odors in the area come from the ecological reserve and former salt ponds, but to ensure we continue to be a good neighbor, when the District receives an odor inquiry from our neighbors we immediately investigate and report our findings back to the inquiring party. All odor inquiries received are investigated, recorded, tracked, and reported to the District's Board of Directors on a monthly basis. USD always checks the operation of our treatment processes and responds to the neighborhood location of the odor inquiry to determine the cause.



Marsh at low tide

**USD regularly tests and evaluates** the effectiveness and condition of our odor-control equipment and frequent assessments of our systems will continue. Plant operators monitor odor scrubbers and confirm proper operation of units several times every day and night.

**At most treatment plants nationwide,** processes take place in uncovered and exposed facilities. In contrast, USD's treatment plant was designed with a concerted effort to minimize the potential of emitting odors by covering or enclosing processes that generate odors and including odor-control equipment to treat the air. These "Odor-Scrubbers" are located throughout the plant and operate on a 24/7 basis.



Odor Scrubbers

**Plant Operators monitor our processes 24/7/365** to ensure continuous compliance with rigorous EPA standards. USD has received recognition from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies annually since the program began in 1993 – totaling 27 years of winning awards for Outstanding Performance.

**USD takes being a good neighbor seriously. If you believe an odor is coming from the USD plant, call us immediately at (510) 477-7500.** We operate 24/7/365 and will respond right away.

For additional information about USD's Treatment Plant contact us:  
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