

Cleaning, Maintenance & Rejuvenation • City of Modesto's Rockwells

The City of Modesto has over 11,000 rockwells that are maintained by City staff. The City currently cleans roughly 4,500 each year. A rockwell allows storm water to flow into a catch basin, which is connected to a deep hole filled with rocks. This system allows the water to seep back into the ground. Rockwells are designed to hold water and allow it to drain within a 24-to 36-hour time frame, depending on the amount of precipitation and soil conditions. Rockwells make up more than 2/3 of the City's storm drain system.

When cleaning a rockwell, City crews arrive at the rockwell with a vacuum truck. A six-foot suction pipe, flushing hose for the cross pipe and hand water guns are used to effectively clean all rockwells on a rotating basis. Rockwell effectiveness depends largely on the quality of the cleaning.



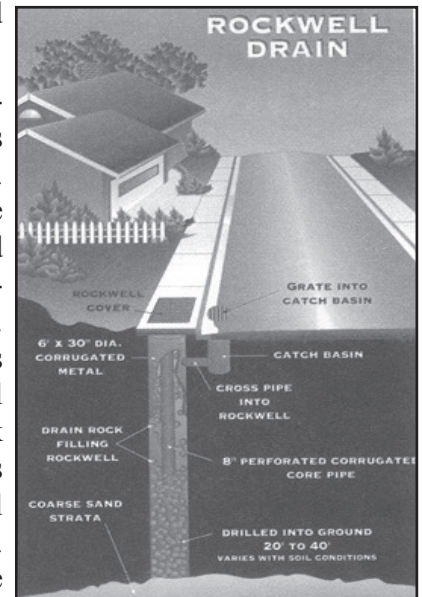
Lowering the suction tube into the catch basin, water is applied while debris are "vacuumed up." With the catch basin clean and the suction tube in place, crews will also remove the rockwell cover and wash debris from cross pipes into the catch basin. Every three to four years, the center core pipe is vacuumed to remove organic debris.

Proper rock level is important to effective rockwell operation, as well. After several routine cleanings or one deep cleaning, the level of drain rock will be inadequate. When this occurs, crews will refill the rockwell with new rock.

Over time, rockwells become filled with roots, silt, dirt and organic debris making them inoperable. Other contributing factors that will cause a rockwell to stop functioning are cement, solvents, oil, grout and paints. All of these materials cause the rockwells to clog or cause any porous soiled layers to be sealed off. If the porous soil layers become sealed, the well stops working effectively. The rockwell can be rejuvenated to correct this problem

but it is more costly and time consuming.

The rejuvenation process is part of the city's maintenance program. For this process, the drain rock is pulled down to a depth of approximately 18 feet. The old core pipe is removed and the drill rig bores through rock removing the debris that prevents the well from draining properly. Occasionally, wells are deepened to reach new sand strata, allowing for better drainage. A new core pipe is placed in the well and fresh rock is placed around the core pipe. The rockwell is now back in operation.



To protect your rockwell, avoid unnecessary flooding, and protect the fragile environment remember...

- steam clean your car's engine at a professional car wash.... not in your driveway,
- clean spills or drips with absorbent material such as cat litter or sand instead of hosing it into the street,
- recycle your used oil at a nearby certified collection center or by curbside collection,
- dispose of anti-freeze (and other hazardous materials) at the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility,
- rinse your latex paint, brushes, rollers and pans in the sink.... not in your driveway,
- be careful not to wash your garden pesticides into the gutter or down the storm drain.

For more information, call (209) 577-6200.

* Due to the cyclic nature of mailing the City Beat with the utility water bills, some of the events/programs may have already occurred.

Bulky Item Program Deadline

City of Modesto residents that have black and green garbage cans are allowed two bulky item appointments per calendar year for unwanted furniture and appliances. *Unused appointments do not carry over to the next year.*

Due to the holiday season, the Bulky Item Program will be suspended from December 20, 2007–January 1, 2008. Call your garbage company to schedule your final appointment for the year. Appointments will resume on January 2, 2008. Please plan accordingly.

Contact your garbage company to schedule an appointment: Bertolotti Disposal at (209) 537-8000 or Gilton Solid Waste at (209) 527-3781. For more information, contact the City Solid Waste Office at (209) 577-5494.

Garbage Holiday Routes

During the week of Thanksgiving, garbage service for all Thursday and Friday route customers will run one day late. In addition, service will run one day late for all Tuesday–Friday customers during the weeks of Christmas and New Year's.

Reminder: Modesto's garbage companies take only four holidays per year, New Year's Day, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Watch Your Car... Thieves Are!

Several areas in Modesto have been the target of vehicle/residential burglaries, along with, stolen vehicles.

Make sure your car windows are closed, take the keys, lock the car and **DO NOT** leave anything in plain sight. Park your vehicle inside your garage.

DO NOT leave your vehicle running and unattended!

If you see anything suspicious,
call (209) 552-2470 or 911.

You need to be proactive because
YOU COULD BE NEXT!

For more information, call the Modesto Police
Department Crime Prevention Unit (209) 572-9500.

Give the Gift of Green by Decking the Halls with Less Waste This Year!

It is estimated that between Thanksgiving and the New Year an extra million tons of waste are generated nationwide each week. In fact, 38,000 miles of ribbon alone is thrown out each year; enough to tie a bow around the Earth!

No-Waste Decorating Ideas

- Sprinkle real fall leaves or holly berries across the table for color, gather from your neighborhood, just rinse off and pat dry.
- Use washable linens, dishes, glassware and silverware when hosting parties.

No-Waste Gift-Giving Ideas

- Not sure what to get someone? How about a gift certificate? That way, you know the gift will be kept.
- Make gifts. Everyone appreciates a home-cooked meal or baked goodies.
- Consider non-material gifts. Tickets to a sporting event, movie, play or concert are a real treat!
- Make a charitable donation in someone's name instead of a wrapped gift.
- Take your own reusable bags when you go shopping.
- Think durable! Consider how long an item will last before you make a purchase. Often, a cheaper item will wear out long before its more durable equivalent.
- And, always remember to look for items made with recycled content.

Waste Reduction with Wrapping, Packaging, Greeting Cards

- Creative wrapping paper substitutes include used blueprint paper, the Sunday comics, or even the sports section for a sports enthusiast. Design your own wrapping paper using decorated paper shopping bags.
- Replace tissue paper with old lace or strips of paper shopping bags or used gift wrap.
- For large, hard to wrap gifts, just add a large fancy bow.
- Reuse sturdy decorative gift bags.
- Hide a large, unwieldy gift somewhere in the house or yard, and give the person a card with a clue, or a series of clue cards, to lead them to the present.
- Make gift tags from last year's holiday cards.
- Shipping a gift? Reuse the foam peanuts from another package, or use un-buttered popcorn for packing.

