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**Via Verdi Collapse Emergency Response Project  
Named a National Public Works Project of the Year**

**RICHMOND, CA.** – The City of Richmond’s Via Verdi Collapse Emergency Response Project was recently named a Public Works Project of the Year by the American Public Works Association (APWA). The City of Richmond, California, as the managing agency, along with primary contractor O.C. Jones & Sons, Inc., and the primary consultant, Nichols Consulting Engineers, were all presented with the award during APWA’s 2012 International Public Works Congress & Exposition in Anaheim, California during August 26-29, 2012.

The APWA Public Works Projects of the Year awards are presented annually to promote excellence in the management and administration of public works projects, recognizing the alliance between the managing agency, contractor, consultant and their cooperative achievements. This year, APWA selected projects in five categories: Disaster/Emergency, Environment, Historical Restoration, Structures, and Transportation.

Awarded in the Disasters/Emergency category at a cost of less than \$5 million, the Via Verdi Culvert Collapse occurred unexpectedly in a 120’ long by 40’ wide by 30’ deep sinkhole collapse at Via Verdi near El Portal Drive in Richmond. The street was closed due to the sinkhole, which was the only street access for a community of 85 single-family homes and several apartment buildings, known as the Sobrante Glen. The event was proclaimed by the City as a local state of emergency with implications to street infrastructure and access to nearby communities, local utilities (sanitary sewer, water supply, gas, electricity), San Pablo Creek, and the upstream San Pablo Reservoir, and the nearby apartment structures.

The project represented an intense failure of public infrastructure within a densely populated and urbanized environment with implications to public health and safety, the environment, and local infrastructure with deep concerns from the public, local community, the City, affected utilities, and many other public agencies. Some of the accomplishments of the emergency response project include:

- \*Design and construction of one-lane bridge using I-beams and steel plates – completed within 72 hours of collapse allowing residents to reoccupy their homes,
- \*Contacted permitting and regulatory agencies within 48 hours of the collapse and provided them with a site assessment, preliminary project descriptions and met on site within the first week of the collapse,
- \*Stabilize the site within one-week timeframe and establish a dewatering and pumping station to draw down creek waters,
- \*Two weeks to design a more robust temporary bypass road,
- \*One month to build and construct the temporary bypass road and open to traffic,
- \*Three weeks to design a temporary shored channel structure which could be built prior to the winter season,
- \*In many cases, construction crews worked seven 12-hour-day weeks (occasionally 24-hour days with up to two shifts of workers),
- \*Outstanding communication and partnering with local community, local environmental agencies, affected utilities, and many other numerous stakeholders,
- \*Obtained all necessary approvals, permits and environmental reviews prior to initiating the temporary improvements,

\*By November, 2010, the creek waters flowed back through shored channel on time and before the onset of winter rains and release of the reservoir waters.

**(more)**

For more information, please contact APWA Media Relations/Communications Manager, Laura Bynum, [lbynum@apwa.net](mailto:lbynum@apwa.net), or call 202.218.6736.

**About APWA**

*The American Public Works Association ([www.apwa.net](http://www.apwa.net)) is a not-for-profit, international organization of more than 28,500 members involved in the field of public works. APWA serves its members by promoting professional excellence and public awareness through education, advocacy and the exchange of knowledge. APWA is headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri, has an office in Washington, D.C. and 63 chapters in North America.*

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