

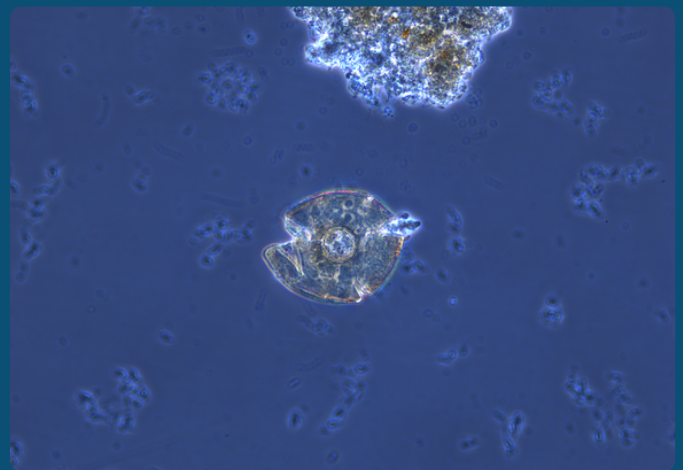
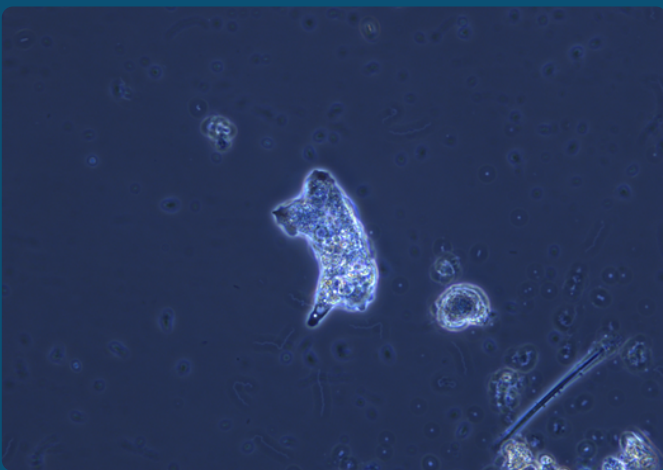
WASTEWATER BUG SPOTLIGHT

AMOEBEA

Amoebas are single-celled, shapeless organisms that can be found in the aeration basins at the El Estero Water Resource Center. Amoebas swim by extending and retracting appendages on their bodies called pseudopods, or "false feet" in Latin. These pseudopods are also used to grab food. Some amoebas are carnivorous and feed on live bacteria, while others are detritivores meaning that they eat dead organic material. Both diets are extremely beneficial when it comes to cleaning wastewater!

Amoebas found at El Estero can either be testate (shielded) or naked. While amoebas can survive in a wide variety of treatment conditions, testate amoebas indicate higher levels of particulate biochemical oxygen demand, otherwise known as food. It is also believed that a higher abundance of testate amoebas can indicate harsher environmental conditions.

On a daily basis, City Laboratory and Operations staff identify a great deal of indicator organisms, such as amoeba, across a wide variety of water treatment conditions in order to fully understand treatment efficacy at El Estero.



Naked amoeba (left) and testate amoeba (right) found under the microscope at the City's El Estero Water Resource Center, magnified x400.



El Estero
WATER RESOURCE CENTER

For more information on
wastewater treatment visit
www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov/ElEstero