

PIPPES

BETWEEN THE

Water Supply Update

Following the second driest year on record and with near record low storage in California's largest reservoirs, last year Governor Gavin Newsom issued a proclamation extending the drought emergency statewide and further urging Californians to step up their water conservation efforts as the State faces a potential third dry year.

California's "water year" runs from October 1 through September 30. California had its warmest ever statewide monthly average temperatures in October, June, and July, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Centers for Environmental Information.

With the start of the new water year, federal forecasters estimated that the atmospheric river storms that hit parts of northern and central California from October 23-26, 2021, dropped 7.6 trillion gallons of water. Enough water for over 244 million people for an entire year. However, it was no drought buster.

In December 2021, heavy snow was accumulating in the Sierra Nevada--enough to break decades-old records. During the last week of December, more than 202 inches of snow, nearly 17 feet, had fallen at the University of California, Berkeley's Central Sierra Snow Laboratory, at Donner Pass east of Sacramento. Scientists noted it was the snowiest December on record for the location and the third snowiest month overall.

The great news from December was tempered by disappointing precipitation for the month of January. State officials recently found snowpack in California's mountains measuring just shy of average for this time of year. While average is better than the modest accumulation seen the past two winters, it's a disappointing drop from the 160% of average recorded in December. Almost all of the precipitation that nurtures soil and fills reservoirs in the western United States falls from November through March.

While we all continue to monitor precipitation in the Sierras, let's continue to do our part to conserve California's most precious resource. Vallecitos' Board recently adopted a new Drought Response Water Conservation Program labeled Ordinance 219. The new ordinance conforms to the District's Water Shortage Contingency Plan, as new requirements require the drought ordinance to have six levels of drought. Vallecitos is currently in a Level 1 "Drought Watch" which asks for voluntary water conservation. For more information visit:

<http://www.vwd.org/drought>

Vallecitos partners with EPA WaterSense



The Vallecitos Water District is committed to protecting the future of our water supply through water-efficient practices, products and services. That's why we've partnered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to bring to you WaterSense, a national program that offers people a simple way to make product choices that use less water – and perform as well or better than existing products and fixtures.

To show our commitment to WaterSense, Vallecitos has created a new website to help educate our customers about WaterSense products and services. Visit www.vwd.org/EPAwatersense for more information on the WaterSense Program. Vallecitos has created educational videos to show how you can save water by using WaterSense products.

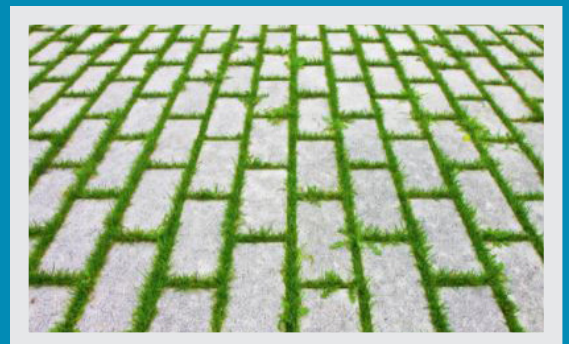
County of San Diego Waterscape Rebate Program

Vallecitos customers located in unincorporated areas of San Diego County are now eligible for residential and commercial water-use efficiency rebates under a partnership between the County's Watershed Protection Program and the San Diego County Water Authority.

The new Waterscape Rebate Program will save money for residential, commercial, and agricultural customers who make landscape upgrades. Sustainable landscapes produce multiple benefits for San Diego communities, such as reducing water use, enhancing habitat, increasing stormwater retention, and decreasing run-off. With the WaterScape Rebate Program, property owners can receive financial incentives to: replace high-water use turf with watersmart, native plants; install weather-based irrigation controllers, and; install rain gutters. To see more rebates and to check eligibility visit:

www.sandiegocounty.gov/watershedrebates.

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO **WATERSCAPE REBATE PROGRAM**



Rain-friendly-pavement

WaterSmart Landscape Contest

Looking for entries!

To further encourage customers to reduce outdoor water use, Vallecitos participates in a regional “WaterSmart” landscape contest to award customers whose yards best exhibit the beauty of California-friendly, low-water use gardening. Vallecitos’ first place winner receives a \$250 gift certificate to a local nursery and recognition at a Vallecitos Board meeting. Second and third place winners also earn gift certificates (in lesser amounts). If you’re proud of your water-wise yard, we encourage you to enter the contest! Visit the contest website at: <https://www.landscapecontest.com>



Vallecitos wins multiple industry awards from California Water Environment Association

Recycled Water Plant of the Year

The Meadowlark Water Reclamation Facility (MRF) was named the 2021 Tertiary Recycled Water Plant of the Year. This award recognizes accomplishments in compliance, innovative practices, cost effectiveness, and superior plant performance. It is the first year for this new award. MRF is undertaking multiple projects to increase efficiencies and achieve higher standards of recycled water supplied to the district’s two major customers. Additional projects include planned installation of a Tesla Megapack Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) as part of the District’s energy resiliency grant program.

Best Use of Social Media

The District won recognition for Community Engagement and Outreach for Best Use of Social Media promoting awareness and understanding of water quality issues through social media campaigns.

Starting in 2019, VWD began using video to document the District’s workforce and infrastructure improvements on its social media platforms. The “Work We Do” series gives the public an opportunity to see crews providing the community with reliable drinking water and wastewater services, protecting the environment, and developing its skilled workforce.

The District also partnered with the Center for Water Studies at Cuyamaca College which uses the “Work We Do” series to educate students on careers in the water and wastewater industry. www.VWD.org/WorkWeDo.



Matt Wiese Named “Operator of the Year”

Matt Wiese received the “Operator of the Year” award for outstanding contributions to the operations of wastewater treatment facilities and the application of knowledge to improve plant processes.

As Senior Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator at the Meadowlark Water Reclamation Facility, Wiese shares a wealth of instrumentation knowledge with Meadowlark staff. He mentors staff on proper procedures to troubleshoot, repair and perform preventative maintenance on instrumentation, resulting in minimal downtime and emergency repairs. He ensures training is up-to-date and completed, including hazardous materials training and drills in conjunction with North County Regional Fire Departments. Wiese’s role in organizing and conducting the training has won statewide recognition for Vallecitos.



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Between the Pipes is a publication of information and interest to Vallecitos water and sewer customers. If you receive water or sewer services from another district, please disregard any information that does not apply to you.

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Management Staff

Glenn Pruiem, General Manager
 James Gumpel, Assistant General Manager
 Rhondi Emmanuel, Administrative Services Manager
 Ed Pedrazzi, Operations and Maintenance Manager
 Wes Owen, Finance Manager

Due to the evolving situation with the COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus and Executive Order N-29-20, VWD will hold future meetings via teleconferencing. The public is encouraged to watch or listen to the meeting from their homes and observe the meeting electronically or listen in by phone. The District’s Board meetings are held on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 5:00 p.m.

To provide public comments prior to the meeting, submit comments via e-mail at PublicComment@VWD.org up to 90 minutes in advance of the meeting. Comments received are handled by the Clerk of the Board of Directors as if submitted in person. All written comments that are received at least 90 minutes before the meeting will be provided to the Board, and a record of the receipt of comment will be noted during the meeting. To comment during the meeting or to watch or listen to the live meeting, go to www.vwd.org/meetings.

Postal Customer

“Like us” on Facebook or follow us on Twitter
 @vallecitoswater

Vallecitos partners with the City of San Marcos by Providing Grant Funded Water Bottle Fill Stations

Concerned by all of the single-use plastic bottles filling up our landfills? In an effort to improve access to clean drinking water and reduce single-use plastics in our community, the Vallecitos Water District and the City of San Marcos recently paired up to install five hydration stations in local parks.

The new hydration stations feature a quick-fill mechanism to encourage reusable water bottle use, a regular water fountain spout, and a dog bowl. Vallecitos worked with the Public Works Department at the City to choose the locations of the hydration stations, which have been installed at Mission Sports Field Park, Woodland Park, Bradley Park, Connors Park and Buelow Park. The locations were chosen based on the areas around the City that would receive the greatest benefit from these stations.

The hydration stations were made possible by the San Diego County Water Authority and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, which provided \$25,000 in grant funding to cover the cost of the stations and signage. The educational signage installed on the stations highlights the benefits of tap water over bottled water while also informing the public of simple steps they can take to conserve our most precious resource.

