

Vallecitos Unveils New Firefighting Tool to Protect Our Community

As the operator of the water system that provides fire suppression support for our customers through a network of water pipelines, the Vallecitos Water District plays an important role in the protection of life and property in our service area. With the ever-expanding range of fire season in our region, providing enhanced access to water for firefighting helicopters to protect the homes and properties of our customers is a crucial element of customer service.

Vallecitos installed a new HeloPod near Vallecitos' Palomar Tank which is located in the hills north of State Highway 78 near the Palomar "P" summit. The HeloPod is a high-capacity helicopter water dipping source. It is a 5,000-gallon cistern specifically designed for firefighting helicopters.

The new HeloPod will help firefighting helicopters refill water tanks faster, saving valuable time.

The new HeloPod is available just in time for the wildfire-prone summer and fall months. A HeloPod allows a firefighting helicopter to automatically fill up four times faster while hovering than by replenishing its tank by landing. When every second counts, this time-saving measure can help save and protect lives and homes.

The HeloPod installation is part of a partnership with Vallecitos, the City of San Marcos, San Marcos Fire Department and CalFire.

More information on the HeloPod can be found here: bit.ly/HeloPod



Vallecitos Board of Directors Rescinds “Level 1 – Drought Watch”

On Wednesday, June 5, 2024, the Vallecitos Water District’s Board of Directors voted unanimously to rescind the voluntary drought restrictions under its “Level 1 – Drought Watch.” Vallecitos customers may irrigate any day of the week with no limit on the number of watering days and may irrigate their landscapes for as many minutes as needed. However, Vallecitos customers are reminded to sustain water conservation as a permanent way of life in California. Vallecitos’ ordinance permanently prohibits wasteful practices. Customers should be mindful that the following restrictions are always in effect:

Restrictions against:

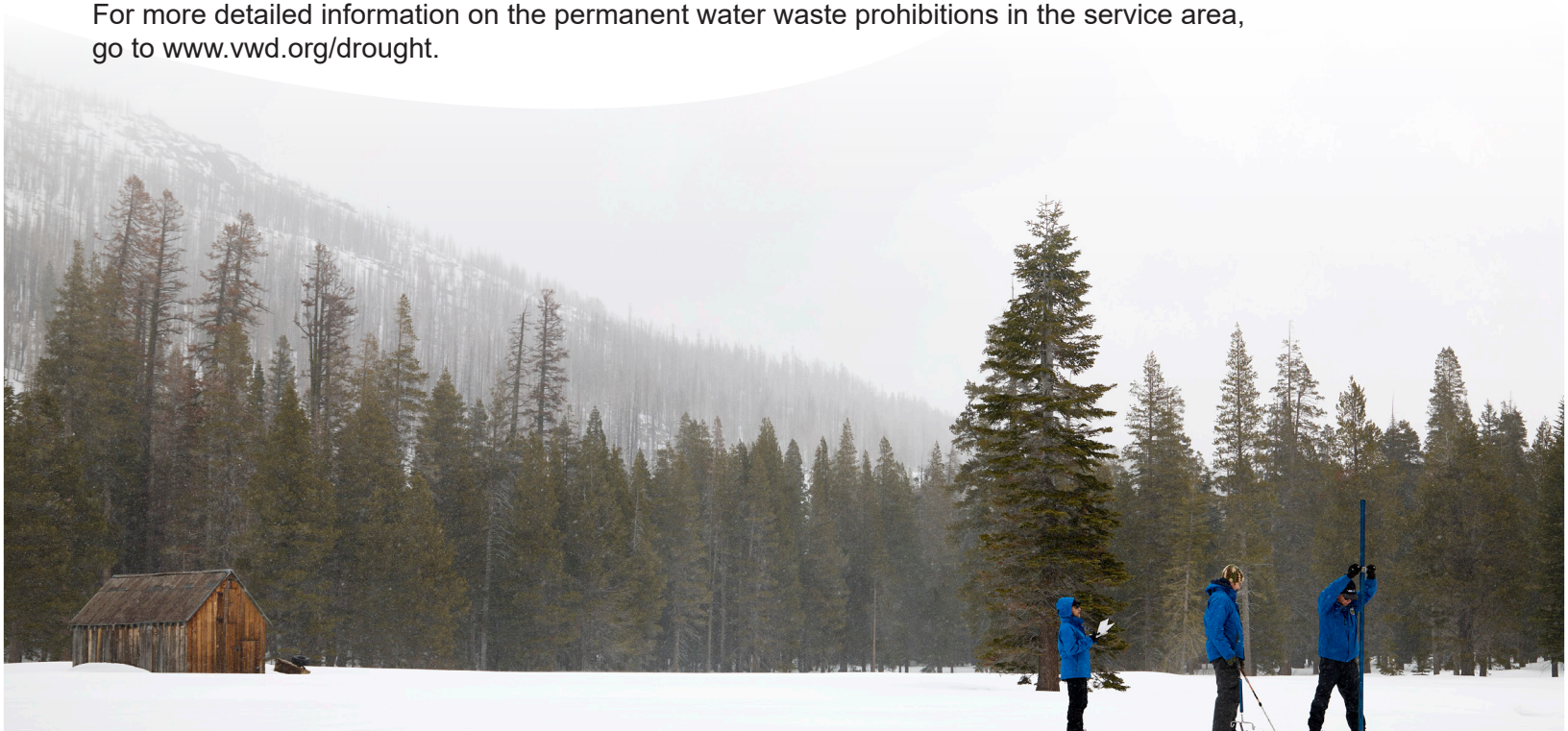
- Irrigating between the hours of 10:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M.
- Irrigating within 48 hours of a measurable rain event.
- Visible signs of runoff when irrigating landscapes.
- Hosing down hardscapes (patios, driveways, sidewalks, etc.).
- Not using a shut-off nozzle when washing cars.
- Not fixing leaks within 48 hours of discovery.

Commercial customers must also comply with the following requirements:

- Restaurants only serve water on request.
- Hotels provide the option of not laundering linens and towels daily.

Vallecitos’ action was taken in response to back-to-back wet winters that have resulted in a major boost for the state’s largest reservoirs. The 2023 water year was the 8th wettest of the past five decades, according to the California Department of Water Resources. Lake Oroville, the second-largest reservoir in California, reached capacity in May for the second straight year. Massive Shasta Lake, the largest man-made reservoir in California, currently sits at 94% of capacity.

For more detailed information on the permanent water waste prohibitions in the service area, go to www.vwd.org/drought.



*Source: California Department of Water Resources
Snow Survey at Phillips Station.*

Seeds of Change: Exploring the New Native Plant Seed Library at Vallecitos Water District

In a world where biodiversity is increasingly threatened, the importance of preserving our planet's rich tapestry of plant life has never been more apparent. Recognizing the need for action, the Audubon Society launched a groundbreaking program aimed at safeguarding the seeds of our natural heritage: the Native Plant Seed Library. The Vallecitos Water District recently partnered with the Audubon Society to ensure that our botanical heritage remains intact for future generations and supports local bird species, pollinators, and other local wildlife.



Nestled within the tranquil surroundings of Vallecitos' Sustainable Demonstration Garden, you'll find the District's newly installed Native Seed Library which serves as a beacon of hope for conservationists, gardeners, and nature enthusiasts alike. Here, visitors are invited to explore, take, and plant a treasure trove of seeds collected from native plants across the county.

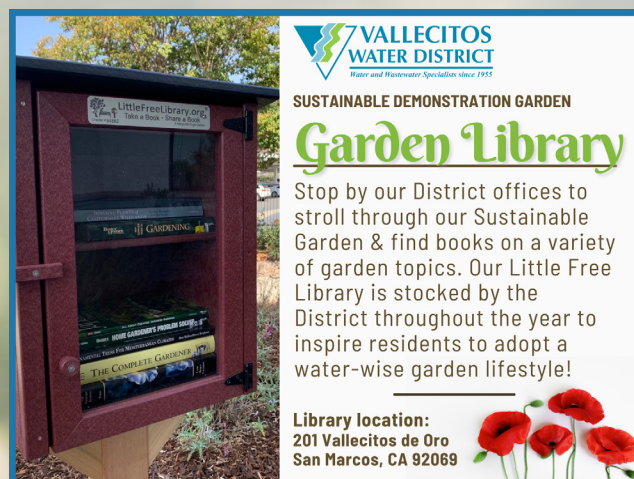
The Seed Library is more than just a repository for seeds; it is a living testament to the power of community and collaboration to protect our natural world. One of the most remarkable aspects of the Seed Library is its focus on indigenous plants. Vallecitos Water District encourages residents to plant these native plants as they not only benefit the local wildlife, but they also typically use less than half of the amount of water required for most drought-tolerant plants, such as rosemary or lavender. Some of the seeds

currently provided in the library include California poppy, black sage, and narrow leaf milkweed, a species that supports the monarch butterfly population. By promoting the cultivation of indigenous species, the library seeks to not only preserve biodiversity but also support the health and resilience of local ecosystems.

Whether you are a seasoned gardener with a passion for native plants or simply curious about the natural world

around you, come visit our seed library at 201 Vallecitos de Oro in San Marcos.

Participants can take native seeds from the library as well as free gardening books from the District's "Little Free Library." The District stocks this lending library throughout the year with various garden books to inspire residents to adopt a water-wise garden lifestyle.





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www.vwd.org



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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Postal Customer

The public is welcome to attend the Vallecitos Board Meetings the first and third Wednesday of each month at 5:00 p.m. in the Administration building—201 Vallecitos de Oro in San Marcos.

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 watch or listen to the live meeting, go to www.vwd.org/meetings.

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2023 Water Quality/Consumer Confidence Report

The 2023 Water Quality Report is now available online at www.vwd.org/waterquality. The report lists the more than 200 compounds tested for throughout the year and the results. Tested water from Vallecitos consistently meets or exceeds all drinking water standards. To request a hard copy of the report, call us at (760) 744-0460.



Water Academy Tour set for Thursday, October 17, 2024

Our certified water and wastewater specialists offer customers a first-hand look at what it takes to operate the Vallecitos Water District and provide reliable, exceptional and sustainable water and wastewater services to the more than 100,000 residents in our service area.



Participants board a chartered bus for a first-hand look at the District’s 33-million-gallon and 40-million-gallon capacity Twin Oaks Reservoirs. The grand finale of the tour is a visit to the District’s Meadowlark Water Reclamation Facility in Carlsbad. The event is held from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and begins at the District’s Administrative Offices located at 201 Vallecitos de Oro, in San Marcos. To have your name added to the list, email Alicia Yerman at ayerman@vwd.org.