

FALL WATER NEWS

Serving the areas of Temecula and Murrieta since 1965

2012 Vol. 73

Water...A Precious Resource

As you know, the Earth is a watery place. But just how much water exists on, in, and above our planet? About 70 percent of the Earth's surface is water-covered, and the oceans hold about 96.5 percent of all Earth's water. Water also exists in the air as water vapor, in rivers and lakes, in icecaps and glaciers, in the ground as soil moisture, aquifers, and even in you.

Water is never sitting still, and thanks to the water cycle, our planet's water supply is constantly moving from one place to another and from one form to another. Freshwater resources, such as the water in streams, rivers, lakes, and groundwater provide people (and all life) with most of the water they need every day to live. Water sitting on the surface of the Earth is easy to visualize, and your view of the water cycle might be that rainfall fills up the rivers and lakes. But, the unseen water below our feet is critically important to life, also. How would you account for the flow in rivers after weeks without rain? The answer is that there is more to our water supply than just surface water, there is also plenty of water beneath our feet. Even though you may only notice water on the Earth's surface, there is much more freshwater stored in the ground than there is in liquid form on the surface. In fact, some of the water you see flowing in rivers comes from seepage of groundwater into river beds. Water from precipitation continually seeps into the ground to recharge the aquifers, while at the same time water in the ground continually recharges rivers through seepage.

RCWD is fortunate to have groundwater in our area and it is important for everyone to remember not to pollute or litter as it could end up in our precious groundwater supply.

The Value of Water

Water is essential to our daily lives, but few people stop to consider its value and importance, especially when compared to bottled water and other everyday products.

Tap water costs less than a penny per gallon – a true bargain considering the energy and expertise it takes to treat and deliver safe and reliable water to homes and businesses day in and day out. But like many basic services today, the cost of treating and delivering water is going up for several reasons.



Here are some of the factors affecting the cost of treating and delivering water:

- **Rising treatment costs.** Increasingly stringent drinking water regulations add to the cost of providing water.
- **Increasing energy costs.** It takes lots of electricity to pump, treat, and deliver water. Rising costs for energy directly affect the cost of delivering water to you.
- **Aging water infrastructure.** Repairing and upgrading aging pipelines, pumps, and other facilities accounts for a significant portion of monthly water bills.
- **Cost of developing new supplies.** Monthly water bills reflect the cost of securing other new water-supply sources and producing recycled water.
- **Invasive species.** Some water suppliers are now spending millions of dollars annually to contain the spread of invaders, such as quagga mussels, that clog and compromise pipelines and water facilities.

Customers receive reliable service that includes ongoing maintenance, sophisticated water quality testing and treatment, and highly trained personnel. Simply put, they're getting one of the best deals around.

Funding Available to Farmers



Rancho California Water District (RCWD/District) agricultural customers are eligible to receive funding to improve irrigation water efficiency. The funding is provided by the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in California in partnership with the RCWD and the California State Department of Water Resources. Funding awarded to farmers must be used to pay for irrigation system upgrades and some of the labor costs required for implementation. Funding could also be used for other best management practices. Past funding has shown an average of 85% of total project costs—equipment and labor—have been funded through this program. For general information about the program, contact Justin Haessly of RCWD at (951) 296-6942. To begin the application process, contact the San Jacinto NRCS Office at (951) 654-7139, or visit their office at 950 Ramona Blvd, Suite 6, San Jacinto, or online at <http://www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov/programs>. The deadline to apply is Friday, November 2, 2012.

Recycled Water

Have you seen this sign in the area? These signs are posted in areas that use recycled water for irrigation. Recycled water users in the RCWD service area include golf courses, schools, and parks to name a few.

What is Recycled Water?

Recycled water starts out as wastewater (water that has been used indoors by residents and businesses, as well as in some industrial processes) which is then treated so that it is suitable for landscape irrigation, industrial uses and other non-drinking purposes. Recycled water is processed through mechanical and biological treatment, as well as a filtration and disinfection system, before being provided to customers. This treated water meets the most stringent federal and state water quality regulations. To ensure that a consistent high level of safety is maintained,

recycled water is continually regulated, monitored, and tested using standards set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and State Department of Health Services. This ensures that the water quality far exceeds its intended use.



Benefits of Recycled Water

Recycling water is similar to recycling aluminum cans or paper, where scarce resources are reused instead of thrown away. Reusing water helps to reduce the potable (drinkable) water taken from groundwater aquifers and other sources. Every gallon of recycled water that is used is a gallon of fresh potable water saved. In addition, recycled water is locally produced, providing a sustainable source that will be here rain or shine. Recycled water will protect expensive landscaping from the potentially devastating effects of droughts and water shortages.

Toilet Voucher Program



Do you own a home that was built before 1993? If so, you could qualify for RCWD's buy one get one free toilet voucher program. The High-Efficiency Toilet Voucher Program allows eligible customers that own homes built before 1993 to receive one free high-efficiency toilet when one is purchased at full price. The purpose of this limited-time program is to allow qualifying residents to conserve water by replacing older, less-efficient toilets with high-efficiency models.

To redeem, customers submit an online voucher-request form at www.ranchowater.com. A voucher will be mailed to approved homeowners within one week of submittal. A limited number of vouchers are available on a first come first served basis.



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We LIVE here. . . We RACE here. . . WE SAVE LIVES here



Free Education Programs

Are you an educator within RCWD's service area? If so, RCWD has many resources to offer to enhance your classroom. Since 1984, RCWD has provided water education programs, assemblies, and in-class presentations for K-12 teachers and students throughout its service area. RCWD is pleased to offer support to the local educational systems, assisting educators in meeting their educational goals. This is a non-profit endeavor to educate children about water—an all-important resource of their future. Materials and assemblies are offered to teachers and schools free of charge. RCWD's materials

meet California State Standards and are available to order online at www.ranchowater.com under the education section. Throughout the year, RCWD also offers assembly programs and many contests. Elementary students can participate in the Poster Contest, Middle School students can participate in the Write-Off Contest, and High School students can participate in the Menu Contest. For more information on RCWD's education programs, visit www.ranchowater.com or contact Meggan Valencia, Public Information Officer at 951-296-6922 or ValenciaM@RanchoWater.com.

The Rancho California Water District Board of Directors meet regularly on the second Thursday of every month at 8:30 a.m. at the District Headquarters. The public is welcome to attend. WaterNEWS is published quarterly to inform the District's customers about issues concerning water. Your questions or comments are always welcome.

Meggan A. Valencia

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