

How to reach us

If you have questions, comments or would like more information on water issues, please contact us or visit our web site.

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Soquel Creek Water District is a nonprofit, local government agency with a locally elected Board of Directors. The District provides water supply and water resource management to more than 45,000 customers within a 17-square mile area of mid-Santa Cruz County.

The Board of Directors meet on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7:00PM at the District's office at 5180 Soquel Drive. Meetings are open to everyone and comments from the public are heard at each meeting.

Board of Directors
Daniel F. Kriege, *President*
Gary E. Hazelton, *Vice President*
James M. Bargetto
John W. Beebe
Bruce Daniels

Laura D. Brown, *General Manager*

What's on Tap is an in-house publication for the customers of the District. Forward your comments to the editor at the address above.

Christopher J. Regan, *Editor*



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levels of MtBE were to reach a District well, that well would be taken out of service until the MtBE was removed.

What are the health effects of consuming MtBE in drinking water?

Little definitive data is available to indicate how MtBE in drinking water affects human health. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has tentatively classified MtBE as a possible human carcinogen based on inhalation studies. MtBE is often described as having a turpentine-like taste and smell, even at concentrations well below the established drinking water standard. With such a low taste and odor threshold, many experts believe consumers would notice MtBE contamination at much lower levels than are likely to cause health effects. ♦

Shedding some light on water use during power outages

As California faces more rolling blackouts due to the current energy crisis, most residents seem to be taking the inconvenience in stride. However, rolling blackouts and other causes of power outages can seriously impact the District's ability to deliver sufficient water to meet demand and provide fire protection.

Although the District has stationary and portable generators and is prepared at all times to use them to operate the water system, during an extended power outage water supplies may be limited.

You can help by mini-

water use for nonessential purposes during a power outage. Nonessential water uses include:

- Watering lawns, gardens, or landscapes;
- Washing cars, boats, building exteriors;
- Washing sidewalks, driveways, or any exterior surfaces, and
- Filling swimming pools, hot tubs, decorative pools or fountains.

It is also wise to prepare for power outages by having an emergency supply of water on-hand in case there is a disruption to your water service. ♦



What's ON TAP

At the Soquel Creek Water District

Volume 3, No. 2

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Facts about MtBE and drinking water

There have been recent news stories about MtBE contamination at the Quik Stop gas station in Soquel, which is in close proximity to several District wells. We want to reassure our customers that MtBE has not been detected in any District wells and that we are monitoring this situation closely.

What is MtBE?

MtBE is a colorless chemical that is manufactured for use in gasoline, which came into statewide use in 1996. It is a common component in reformulated fuels developed to reduce smog and meet Clean Air Act requirements. The

characteristics are unlike those of other gasoline constituents and solvents. MtBE is highly soluble and migrates quickly with groundwater.

How does MtBE get into groundwater?

MtBE can get into groundwater from leaking underground fuel storage tank systems and leaking petroleum pipelines.

What is being done about the MtBE contamination in Soquel?

In July 2000, the District received the Regional Water Quality Control Board's (RWQCB) Quarterly MtBE Report and notified the RWQCB

that several production wells are near the leak site. RWQCB is directing the cleanup, which includes removal of the contaminated groundwater and installation of monitoring facilities. The District is receiving all information about the MtBE contamination from RWQCB for our own review.

No MtBE has been detected in District production wells

The District has regularly tested for MtBE since 1997. MtBE has not been detected in any District wells. In the event contaminating

"Facts about MtBE"
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STORING WATER

for emergencies

The District strives to provide a dependable water supply, but disasters such as earthquakes, floods, and severe power outages can disrupt water service. Your family can be prepared with the most important necessity during a disaster: a safe, adequate supply of drinking water.

CAN I STORE MY TAP WATER?

Yes. The tap water that you are currently using for drinking and cooking is suitable for storing for emergencies. Water from the Soquel Creek Water District is regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State of California Department of Health Services. EPA and the State require that all public water suppliers regularly test

for bacteria and deliver water that meets established drinking water standards.

SELECTING THE PROPER CONTAINERS

Store water in food grade plastic or glass containers, such as 2-liter soda bottles and other water, juice, or punch containers, with tight fitting screw-on caps. Avoid using containers that will decompose or break.

Plastic milk bottles should be avoided, because it is difficult to remove protein and fat residues, which may allow bacteria to grow during storage. Old glass jars should also be avoided since they may contain lead. You can buy new plastic contain-

ers for water storage in most housewares and sporting goods departments, and clean food-grade containers may be available for purchase at water vending machines.

Only purchase containers labeled for storage of food or beverages. Improper containers could release harmful chemicals into the water. Never use a container that has held toxic substances.

HOW MUCH WATER SHOULD I STORE?

Having an ample supply of water is a top priority in an emergency. Most people need to drink at least two quarts (64 ounces or eight cups) of water each day. The amount of water you need will also depend on the total amount of juices, soups, other drinks, and high moisture foods that are available. Children, nursing women, and ill people will need more.

Additional water will be needed for food preparation and hygiene. In general, store at least one gallon of water per person per day of expected need. For pets, allow one quart per day for each dog or cat.

Store at least a three-day supply, but consider storing enough for two weeks if your home has enough space for it.

WHERE SHOULD I STORE WATER AND FOR HOW LONG?

Store containers in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight. Because most plastic beverage containers degrade over time, store them away from heat and light to prevent leakage.

Because hydrocarbon vapors can penetrate polyethylene plastics, store plastic containers away from gasoline, kerosene, pesticides, or similar substances.

For best quality, replace stored water every six months. For commercially bottled distilled or drinking water, check the label for an expiration date. If none is given, bottled water with the IBWA or NSF seal should have a shelf-life of at least one year. You can also store water in the freezer.

TURNING OFF YOUR WATER

Do you know the location of your incoming water valve? You'll need to shut it off to stop contaminated water from entering your home if you hear reports of broken water or sewage lines in your neighborhood.

HIDDEN WATER SOURCES IN YOUR HOME

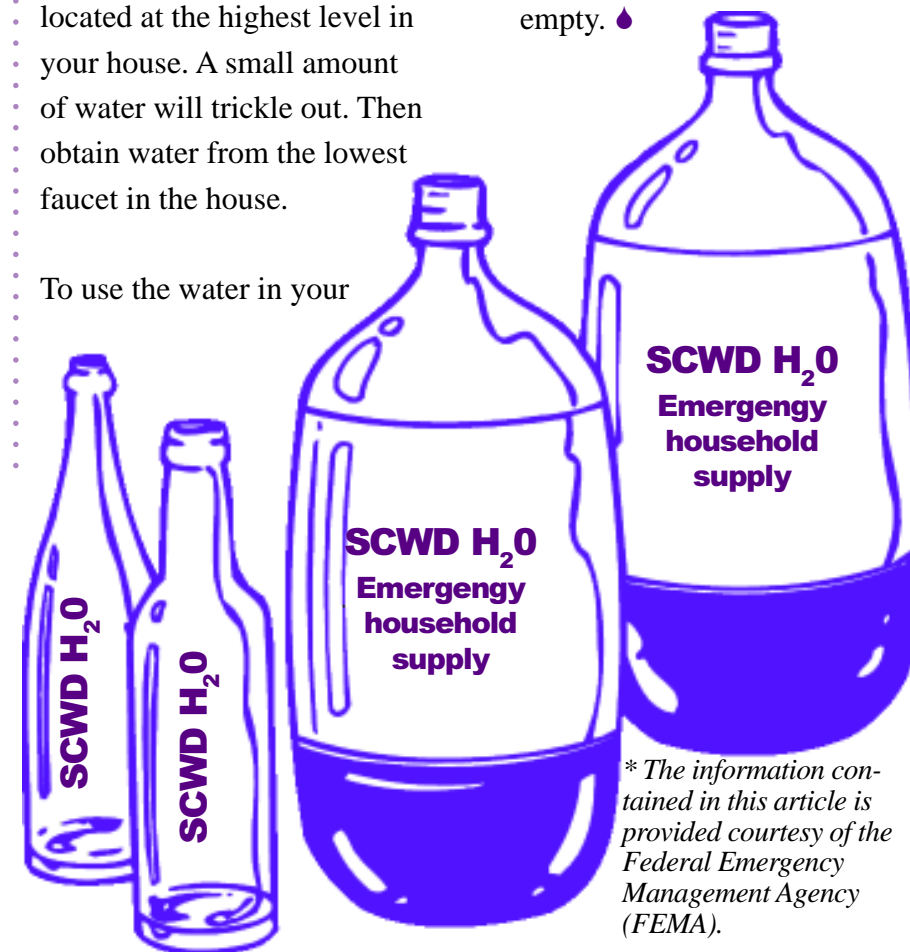
If a disaster catches you without a stored supply of clean water, don't panic. The water in your hot-water tank, pipes, and ice cubes can supply a limited amount until

you're able to get additional supplies. As a last resort, you can use water in the reservoir tank of your toilet (not the bowl.)

To use the water in your pipes, let air into the plumbing by turning on the faucet located at the highest level in your house. A small amount of water will trickle out. Then obtain water from the lowest faucet in the house.

To use the water in your

hot-water tank, be sure the electricity or gas is off, and open the drain at the bottom of the tank. Start the water flowing by turning off the water intake valve and turning on a hot-water faucet. Do not turn on the gas or electricity when the tank is empty. 💧



** The information contained in this article is provided courtesy of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).*