

## 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 non-profit, 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 meets 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*  
Bruce Daniels, *President*  
Dr. Thomas LaHue, *Vice President*  
John W. Beebe  
Daniel F. Kriege  
Dr. Bruce Jaffe

Laura D. Brown, *General Manager*

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



## Welcome aboard

New employees bring wealth of experience to District

The District's Engineering Department is now fully staffed with the hirings of Michael Wilson and Reggie Almond.

Wilson fills the position of Associate Engineer. He is a professional engineer whose experience includes a focus on the water supply and distribution portion of water resources engineering.



Joining the Soquel Creek Water District staff are Reggie Almond, Construction Inspector (pictured left), and Michael Wilson, Associate Engineer.

Almond's background is in the construction industry. He is also a certified cross-connection specialist and is responsible for the backflow/cross-connection program. The program prevents possible contamination of our water supply when there is a connection to another water source of unknown quality, such as private wells, irrigation systems, etc.

"Desalination study under way"  
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converting seawater into drinking water; however, the focus of most research is on various individual components of the treatment process. To date, there have been few, if any, comprehensive studies evaluating the entire process. The Santa Cruz pilot project will evaluate the entire desalination process to determine the most optimal performance in terms of cost, system reliability and water quality.

### The public is invited

Completion of the pilot plant is anticipated in Spring 2007. Public tours and educational materials will be available free of charge. Take this opportunity to learn about the desalination concept for Santa Cruz County.



# What's ON TAP

## At the Soquel Creek Water District

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## Seawater desalination pilot study under way

In January 2006, the District adopted its plan for meeting the community's long-term water supply needs. A joint venture between the District and the City of Santa Cruz to desalinate seawater has been identified as the apparent best new water supply option. A new source of water is needed to close an approxi-

mate 25 percent gap between maximized water use efficiency through conservation and the sustainable yield from our groundwater aquifers.

The first step in the detailed evaluation of desalination before final decisions are made is a one-year pilot study. A small scale desalination plant

for conducting the study will be constructed at Long Marine Lab. The City of Santa Cruz received a major state grant for the project, and the California Coastal Commission voted in October to permit the study.

### What the pilot study entails

There is research currently underway throughout the world to improve the efficiency of

"Desalination study under way"  
*continued on back page*



## Art sparks water conservation

After a one year hiatus, the District is renewing its unique partnership with the “SPECTRA” art program funded through the Cultural Council of Santa Cruz County.

This arts in education program presents water education through art lessons. Local art teacher Lynn Guenther is co-presenting

with the District’s education coordinator Vai Campbell in local fourth grade classrooms. The six-class water presentation series “The Art of Water Conservation” satisfies California State education standards for life science. The focus is on how plants and humans adapt to water scarcity. Guenther teaches fourth



*Capitola Water Festival. Ken Varnes from Slakey Brothers Plumbing Supplies shows Evan and B.J. Anderson how a dual flush toilet works at the Capitola Water Festival held on September 30.*

grade students how to create science observation journals, conduct a leaf study after discussing how native plants adapt to summers without rain in California, and paint a landscape drawing to learn about their local watersheds. Other class topics include water collection systems and communicating water-wise habits through art and advertising while emphasizing water conservation concepts.

If you are a local teacher, call Vai Campbell at 475-8501 ext. 142 to sign up your classroom for this exciting program. Visit [www.soquelcreekwater.org/School\\_Education.htm](http://www.soquelcreekwater.org/School_Education.htm) for more information on other grade specific one-hour class presentations for kindergarten through twelfth grade, field trips, assembly programs, videos, and activity booklets offered to District schools and parents.

## Drive by meter reading

Continuing its efforts to seek innovative ways to save time, money, and perform functions more efficiently, the District is conducting an automated meter reading pilot program.

The program enables District employees to read water meters automatically with a wave of a wand without leaving their vehicle. Consumption data is then downloaded into a computer in the vehicle.

Currently, one hundred and fifty automated read meters are installed on Cathedral Drive in Aptos. “The fact that employees do not have to take manual readings should result in labor savings and efficiency, as well as improve employee safety,” says

Ron Duncan, conservation and customer service field manager. And, automated meter readings have proven to be reliable and accurate.

Another benefit to the automated read meters is that they also detect certain types of leaks by noting if water usage is continuous for a 24-hour period. The prompt discovery of undetected leaks results in water savings for the District and lower water costs for the customer.

Staff is evaluating the program to determine whether it should be expanded to other areas of the District.



*Customer service field workers Paul Bargetto and Rob Jaime check the automated meter reading system being used in the District’s pilot program.*