

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.

TEL: (831) 475-8500
FAX: (831) 475-4291
EMAIL: custserv@soquelcreekwater.org
MAIL TO: P.O. Box 1550
Capitola, CA 95010
WEB SITE: www.SoquelCreekWater.org
www.WaterSavingTips.org

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

Dr. Thomas LaHue, *President*
Bruce Daniels, *Vice President*
Dr. Don Hoernschemeyer
Dr. Bruce Jaffe
Daniel F. Kriege

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.



Online bill paying about to get easier

In response to customer feedback about our Online Bill Pay feature, the District is switching to different software for this service. This new service is easier to access and offers many new features, in addition to saving the District money in transaction fees.

Customers will be able to view their bills and account detail online anytime, from anywhere. The account information is real-time so payments post immediately. This will enable customers to make their payment online and avoid unnecessary service disruption.

The new Online Bill Pay is flexible, allowing customers to make a single online payment, or to set up recurring payments, using Visa, MasterCard, a bank debit card, or a checking

account. Each online account has access to consumption information, billing statements, payment history, and District messages. If desired, customers can register for ecologically friendly email bill statements, combining convenience with conservation.

The Online Bill Pay feature can be easily accessed via a quick link on the District website at www.soquelcreekwater.org. The new service is expected to be available in Fall 2009. For more information, contact customer service at 831-475-8500.



Droplets

The District does not receive any tax revenues. Rates and fees paid by customers and developers, supplemented with grants and loans, are the sources of funding for all District projects and operating costs.

The Board of Directors has been discussing possible rate and fee increases. A customer notification is likely before the end of the calendar year.



What's ON TAP

At the Soquel Creek Water District

Volume 11, No. 5

Printed on Recycled Paper

September/October 2009

Stepping forward to cut back—we need to do better

Initial customer response to the District's call to reduce overall water use by 15 percent from May through October was impressive, but has since dropped off after two months. May's water use was 19 percent below last year, and water use in June was down 15 percent. July's water use, while still less than last year, only dropped by 6.5 percent, less than half the goal.

After the third consecutive year of below average rainfall, the local groundwater aquifers are stressed. Without any other source of water supply, it is

July's water use, while still less than last year, only dropped by 6.5 percent, less than half the goal.

important that all customers minimize or discontinue non-essential water use. Please make an effort to learn how you can reduce water use and put those tips into practice. For information, go to www.soquelcreekwater.org, www.WaterSavingTips.org, or contact the District at 475-8500.

Help us stop water waste

Thousands of gallons of water a day are wasted from broken or malfunctioning sprinkler systems that pour water onto our streets. Unfortunately, not everyone knows when water waste is happening on their property. Report observed water waste by calling 475-8500. Provide the time, date, address or location, and the nature of the witnessed water waste (e.g. irrigation runoff) or send an e-mail with this information to custserv@soquelcreekwater.org. Tips may be anonymous. District staff will follow up on all reports of water waste.

What's On Tap for the Year Ahead

Priorities for Fiscal Year 2009-2010

For several years, the District has identified projects and programs needed to assure the communities we serve have a reliable and sustainable supply of high quality water now and in the future.

Following are highlights from the District's work program for the 2009-10 fiscal year (July 1 – June 30.) During this year, we intend to implement many of the projects that have long been in the planning stages. We will also continue to undertake studies necessary to evaluate and permit regional seawater desalination as a potential supplement to our limited and threatened water resources.

Addressing our diminishing water supply

Conservation – The District will continue a robust and expanded conservation program. The focus will be on toilet retrofits, large irrigation efficiency and reducing water waste. The District's web site has information regarding conservation services and rebate programs.



Potential Regional Desalination Project –

A number of studies and investigations are underway as prerequisites to a final decision to seek approval for



a desalination plant that would serve both the District and the City of Santa Cruz. Two studies are currently being conducted to determine the best seawater intake system to provide a reliable, cost-effective supply of seawater while protecting marine life and the environment. A study to determine the expected energy requirements for the proposed desalination plant operation and identify ways to maximize energy efficiency and minimize greenhouse gas emissions is also underway. The environmental review process will also begin in Fall 2009. To learn about the proposed desalination project, visit www.scwd2desal.org.

New Wells – An urgent and costly undertaking is the redistribution of District pumping inland to avoid

heavy pumping at the coast, which draws in seawater contamination to our freshwater aquifers. Many of the District's existing wells are no longer reliable due to age and mechanical issues as well as being in vulnerable locations near the coast that make them prone to seawater intrusion. Up to five new wells are planned over the next several years, with significant progress on the first two of those wells anticipated over the next 12 months.



Developing a new municipal water well is a lengthy and expensive process. The cost to develop each well and treat the groundwater to drinking water standards is upwards of \$1 million.

Groundwater Management –

The District will continue its long history of closely monitoring the state of our coastal groundwater basin and responding to the ever-present threat of seawater intrusion before it impacts our only water supply. We will also continue to better our understanding of the groundwater basin with expanded and improved data collection and analysis. This effort involves extensive interagency coordination and cooperation with Santa Cruz County Water Resources Division, City of Santa Cruz Water District and Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency. We are working with all of these



agencies on a number of projects as well as seeking grant funding to assure sustainable water supply for Santa Cruz County.

Delivering water to our customers

Moving Water from Capitola/Soquel to LaSelva Beach

Our ability to provide water is currently restricted to four separate service areas. During the next several years, there will be a number of projects to intertie these service areas and enable transmission of water throughout the District. Over the next year, we are scheduled to complete a pump station in the 9000 block of Soquel Drive in Aptos and acquire property



for a second pump station on McGregor Drive in Capitola.

Replacing Old and Undersized Water Mains –

Five neighborhoods are scheduled to receive new water mains by the end of 2010: the Vienna Woods and Cathedral areas of Aptos; the Depot Hill area of Capitola; the Barrett Drive area of La Selva Beach; and the Moosehead Drive and Winfield Way area of Rio Del Mar.



The 2009-10 Final Budget lists all projects planned for this fiscal year along with cost estimates. It is available on our web site or at the office.