

What's On Tap



AT THE SOQUEL CREEK WATER DISTRICT

District Awarded \$50 Million Prop. 1 State Grant for Pure Water Soquel

We are pleased to announce that we have been awarded a State Proposition 1 Groundwater Implementation Grant in the amount of \$50 million, for our Pure Water Soquel Groundwater Replenishment and Seawater Intrusion Prevention Project. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) unanimously voted to approve the grant on November 19.

This grant—which covers about half of the projected construction costs for the Pure Water Soquel advanced water purification facility and distribution system—is enormously beneficial for our customers and community, both in the near-term and for generations to come. In addition, the SWRCB approved a \$36 million low-interest loan through its Seawater Intrusion Control Loan Program.

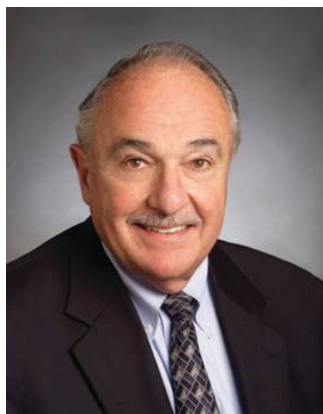
With this generous financial support, the State is demonstrating its strong support for preventing further seawater contamination and increasing water

reuse in our region. It also confirms their confidence in the District's ability to bring the project on-line and that our project supports the State's recycled water objectives.



Photo following SWRCB approval for project funding at the November 19th Board Meeting in Sacramento. Included in this photo are the State Water Resources Control Board Members (Back Row: Laurel Firestone, Tam M. Dudoc, Chair E. Joaquin Esquivel, Vice-Chair Dorene D'Adamo, and Sean Maguire), Soquel Creek Water District Representatives, District partners and supporters, and the Division of Financial Assistance Staff.

Thank You for 50 Years of Service Bob Bosso!



We are excited to honor a historic milestone and celebrate the 50-year legacy of being represented by the District's General Counsel, Robert "Bob" Bosso. In December Bob will be stepping down as our General Counsel. Thank you for your service and we wish you all our best!! To celebrate this milestone, we

asked Bob five questions.

What was your happiest experience at Soquel Creek?

There have been a number of them. I was honored to

be selected as the District Counsel 50 years ago, and I have enjoyed the great relationships I have had with many board members over the years and staff. In those 50 years, the District has only had four managers and four board Presidents. Many of the retired folks have remained my friends.

What will you miss the most? I will miss the interaction with the staff of the District which happens almost every day either by e-mail or telephone and that includes weekends. Most are on business issues, but they often are an exchange of humor which I love. I will truly miss those exchanges.

What won't you miss? I suppose the obvious are the

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Small Leaks Add Up to Big Waste!

Some water leaks may not seem like a big deal, especially if they aren't damaging your property.

However, even a leak that seems small and inconsequential can waste huge amounts of water over time and cause a big spike in your water bill.

Toilet leaks. A leaking flapper valve is the most common source of a toilet leak and is easy to miss because the water just slips down the drain, yet it can waste about 7 gallons per hour. **7 gallons/hour x 24 hours/day x 30 days/month = 5,040 gallons/month**

That's approximately 7 units of water per month!

Irrigation Leaks. Irrigation leaks can be sneaky! A single broken drip emitter can leak a gallon per minute. Often, this type of leak won't puddle significantly and will be readily absorbed into the soil, especially if you live somewhere with sandy soils. **1 gallon/minute x 1,440 minutes/day = 1,440 gallons/day**

That's approximately 2 units of water per day!

Garden Hose Left On. A hose left on, running at 5 gallons per minute, even for just part of the day can waste a lot of water. **5 gallons/minute x 60 minutes/hour x 8 hours = 2,400 gallons**

That's more than 3 units of water wasted in just one night!

Catch small leaks early! Be vigilant! Listen to your toilets for the sound of running water. Replace your aging toilet flappers. Know where your irrigation valves and emitters are and inspect them regularly. Use hose nozzles (with automatic shut-off) on your garden hoses.

Treat all leaks seriously! Address them as soon as you are aware. Waiting even a couple of days can have big ramifications for your water bill.

Coming soon! Your water meter is getting an upgrade to Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI)! With AMI, leaks will be detected daily rather than monthly, which leads to less water waste and water damage, and fewer surprising bills due to leaks. For more information, please go to www.soquelcreekwater.org/AMI.



QUESTION CORNER

Why is Tier 2 so high? Tier 1 represents the amount of water that can sustainably be provided to each customer account in the District without making our groundwater conditions worse. Tier 2 is water use greater than 6 units, which is not sustainable in the long term and increases the risk of seawater intrusion into our aquifers. Developing new water supplies to reduce our withdrawals from our current overdrafted groundwater supply are part of Tier 2 costs.

Have rates caused customers bills to go up \$300 and \$400 as indicated on social media? No, the most a single-family bill with a 5/8" meter could increase in a month because of rates is \$86. If bills are increasing \$300 or \$400 it is because that customer is using more water now than they were before the rate increase. If you have questions about your bill please call a billing representative at 831-475-8500 and they will be happy to answer your questions.

Will water rates go down if the District receives grants for the Pure Water Soquel project?

With the recent awards and announcements of the grants and low-interest loans for the District, we will be working with a rate consultant to determine the impacts of these funding sources on future rate increases.

The rates were developed based on costs to develop a supplemental supply project and it was expected that the District would finance the project over 30 years, much like the mortgage on a home. Any grants the District receives would reduce the amount that would need to be borrowed, which could lower rates over time.

Do you have a question you would like to see in the next issue? Email it to outreach@soquelcreekwater.org

Water Harvest Festival

On October 20th we held the 2nd Annual Water Harvest Festival at Anna Jean Cummings Park. We partnered with Santa Cruz County Parks, Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County and Save Our Shores to bring this awesome event to our community. This year it was held in memory and celebration of Vaidehi Campbell Williams, who tragically lost her life on the Conception Dive Boat fire. Over 25 organizations participated and led education water activities for over 200 kids and their families. The face painters, bounce houses, and performances by ZunZun, EarthCapades & Rock Steady Juggling made it a day to remember!



Bob Bosso Cont.

late night board meetings, although those have not happened often in the past few years.

What was your most noteworthy achievement at Soquel Creek? I am proud of the fact that the number of lawsuits against the District in my 50 years have been few and far between. I have always seen my role as trying to prevent the District from getting involved in litigation, rather than waiting for it to happen and then trying to win it. I also have been able to work with numerous board members and staff without any friction, by and large, and I think that is unusual for that long a period of time.

What do you plan to do in retirement? Well, I am going to continue to practice in Santa Cruz on a reduced basis and plan to spend more time with my wife, children, and grandchildren. We now have six grandchildren, and they are growing up way too fast, so I want to enjoy them as much as I can. In addition, I hope to spend more time at our little cabin in Humboldt County, and perhaps spend a few more early mornings on Loch Lomond trying to catch some elusive trout.

The Multi Benefits of the Intertie with Santa Cruz

For decades we have maintained emergency interties with the City of Santa Cruz to provide mutual aid to each other as needed. In 2015, the intertie near Soquel Drive and 41st Ave. was upgraded and has been frequently used during the recent PG&E Public Safety Power Shut Offs (PSPS) and pilot winter water purchase project. During a critical valve replacement in 2015, we were able to provide the City 1.9 million gallons (MG) of water and during the winter storms of 2017, we provided another 3.5 MG in aid. Recent PSPS events in 2019 resulted in the City providing 4.5 MG to our customers as a result of 25-30 District facilities being out of power.

Additionally, we continue to explore the pilot water purchase program during winter months. Due to the lack of rainfall in November, the pilot program was delayed, but the transfer and purchase of water from the City was initiated on December 6. The surface water availability is generally anticipated between November 1st – April 30th, however, it is weather dependent, thus unpredictable as we have found this season. Last winter between December 2018–April 2019 we purchased 53.8 MG (165 Acre-Ft) of water from the City and this 2019-20 winter we



hope to purchase twice as much water if available. Customers between 41st Ave. and Park Ave. (Service Area 1) will receive City water once the intertie is opened. The surface water availability and quantity is based on many factors, prioritized as follows: First and foremost the City must meet fish flow requirements in the creeks supplying the water, secondly they must meet their customer demands, thirdly the City must store water in Loch Lomond, and then remaining water can be purchased by us. We continue to collaborate with the City on opportunities related to winter surface water use for our region. For questions, please contact Taj Dufour, at tajd@soquelcreekwater.org or 831-475-8501 x123.



In 2019, we earned the honored distinction of being named a Bay Area Top Workplace by The Bay Area News Group. It's based on employee feedback, gathered through an anonymous survey administered by an outside organization that measures several aspects of workplace culture including alignment, execution and connection.

Being named a Top Workplace is a big deal — only 85 companies in the greater Bay Area made the 2019 list. This was the our first survey and we were excited that our employees consider the District a great place to work. Being recognized as a Bay Area Top Workplace on our maiden voyage was a complete and humbling surprise.

Our workplace culture is a distinct part of what makes us special. Our mission has always been to recruit and retain top-notch, public employees dedicated to serving our community by providing a safe, reliable and sustainable water supply. Being recognized as a Bay Area Top Workplace affirms that its our employees who make this mission possible.

As demonstrated by some of the highest-ranked results, employees feel “well-informed about important decisions” happening in the District and believe that “the District operates by strong values”. Employees gave top ranking to a well-managed workplace which “cares about my concerns, helps me learn and grow, and makes it easier to do my job well” .



We'd like to share with our customers some of the reasons our employees think working for the District is special:

- *“I live and work here in our beautiful area and I'm proud to be a part of something important - Water!”*
- *“Because my team is awesome. It makes coming to work a joy.”*
- *“I have many opportunities to learn every day. I feel like the District is open to new technology and new ideas and it is definitely an interesting benefit to my job. I enjoy working with all the staff at the District. My direct manager is awesome. The General Manager is a great asset to the District .“*
- *“I like helping people.”*
- *“I am always learning something new and am genuinely interested in how the District addresses and responds to a variety of complex and challenging issues. I also enjoy who I work with! I appreciate that the District encourages new, creative ideas to improve efficiency/general work functions.”*

PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoffs

This past October, Santa Cruz County experienced two PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) and our facilities were also affected. During the first PSPS, we lost power to 63% of our facilities. During the second PSPS, power was shut off to 72% of our facilities.

During the shutoffs, our water production capability was reduced by 57%. That prompted the us to call a Stage 5 Critical Water Emergency during each shutoff. Through the use of strategically placed generators, importing water from the City of Santa Cruz Water Department through the emergency intertie, and our customer's valiant water conservation efforts, we were able to keep our water storage tanks filled. Customers' water savings were an amazing 40% during the first shutoff, and about 25% during the second.



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Other ways to connect with us!

