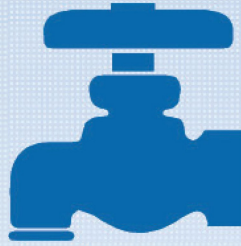


What's On Tap

AT THE SOQUEL CREEK WATER DISTRICT



Aptos Village Project Completes Water Conservation Requirements, Water Service Approval Granted

THE SOQUEL CREEK WATER District's Board of Directors granted Barry Swenson Builder (BSB) water service approval for the Aptos Village re-development project in February 2014. To receive the final approval the proposed buildings had to meet strict water conservation requirements for ultra-high efficiency fixtures such as toilets and showerheads and exceed standards for low water use landscaping. The proposed project also encourages innovative groundwater recharge through efficient storm water management that directs the



Artist's rendering of the Aptos Village Green and the surrounding commercial and residential units.

water to permeable landscaping features. These features include the use of pervious pavement, pervious synthetic turf, rain gardens, swales and dry wells that let the rainwater soak into the ground instead of running off to a storm drain.

The project also met requirements to save water by replacing hundreds of old residential and commercial toilets in existing buildings in the District with high-efficiency toilets as part of the "water demand offset" requirements. By exceeding water efficiency standards in the new development, the Aptos Village project will serve as a conservation showcase for other urban projects.

what is WDO?

The Water Demand Offset Program is an innovative approach to planned development that requires developers to offset their anticipated water use by 200% by reducing existing customer's use elsewhere in the District. This "win-win" program means that new development actually leads to less water use District-wide. Since the WDO program's inception in 2003, developers have paid for and offset new uses by installing over 3,000 toilets in our existing residential homes, businesses, and schools.

Our Board of Directors meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm at the District office. Meetings are open to everyone and comments from the public are heard at each meeting.

Shifting Pumping Away from the Coast

AS A COASTAL COMMUNITY solely reliant on groundwater we are at risk, and seeing the first signs, of seawater intrusion. If our aquifers continue to be pumped at their current level seawater can invade and contaminate public and private wells, making them useless for supplying drinking water. To safeguard our groundwater resource, the District's long term goal is to raise groundwater levels at the coast.

One of the ways the District does this is by managing our pumping of wells further inland, where there is less risk of seawater



intrusion. In 2011, the District approved developing five new inland wells. These new wells will not add to the overall amount of water we're pumping, but rather allow redistribution of pumping inland.

In the fall of 2012, the first well was brought on-line at the Polo Grounds County Park in Aptos. Also around that time, the O'Neill Ranch Well was drilled near the intersection of 41st Avenue and Soquel Drive.

Beginning this month, construction will start on the O'Neill treatment plant to remove contaminants from the water to ensure the water delivered to you meets all state and federal water quality requirements. The 5 million dollar project includes new pipeline from 41st Avenue to Porter Street, new pumping equipment, a control building, an emergency back-up generator and filtration equipment. Work on Soquel Drive will be limited to the hours of 9 am to 3:30 pm to reduce traffic impacts. This project is expected to be completed in February of 2015 and will produce up to 650 gallons per minute of high quality drinking water.

The District is managing our pumping of wells further inland where there is less risk of seawater intrusion.

yard signs available to promote water cutbacks

Soquel Creek Water District is partnering with other local water agencies to promote water conservation and reductions in use, both indoors and outdoors. As a District customer, if you would like to have a free yard sign to display at your home or business, please contact Melanie Schumacher at (831) 475-8501 x153 or melanies@soquelcreekwater.org.



Short and Long-term Water Reduction Programs

OUR DISTRICT IS FACING a challenging water shortage issue that will require both short-term actions and long-term solutions. Right now, the District Board is requesting that customers voluntarily reduce their water use by 20%, consistent with what Governor Brown has asked Californians to do in the face of the current drought.

We are also developing a long-term Water Use Reduction Program for District customers that will last for several years – even after the drought ends. All of our plans recognize our customers' ongoing conservation efforts and will focus on helping high users meet new water use goals. If conservation is a way of life for you, you likely already meet these goals and aren't being asked to reduce further.

what will the new long-term cutbacks look like?

While we are still working through the details, each District customer will likely be allocated a monthly water budget based on the number of people in the household. If the water budget is exceeded then financial penalties would be assessed. Businesses and other organizations will have their own guidelines or budgets. The District is committed to helping our customers meet these goals and will be providing substantial customer outreach and support, rebate packages and incentives.



The purpose of the water reduction program is to save a sufficient amount of water to slow down seawater intrusion and permanently secure long-term water savings as we continue searching for additional water supplies. The project is being designed so it produces water savings in a cost effective manner that is fair and equitable to customers, focuses on reductions in outdoor potable water use, and provides support to customers.

The Board has been holding discussions since January to develop this water use reduction program with input from staff, technical experts and community members. Our goal is to begin implementing the program in the Fall of 2014. We will continue to provide more information and direction as the program is fully developed.

District customers can pick up free water-saving devices such as faucet aerators, low-flow showerheads, toilet flappers, and automatic shut-off hose nozzles at the District office.

What's On Tap is an in-house publication printed bi-monthly for the customers of our District. Forward your comments to the editor at P.O. Box 1550, Capitola, CA 95010.



New Communication Tools for 2014

WE ARE COMMITTED to effective communication with our customers, partners, and other stakeholders and recognize that people use many forms of communication in their daily lives: newspapers, email, websites and blogs, television, radio, and social media. In order to reach as many customers as possible we have broadened our outreach in several ways:



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other ways to connect with us!



Our NEWSLETTER has been expanded and now provides longer and more comprehensive articles. These will now be delivered quarterly inside a billing statement and will be available on our website.

Our first E-MAIL UPDATE was sent out in March. With more people using smartphones and computers to access information, we're generating a short yet informative email once a month that will include -- but won't be limited to -- updates on our programs and projects, tips on how to save water, and quick links to our website. To sign up to receive our email updates, visit: www.soquelcreekwater.org/contact.

Like us on FACEBOOK. We also just entered the world of social media and have created Facebook and Twitter pages to promote our upcoming meetings and events, provide water-saving tips, share links to our website and other water-related news. Visit us at www.facebook.com/soquelcreekwater and follow us on Twitter twitter.com/SoquelCreekH2O.

Our WEBSITE is undergoing a complete redesign. This spring we will unveil a new website at www.soquelcreekwater.org that will have all the same important news, reports, customer information, bill-paying service, and Board meeting materials – but will be much more user-friendly.

In order to reach as many customers as possible we have broadened our outreach efforts. We hope you find these new tools useful in staying up to date with District activities and programs. Let us know what you think!