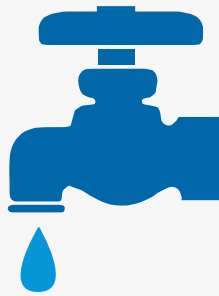


What's On Tap

AT THE SOQUEL CREEK WATER DISTRICT



Staff from Operations & Maintenance participating in the strategic plan update process.

We Have Embarked on Our Strategic Plan Update!

The District created its strategic plan in 2015, where we adopted our Mission, Values, and Goals. Our Mission Statement is as follows “*We are a public agency dedicated to providing a safe, high-quality, reliable, and sustainable water supply to meet our community’s present and future needs in an environmentally sensitive and economically responsible manner.*”

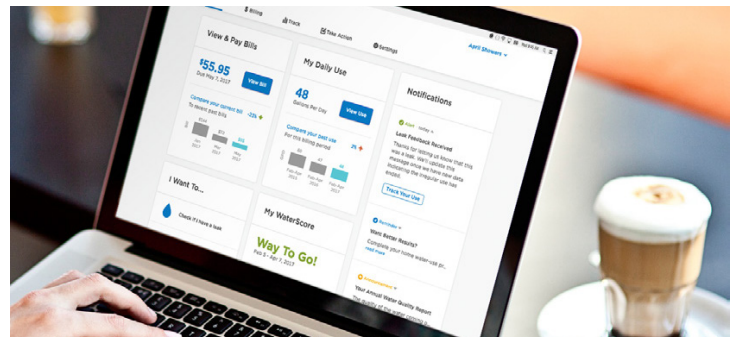
Since 2015, there have been many internal and external changes that this update will recognize. While we do not anticipate significant changes to the

Cont. on page 5

Are you WaterSmart?

WaterSmart — our free online tool — provides a trifecta of benefits for customers. The single sign-on to WaterSmart allows you to pay your bill online, set-up autopay, provides easy access to daily and hourly water use, and generates alerts when you may have a leak or abnormal water use. It takes away the guesswork and uncertainty from managing your water consumption and bills. It also helps you use water more efficiently by providing a clear and convenient way to view your use which can save you money and prevent water waste due to earlier leak notifications.

Using water efficiently requires understanding how much water you are using, where you are using it, and when you are using it. You can set up custom alerts for when usage goes above average for your household or when your bill exceeds a customized threshold. If your email is on file with us, it will automatically send out leak alerts (even if you’re not registered) when your meter detects continuous hourly usage over a 24-hour period. However, as a registered user, you can change your notification preferences and set alerts for unexpected water use while you are away from home for extended periods. These automated leak alerts are helping customers minimize water waste and the resulting high bills.



Example of the customer portal that is phone and tablet friendly.

A hose left on by accident flowing at 4 gallons a minute uses 240 gallons in one hour. An average-sized backyard can quickly soak up this volume of water hour over hour, so you might not see water pooling. In a day, close to 5,800 gallons or 8 billing units will have been lost. WaterSmart has helped customers greatly minimize such instances. There is no longer any such thing as a small leak, and there is no reason to leave water use to chance.

Over half of our customers have already signed up to receive these benefits. Don’t delay and miss out; sign up today! Register at <https://soquelcreekwd.watersmart.com> with your account number as it appears on your water bill. Call us at (831) 475-8500 option 3 or email billing@soquelcreekwater.org if you need assistance.



Pure Water Soquel Update

PUREWater Soquel

Water Transformed™

Pure Water Soquel (PWS) is Soquel Creek Water District's groundwater replenishment and seawater intrusion prevention project. As a reminder, PWS will:

- Replenish the local groundwater basin to prevent further seawater intrusion, and be a sustainable water supply that meets the District's objectives and the State's mandate under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.
- Be a reliable, drought and climate change-resistant supplemental water source, which contributes to the diversification of the District's water supply portfolio and enhances resiliency.
- Provide District customers with a high-quality and safe water supply.

We are very fortunate and grateful for the financial investment and continued support that State and Federal agencies have provided for the Project.

Construction is underway on pipelines, monitoring wells, and treatment facilities. We have built three Seawater Intrusion Prevention (SWIP) Wells (two in Aptos and one in Capitola) to replenish the groundwater basin with the purified water produced from the Water Purification Center. Throughout 2022, the District will be constructing the site improvements at these new SWIP well locations. In addition to the SWIP Wells, we have constructed eight of nine new monitoring wells for the Project.

Pipeline construction has been ongoing since May 2021, and over 17,000 linear feet of pipe have been installed so far.

In December 2021, we broke ground on the new Water Purification Center located at the corner of Chanticleer Avenue and Soquel Avenue and the Recycled Water Facility located at the Santa Cruz Wastewater Treatment Facility. Construction is anticipated to last through 2023 with the Project up and running in early 2024.

Helpful Links:

Pure Water Soquel Overview:

soquelcreekwater.org/PWS

Construction Updates:

soquelcreekwater.org/PWSConstruction

Treatment Groundbreaking



State Water Board Chair E. Joaquin Esquivel speaks at the groundbreaking event held on December 10, 2021.



Group photo for the ceremonial groundbreaking.



Operations and Maintenance Supervisor Nick E. standing in front of our Pure Water Soquel butterfly mural located at the Chanticleer office.

Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Update

Ensuring our water infrastructure is maintained and replaced is a part of our commitment to keeping critical infrastructure safe and reliable. Our Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) maintain our water system so that homes, businesses, and firefighters can continue to have the water they need for their everyday and emergency needs. Here are some updates on recently completed CIP and future CIPs. For the most up-to-date information follow our webpage at soquelcreekwater.org/CIP.

RECENTLY COMPLETED CIP

Soquel Dr. Main Replacement Project

7,000 feet of the failing cast iron pipe was replaced along the Soquel Drive corridor from Cabrillo College to State Park Drive including streets connecting to this corridor. In addition, 1,500 feet of failing concrete pipe was replaced on Haas Drive. Repaving of the streets will commence in the Spring. The District is working with the County to incorporate final road resurfacing and striping into the County's Measure D and upcoming Buffered Bike Lane projects. This collaboration with the County will allow for more robust road surfacing products to be installed in some locations and create a more efficient use of our capital improvement funds.



Soquel Drive main replacement.

Cliff Dr. and Bayview Dr. Main Replacement Project

2,350 feet of new water mains were replaced along Cliff Drive between 501 Cliff Drive to Hidden Beach Park, and 1,040 feet of new water main along Bayview Dr. between 634 Cliff Drive and 653 Bayview Drive in the Rio Del Mar area. The Santa Cruz County Public Works will schedule a road overlay on Cliff Drive using Measure D funding upon completion of this main replacement. The project will finish ahead of schedule in April.



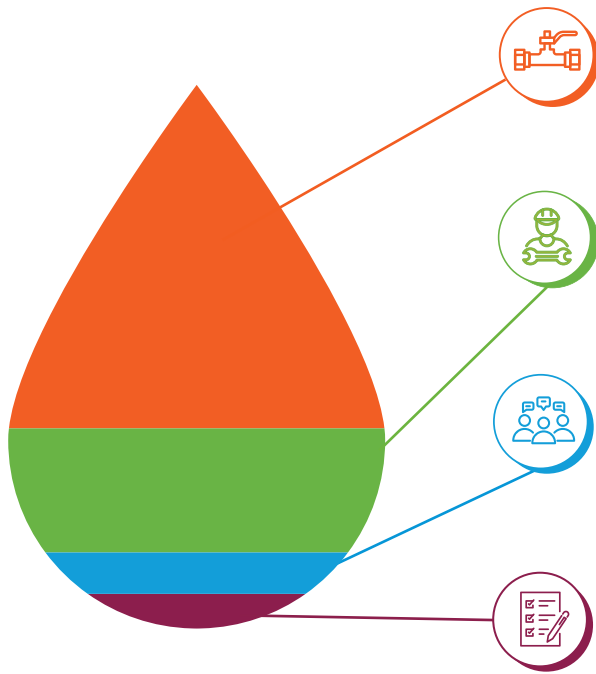
Bayview Drive main replacement.

UPCOMING CIP

- Country Club Replacement Well and 1,2,3-Trichloropropane Removal Water Treatment Plant Project
- Fairway Tank recoat
- Park Avenue bottleneck Phase I main installation
- Hexavalent chromium treatment
- Planning and design work for a new well and treatment facility on Cunnison Lane
- Replace a portion of the water main on Moosehead Drive (upper segment)
- Rio Del Mar Blvd./Hwy 1 crossing planning and design
- Main Replacement planning and design from Mar Vista Drive to Mesa Drive
- As part of County Buffered Bike Lane project on Soquel Drive, utilities will be relocated primarily between Cabrillo and State Park Drive
- Water valves in Rio Del Mar will be raised as part of the County Road Maintenance projects

Did You Know We Are a Not-For-Profit?

Did you know that we are a not-for-profit local government agency and 100% of our revenue is from water sales and related fees which is directly reinvested into the District. Below is how we use the money received from a typical monthly bill of \$98.34 (6 units of water) so we can provide you fresh, clean water at the turn of your tap, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.



63% • INFRASTRUCTURE 63% or \$61.95 of that typical bill goes to infrastructure-related expenses. Infrastructure is a term used to describe essential facilities such as pipes, wells, valves, pumps and tanks.

23% • OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE, REPAIR, WATER QUALITY TESTING, & ENGINEERING 23% or \$22.62 of that typical bill goes to fund operations, maintenance, repair, water quality testing, and engineering functions.

8% • METER READING, BILLING, WATER EFFICIENCY, FINANCE, TAXES, INSURANCE, IT, OUTREACH, EDUCATION, & CUSTOMER SERVICE 8% or \$7.87 of that typical bill goes to fund meter reading, billing, water efficiency, finance, taxes, insurance, IT, outreach, education and customer service functions.

6% • ADMINISTRATION AND LEGAL SERVICES 6% or \$5.90 of that typical bill goes to administrative services functions and legal services.

Strategic Plan Cont.

District's mission or primary organizational goals, this update aims to review and revise our strategic plan to ensure our values and goals remain current and relevant. Continuous improvement is important.

The planning horizon of this update is three years, which will encompass the Pure Water Soquel Project being operational, help inform the District's annual budgets, and the next rate-setting process. This update involves a comprehensive approach, including public meetings, internal and external stakeholder interviews, a staff survey, and department meetings.

The update process began in January 2022, and we anticipate that the Board will adopt the updated strategic plan in May or June 2022. After adopting the updated strategic plan, staff will update the District's guiding principles, Community Water Plan, and staff-level implementation plan, as needed.



Staff from Finance and Business Services participating in the strategic plan update process.



Staff from Engineering participating in the strategic plan update process.

Retiring Employee Spotlights

MICHAEL WILSON • ASSOCIATE ENGINEER



Mike at his desk circa 2015.

Before Mike became an engineer, he was a professional rock and roll musician. He fell in love with working anywhere in the world, which inspired him to find a career that allowed him to travel. Interested in wetland restoration and environmental engineering, he pursued Civil Engineering at 30 years old. Nervous he wouldn't pass because of a terrible high school career, he surprised himself and graduated magna cum laude. Mike defines success as how many times you get back up on your feet after being knocked down. He embodied that mantra in his engineering pursuits, all while starting a family in Soquel! When Mike was hired as an Engineer for the District, he drafted an "Intra-tie" Plan for the District's service areas to serve as a guide to strengthen the inefficiencies in our distribution system. Thanks to his research and planning, Mike and his peers implemented a Capital Improvement Project to increase the conveyance capacity across our District. Mike feels fortunate that he made the District his final career stop, working within and for his community. Looking back on his 16 years, he says that he is "delighted with how things turned out" in his career and home life. With retirement on the horizon, Mike hopes to connect with old friends, especially those in music. Life can't be taken for granted and it's the people that are often

the most important. Soon you can catch Mike having lunch with his friends or performing around town. The travel bug is coming back with full vengeance, too. Mike and his wife plan to visit Scotland and South America. "Mike has always been a key contributor to design discussions and has a perspective that we all respect and value. Besides being a key player in some of our largest infrastructure projects, he has been bringing smiles and laughs to our department for years. I'm going to miss his expertise and guidance but also the humor and camaraderie he brings to our department!" - *Brice Dahlmeier Associate Engineer*



Christine circa 2008.

CHRISTINE MEAD • OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE MANAGER

Christine is known for having a good, solid perspective on life which has given her the ability to courageously lead our Operations and Maintenance department for the past 9 years. Christine found her way to water through her previous career as a professional geologist. With a deep knowledge of the earth, its materials, and processes, Christine applied for our open Water Quality Program Coordinator position in 2007. She got the job and learned the ins and outs of production and distribution systems. Since day one, Christine has had an unwavering dedication to the District and following established regulations and guidelines. Six years later in 2013, she stepped into her current role as the Operations and Maintenance Manager. She has been a strategic part of delivering water to our community and has earned the respect and admiration of many. Her team regards her as a supportive, appreciative,

and fair manager. It is echoed that they will miss her fun personality and great sense of humor. "I will always remember how supportive she was and how welcome she made me feel when I first started at Soquel Creek. I will miss getting her input on my ideas, her historical district knowledge, asking her where to find documents on the drive, and generally, I will miss working with her every day. She really is a great boss." - *Nick Emmert, Operations and Maintenance Supervisor*



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More information is available at:
www.soquelcreekwater.org

Other ways to connect with us!

