

Infrastructure Update

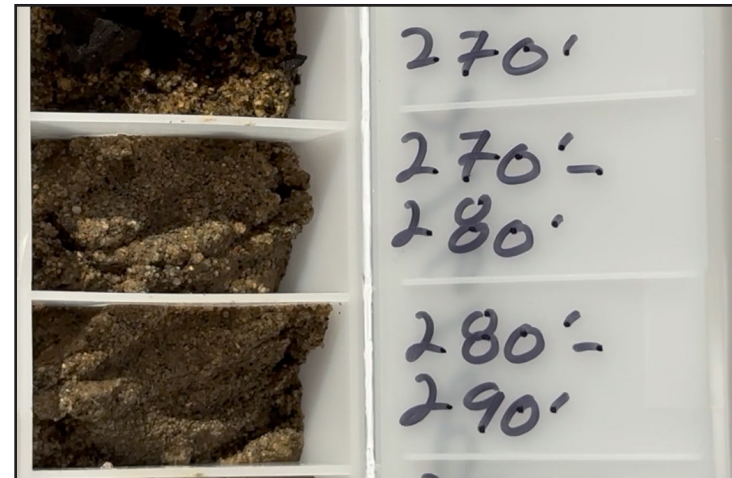
One of the District's primary goals is to maintain a robust and resilient distribution system to ensure reliable water service can be provided to our customers year-round. One of our most recent infrastructure projects is the replacement of the Country Club Well in Aptos that was originally built in the 1950s.

This project recently reached a major milestone! In mid-February our contractor worked around the clock, rain or shine, for two weeks to drill down approximately 550 feet deep and also install the well casing.

The next phases of work involve:

- Development of the new well. Development is an industry term which refers to cleaning out of fine sediments which accumulate in the well during the drilling process.
- Testing the new well's production capacity and taking water quality samples. This is performed by using a temporary pump to begin a series of tests to gauge the well's performance.

We anticipate the entire project to be completed before Summer 2023. Thank you to our neighbors in this area for their patience during construction.



Soil samples are taken every 10 feet when a new well is drilled.



The new Country Club Well being drilled on Baltusrol Drive.

Question Corner



Why is my water hard?

Your water is groundwater, and groundwater is naturally high in mineral content, making it "hard."

Naturally occurring calcium and magnesium dissolved in water are the two most common minerals that make water "hard."

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

Retiring Employee Spotlight

STELLA DOMINGUEZ • CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE II



Stella Dominguez

Stella, one of our Customer Service Representatives, has been with the District for 34 years, and at the end of April, she retired! Her energy is groundbreaking – no, literally! The 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake happened within her first month of working for the District! Stella's kindness has a way of making everyone feel heard and valued, which has been one of her greatest gifts to customers and coworkers here the District.

While there hasn't been another big earthquake during Stella's tenure, much has changed since 1989. Most notable is the increasing use of technology. Today everything is processed electronically, but Stella remembers when this wasn't always the case, and she had to write and post everything on paper manually.

Leslie Strohm, the District's Financial/Business Services Manager, congratulates Stella on her retirement, "Not only is Stella wonderful to have on our team, but I have enjoyed her very much as a friend. She is a party-giver extraordinaire, a snappy dresser, fun to be with on travels (karaoke master), and willing to share her heart and gifts with everyone around her. Her zest for life is contagious, and she always gets a laugh out of her coworkers when things get stressful. I'll miss having her expertise and joie de vivre our team, but I hope I get to continue to count her as a friend."

Stella's most memorable moments with District coworkers included playing softball and attending fundraisers and holiday dinners. Most of all, she will miss laughing, talking, and bonding with her colleagues and friends! Stella's next steps are to enjoy life fully and do what she wants when she wants! Her words of wisdom and parting words to staff and customers: "Be daring and take a chance. You won't regret it!"

“Stella shines bright like a diamond!! I’ve worked with Stella since the very beginning of my career at the District in 1998 and she’s been a constant for me for the last 25 years. She’s been a friend, a coworker, and a confidant to me and I am going to miss her beyond words! In some ways, we grew up together at the District!”

Jayne Wallner -
Customer Service Representative

WaterSmart continued...

identify and resolve common water waste issues such as running toilets, hoses left on, over-irrigation, and broken underground pipes.

By better understanding your water use and taking advantage of custom water use alerts, you can proactively prevent water waste and save money on your water bill!

Join the majority of District customers already taking advantage of this helpful tool and register today at 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.



5180 Soquel Dr., Soquel, CA 95073
P.O. Box 1550, Capitola, CA 95010

Phone: 831-475-8500
Fax: 831-475-4291
outreach@soquelcreekwater.org

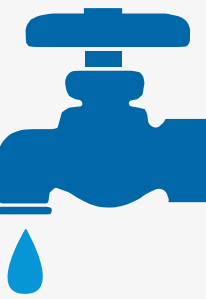
More information is available at:
www.soquelcreekwater.org

Other ways to connect with us!



“We really appreciate your alert. We knew it was going to be a true leak because we were not home at all on the day the continuous usage started. Thank you a bunch!”

What's On Tap



AT THE SOQUEL CREEK WATER DISTRICT

O&M to the Rescue! We Made National News!

Our town made national news when the Bates Creek culvert on North Main Street became blocked by debris during the middle of the night on March 10. The road and our 8-inch water main were washed out. District staff worked tirelessly to re-establish temporary water service as customers on North Main Street, Cherryvale Avenue, and Glen Haven Road were landlocked without water or a way out. Our Operations and Maintenance (O&M) team jumped into action, and staff ran an above-ground 2-inch hose spanning the entire width of Bates Creek from one fire hydrant on Pringle Lane to connect with another fire hydrant on Cherryvale Avenue.



The Bates Creek Culvert in Soquel, off of Main Street, washed out during the March 10, 2023 storm and took our 8-inch main with it.

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Two out of Three District Customers are Taking Advantage of WaterSmart!

Three years after making our WaterSmart customer portal available to customers, we're happy to report that two out of three District customers are registered and taking advantage of this powerful tool. WaterSmart is a one-stop shop to track your water use, pay your bill, set alerts for possible leaks or unusual usage, communicate directly with District staff, and learn how to save water.

You can also use the portal to let us know the best way (i.e. email, text or voice) to contact you in case of a possible leak. WaterSmart has helped customers

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One Rain-Soaked Season Does Not End a Drought

Despite the downpours, flooding, and battering rains we've experienced since December, California officials have declared it's too soon to assume our statewide multi-year drought is over. It seems counterintuitive after the drenching storms that came through our coastal region this winter. But droughts are a complex phenomenon. Just as severe droughts can take consecutive dry years to develop, they often take multiple wet years to end! This is especially true in our area, which relies entirely on groundwater.

Groundwater Basins Take Years to Recover

Our District customers have done an outstanding job of conserving water for many years, but these

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Drought continued...

efforts have not been enough to offset the decreased recharge rate and overdraft of the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Basin. Groundwater basins rely on rainwater that percolates slowly through layers of soil before it reaches the water table, unlike reservoirs that can refill quickly from surface water runoff following significant storms. It's estimated that only 5-7% of rainfall naturally recharges our local aquifers. Aquifers take time to recharge — sometimes, they require years to recover from drought and overdrafting.

Local Geology is Tricky for Stormwater Capture

With persistent droughts and then torrential atmospheric rivers, capturing stormwater can be more challenging than one might think. The District investigated stormwater capture projects, but the technical studies found that the local geology, topography, and lack of available land for spreading basins and percolation ponds make these projects difficult to implement. In addition, stormwater is not always reliable, and heavy, intense storms don't get a chance to fully percolate into our deep aquifers. Due to these limitations, the District has moved away from pursuing large stormwater capture projects. However, we encourage households to capture stormwater through residential rain gardens, redirecting downspouts into landscaping and rainwater harvesting. If you're interested, visit our website for rebates and to learn more at www.soquelcreekwater.org/Rebates.

And Then There's Climate Change

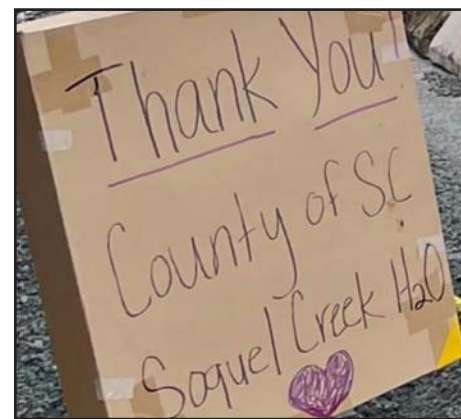
Droughts and floods are an unfortunate but inevitable part of the climate in our region, and the frequency of those extreme weather events is increasing. The District is committed to meeting the challenges of climate change with resilient solutions such as promoting water efficiency and water recycling with Pure Water Soquel.

O&M continued...

This April, our District O&M and Engineering teams strategized a plan to provide a more reliable interim water service to this impacted neighborhood. A new and larger temporary 5-inch water line has been installed at Bates Creek to provide these customers adequate fire flow protection during the summer months until the County of Santa Cruz finalizes their culvert repair.



Mark, from our O&M department, with the hose connection to one of the hydrants, that is temporarily providing water to residents.



"Thank you so much for working so hard to restore our water!"

-Anonymous Cherryvale Ave Customer

Hydrology 101

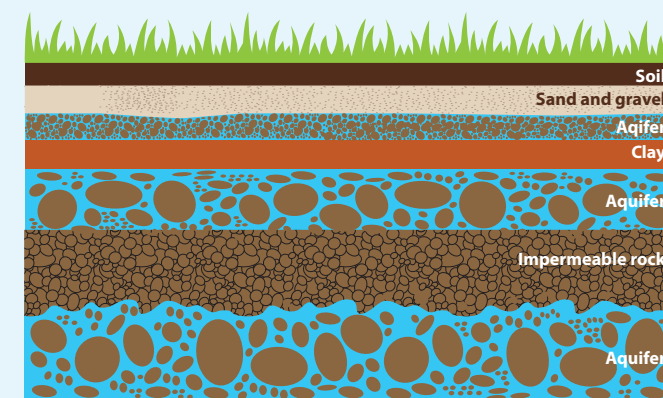
What is an aquifer?

An aquifer is any geological formation containing groundwater. Groundwater is rain that has infiltrated the soil beyond the surface and collected in the void spaces amongst the silt, sand, and gravel that compose the aquifer underground.

Soquel Creek Water District gets our water from two different aquifer formations:

- The Purisima Formation is a 2,000-foot-thick body of sandstone alternating with layers of siltstone and claystone. Think of it as a layer cake. It spans from 41st Ave. to Aptos, and consists of several layers of aquifers. These aquifers slope down from the surface deep into the ground and also out toward the ocean. Our wells in Capitola, Soquel, and parts of Aptos pump groundwater from this aquifer.
- The Aromas Red Sands Formation is comprised of layers of sands alternating with formations of silt and clay. This aquifer overlies the Purisima Formation within portions of the District's service area. It spans from Aptos Creek and covers a large portion of the Pajaro Valley Basin. This aquifer that gets its name from the characteristic red-brown sands that you can see from drilling into this formation. Our wells in Aptos, Seascapes, and La Selva Beach pull groundwater from this aquifer.

These formations were made by different geological processes and they each produce water with their own unique water quality.



Construction Update

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

- Replenish the local groundwater basin to prevent further seawater intrusion, and be a sustainable water supply that meets the community's goals and values, 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.

Construction is underway on pipelines and treatment facilities. We have built three recharge wells (two in Aptos and one in Capitola) to replenish the groundwater basin with the purified water produced from the Water Purification Center. Throughout 2023, the District will be constructing the site improvements at these recharge well locations.

Pipeline construction has been ongoing since May 2021, and is 90% complete as of March. The 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) broke ground in December 2021 and construction is anticipated to last through early 2024. We anticipate the Project up and running in Fall 2024.

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

Helpful Links:

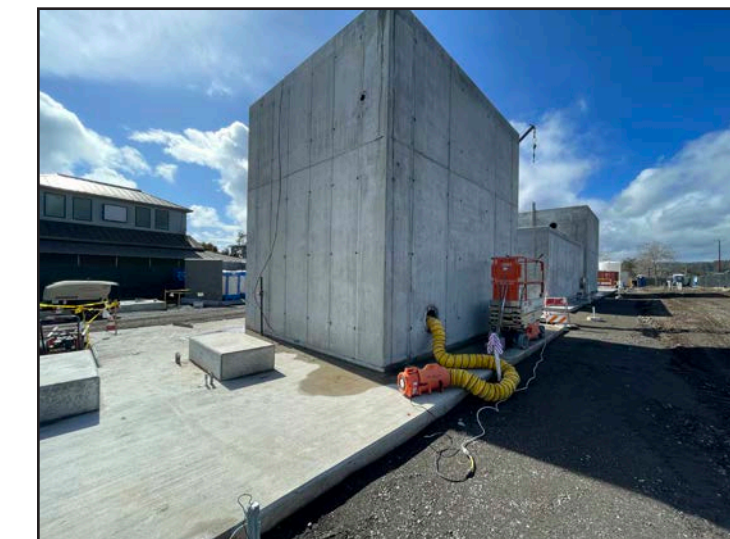
Pure Water Soquel Overview: purewatersoquel.com

Construction Updates: soquelcreekwater.org/PWSConstruction

Treatment Construction



The recycled water purification building at Chanticleer will house the microfiltration and reverse osmosis membranes.



Concrete tanks at Chanticleer Purification Center.



The recycled water treatment facility being constructed at the Santa Cruz Wastewater Treatment Facility.

Recharge Well Construction

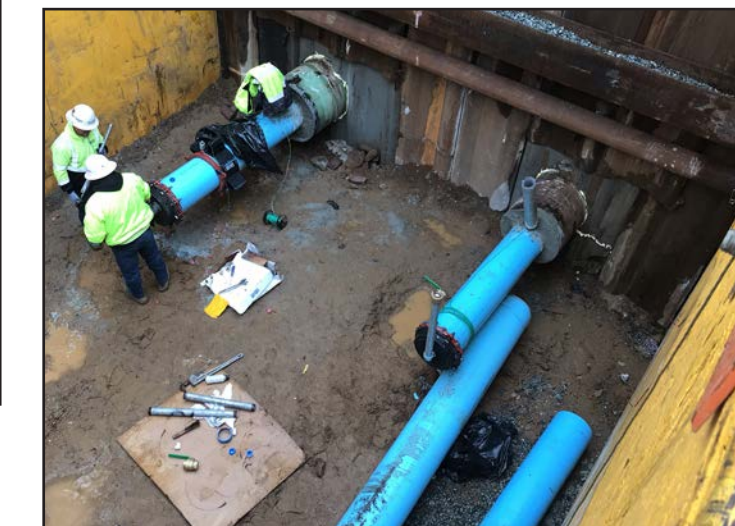


The backwash tank being constructed at the Twin Lakes Church recharge well. Periodic backwashing and rinsing of our well screens will help to maintain performance and optimize replenishing our basin with purified water.

Pipeline Construction



Pipeline advancing over the Laurel Street Bridge in Santa Cruz that will bring the water to the Purification Center.



Pipes being installed underneath Highway 1 at the end of Rosedale Avenue in Soquel. They will meet with the pipes on Kennedy Drive which will bring purified water to the Monterey Recharge Well.

Save the Date for the Water Harvest Festival!



Saturday, October 14, 2023

Chanticleer County Park (Leo's Haven playground)

The Water Harvest Festival is a free and fun water education event for the whole family. Kids and families will learn about water resources, water-wise gardening, water supply, groundwater geology, infrastructure, plumbing, water conservation, watershed protection, pollution prevention, and all things watery. As part of the festivities, there will be free face painting, live music, and a free raffle with amazing prizes.