

What's On Tap



AT THE SOQUEL CREEK WATER DISTRICT

New Videos to Help You Understand Your Meter

Introducing a new video series we are developing, hosted by the one and only Chris F., the District's Customer Service Field Supervisor! With Chris's expert guidance, learn how to read your water meter and spot leaks in real-time. Gain the knowledge to control your water usage and become a water steward! Stay tuned for more information on premiere dates!



Meeting Water Quality Standards Year After Year

The annual Consumer Confidence/Water Quality Report reflects the hard work and investment by the District to provide high-quality drinking water to its customers. The District's water meets all U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and California State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water drinking water health standards.

Empowering the Next Generation of Water Professionals

As the local water purveyor in Santa Cruz's mid-county region, the District is privileged to witness and contribute to an initiative that's closely aligned with our agency's primary goals of development of workforce excellence and community engagement. We are proud to be an educational partner with the local non-profit Your Future is Our Business (YFIOB) to illuminate the path for our youth toward meaningful careers in water.

YFIOB's mission resonates deeply with us at the District. They are dedicated to bridging the gap between students and their potential careers by facilitating direct engagement with professionals across various industries. For us, it's an opportunity to open our doors and share the intricacies of running a water District—operations, customer service, outreach, water efficiency, treatment, and distribution—with the next generation.

We take pride in recounting the ways we've integrated students into our water world. In 2022 the District hosted its first YFIOB high school intern.

For the last two years, our Engineering Manager has participated in the High School Mentor Program where once a month, from September to May, he meets with 10th grade students and covers topics like goal setting, academic progress, team building, skill building, and future planning. The Mentor Program is a powerful way to introduce students to successful, professional role models who can help encourage them and guide them in their future career path.

We also engage with our youth community by taking part in College and Career Day events hosted by YFIOB at local high schools, such as Soquel High

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District Updates

Community Building: Your Future Is Our Business (YFIOB) awarded the District the 2024 Community Partner Award.



District staff accepting the Community Partner award at the YFIOB luncheon in March.

Finance: Staff is working hard on the 2024–25 fiscal year budget that will be brought to the Board in June for approval.

Optimization Study: This study examines Pure Water Soquel (PWS), the City of Santa Cruz’s (City) planned Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) projects, and water transfers and exchanges to see how they can work together and be optimized to ensure Basin sustainability and help meet regional water supply needs. It is in partnership with the District, the City, and the Regional Water Management Foundation.

New Infrastructure: A new utility pole and radio repeater were installed on District property in Seacliff to enhance meter data transmission for our smart-metering system. A new well will be drilled at Cunnison Lane as part of our long-term Well Master Plan to move pumping inland away from the coast. A new treatment plant is also being designed for the Cunnison and Tannery Wells.

Ongoing Emergency Repair and Maintenance: We are invested in maintaining infrastructure through leak repairs, preventative maintenance tasks, treatment plant operations, water quality program coordination, underground service alert (USA) locate response, and production data management. Operations & Maintenance staff work around the clock every day of the year, ensuring the continuous operation of the water system.

Water Main Relocation and Buffered Bike Lane Project (Measure D): You might have noticed all the work being done by the County for the new Soquel Drive Buffered Bike Lane Project, which is creating ADA-accessible sidewalks and a safer bike lane along Soquel Drive from Harbor High School to State Park Drive. Water mains are currently being moved for this County project.

WaterSmart: This easy to use tool automatically notifies customers of leaks and offers tools and resources to help you find leaks early and save money as well as use water efficiently. We also created how-to handouts on creating a WaterSmart icon on your phone or tablet. Check them out here: www.soquelcreekwater.org/291/WaterSmart-Customer-Portal



District Operations and Maintenance team making an emergency repair.

Pure Water Soquel Update



Construction for the District's Pure Water Soquel Project broke ground in 2021 and is anticipated to be complete in late 2024/early 2025.

The Project will:

- Replenish the local groundwater basin that is designated Critically Overdrafted by the State of California
- Prevent further seawater intrusion and meet the State's mandate of basin sustainability by 2040
- Be a reliable, drought and climate-change resistant supplemental water source
- Diversify District's water supply portfolio and enhance resiliency
- Provide District customers with a high-quality and safe water supply

Conveyance: Final paving and microsurfacing work is in process and should be done in early summer.

Seawater Intrusion Prevention Wells: 85% complete and should be done in late summer.

Treatment: Electrical and mechanical work continues at the Santa Cruz Wastewater Treatment Facility and the Chanticleer Water Purification Center.

Thank you to everyone for their patience during construction!

► [Learn more at purewatersoquel.com](http://purewatersoquel.com)

Construction Photos



Electrical work at the Chanticleer Water Purification Center.



Pipe work at the Santa Cruz Wastewater Treatment Facility.

Water Quality *cont. from page 1*

This report includes details about where District water comes from, what it contains, and how it is treated and tested to ensure customers receive high-quality drinking water. The District is committed to providing customers with accurate information about the quality of their drinking water.

Download it today at soquelcreekwater.org/waterqualityreport.

If you wish to have a paper copy of the above report mailed, please email the District office at gregw@soquelcreekwater.org or call 831-475-8501, ext. 138.



Hydrology 101 - Water Cycle

Pour yourself a glass of water and take a sip. Did you know that the water you've just swallowed is the same water that woolly mammoths, dinosaurs, and the first humans drank? That's because Earth has been recycling water for over four billion years!

The world's water constantly moves between lakes, rivers, oceans, the atmosphere, and land in a continuous cycle called the water cycle. As it goes through this ongoing system, water can exist as a liquid, a gas (vapor), or a solid (ice). Let's explore the cycle a little deeper.

Evaporation

Energy from the sun heats the surface of the Earth, raising the temperature of water in our rivers, lakes, and oceans. When this happens, some water evaporates into the air, turning into a gas called vapor. Plants and trees also lose water to the atmosphere through their leaves in a process known as transpiration.

Condensation

As water vapor rises into the sky, it cools and turns back into a liquid, forming clouds. This process is called condensation. Currents high in the air move these clouds around the globe.

Precipitation

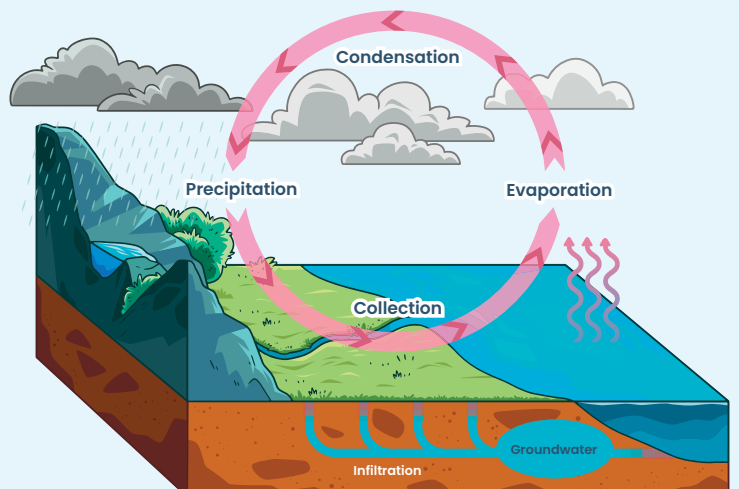
When too much water has condensed, the water droplets in the clouds become too big and heavy for the air to hold them. They return to Earth as rain, snow, hail, or sleet.

Collection

The fallen precipitation is then collected in bodies of water such as rivers, lakes, and oceans, from where it will eventually evaporate back into the air, beginning the cycle all over again. How it is collected depends on where it lands:

- Some will fall directly into lakes, rivers, or the sea, from where they evaporate and begin the cycle anew.
- If the water falls on vegetation, it may evaporate from leaves back into the air or trickle down to the ground, where plant roots may absorb it.
- In cold climates, precipitation may accumulate as snow, ice, or glaciers. When temperatures rise, the ice melts into liquid water, which soaks into the ground or flows into rivers or the ocean.
- Water that reaches the land directly may flow across the ground and collect in oceans, rivers, or lakes as surface runoff. Some precipitation will instead infiltrate the soil, replenish groundwater, and keep moving through the ground until eventually reaching a river or the ocean.

Next time you take a drink of water you can think of all the places those drops might have traveled across the globe.



Join Us at Aptos Party in the Park!

Visit our booth at the Aptos Chamber *Party in the Park* on July 4. Located at Aptos Village Park, it is a fun family day with live music and food. We hope to see you there!



Earth Day

The District proudly participated in the 2024 Earth Day Festival in downtown Santa Cruz, where we connected with our valued customers and the wider community in a celebration of environmental awareness and responsibility. At our booth, we engaged in meaningful conversations with attendees about regional water issues and solutions. We provided practical tools and resources, such as leak-detection tablets and water-saving guides, to empower individuals to take proactive steps toward water efficiency. As a district deeply committed to sustainability and stewardship, we were honored to stand alongside other organizations and businesses at this inspiring event. Together, we demonstrated our collective dedication to safeguarding our planet for future generations.



Mackenzie M., Communications Specialist and Becca R. Public Outreach Coordinator, talking to attendees.

Empowering *cont. from page 1*

School, Aptos High School, Watsonville High School, and Pajaro Valley High School.

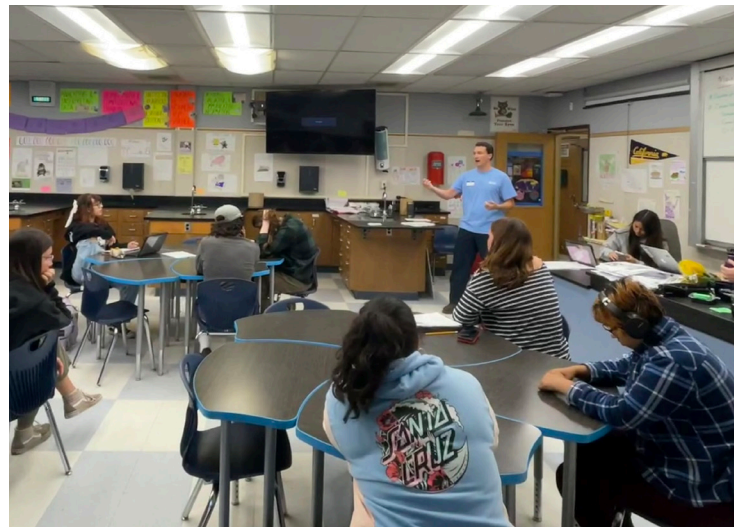
In addition, we have collaborated with YFIOB as a community partner in conducting Career Readiness Mock Interviews, to enhance students' job interview skills, offering them practical feedback from experts in the field.

Other examples from our collaboration with YFIOB:

- Welcoming students to job shadow, where a student follows around a District employee for the day
- Presenting at school assemblies and teaching students pre-k to fifth grade about recycled water

Our partnership with YFIOB is an important component of our community engagement efforts. It's a reflection of our dual commitment to water resource management and educational enrichment. By guiding students through the complexities of our work, we're planting the seeds for a future where water is valued and safeguarded by knowledgeable, passionate professionals.

This collaboration isn't just an investment in students' futures; it's an investment in our community's well-being and the sustainability of our environment. The mentorships and hands-on experiences we offer provide a real-world context that textbooks simply can't match. It's about connecting theory with practice, and ideals with action.



Sam S., Operations & Maintenance Supervisor, speaking at an Aptos High School career panel.



Emma W., Board Clerk, with our first YFIOB intern, Cameron.

Employee Spotlights

KAYA A.

Customer Service Technician II

I LIKE turtles.

I KNOW lots of cats.

I COULDN'T DO WITHOUT my kitty, Indiana Jones.

IN MY FREE TIME I like playing with my cat.

MY SUPERPOWER IS charming kitties.



CAMERON K.M.

Associate Manager — Water Resources

I LIKE kindness and inclusion... and science and process engineering!

I KNOW my way around a kitchen.

I COULDN'T DO WITHOUT my family and community.

IN MY FREE TIME I surf, run, hike, backpack, garden, & read.

MY SUPERPOWER IS fermentation.



Board Selects New General Manager

A leadership transition is set to usher in a new era of innovation and commitment to sustainable water management here at the District. The District has been at the forefront of addressing critical water supply challenges, notably through initiatives like the Pure Water Soquel project, under the dedicated leadership of Ron Duncan. After 20 remarkable years of service, including nearly nine years as General Manager, Duncan announced his retirement, effective September 30, 2024. His tenure has been characterized by groundbreaking conservation programs and significant advancements in the District's approach to sustainable water supply solutions.

Stepping into this pivotal role is Melanie Mow Schumacher, who was unanimously appointed by the District Board of Directors as the next General Manager, with her new responsibilities beginning on October 1, 2024. Schumacher, who currently serves as the Special Projects-Communications Manager/ Assistant General Manager, brings a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to the district's mission. Her leadership in bringing the Pure Water Soquel project to fruition showcases her capability to steer the district towards a future marked by service, sustainability, and stewardship.



Duncan leaves behind a legacy of excellence and dedication. His and Schumacher's efforts have not only led to the development of crucial projects like Pure Water Soquel but have also garnered nearly \$100 million in Federal and State grant funding for the district. Duncan's vision and leadership have significantly contributed to the District's reputation as a leader in water conservation and sustainability.

As the District embraces this transition, it remains dedicated to its goal of delivering a safe and reliable water supply in an environmentally sensitive and economically responsible manner. Under Schumacher's leadership, the District is poised to continue its journey towards excellence in water resource management, ensuring a sustainable water future for our community.



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More information is available at:
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Other ways to connect with us!

