

What's On Tap



AT THE SOQUEL CREEK WATER DISTRICT

Stage 3 Water Shortage Continues in 2016

SOQUEL CREEK WATER DISTRICT'S Stage 3 Emergency Water Shortage will continue through 2016. The decision was made official at the District's April 19 public board meeting and is based on a plan taking into account five years of rainfall and associated groundwater recharge. This winter's rainfall is not enough to solve our long-term groundwater shortage.

Temporary Stage 3 Measures for 2016:

- **Efficient Water Use Guideline:** Efficient water use is defined as an annual average of 50 gallons per person, per day. This is a general guideline only as each household is unique. Customers can use their redesigned monthly water bills to track how they're doing.
- **Car Washing:** Use of a recycled water car wash is preferred. Vehicles may also be washed at home with any of these three methods: waterless spray, hose with an automatic shut-off nozzle, or pressure washer as long as water does not run off of the property.
- **Save Water Signage Requirement:** Businesses must display signage encouraging conservation and reporting of water waste.
- **Exterior Washing of Structures:** No exterior washing of structures unless in preparation to paint or stain and a pressure washer is used.
- **Year-Round Water Waste Ordinance Remains in Effect.** The Rules of Water Waste can be found on the District website.

Check out our website for more information on how to report water waste and conservation programs that can save you water and money. Thank you for your continued efforts to use water efficiently!

Our conservation goal remains the same as last year: **To collectively use 25% less water than in 2013.** Thanks to our community's successful water-efficiency efforts, this goal was achieved last year.

Maintaining the current level of conservation will help us continue to achieve this goal and protect our groundwater while we develop new water sources.



www.soquelcreekwater.org

Advanced Water Purification Update

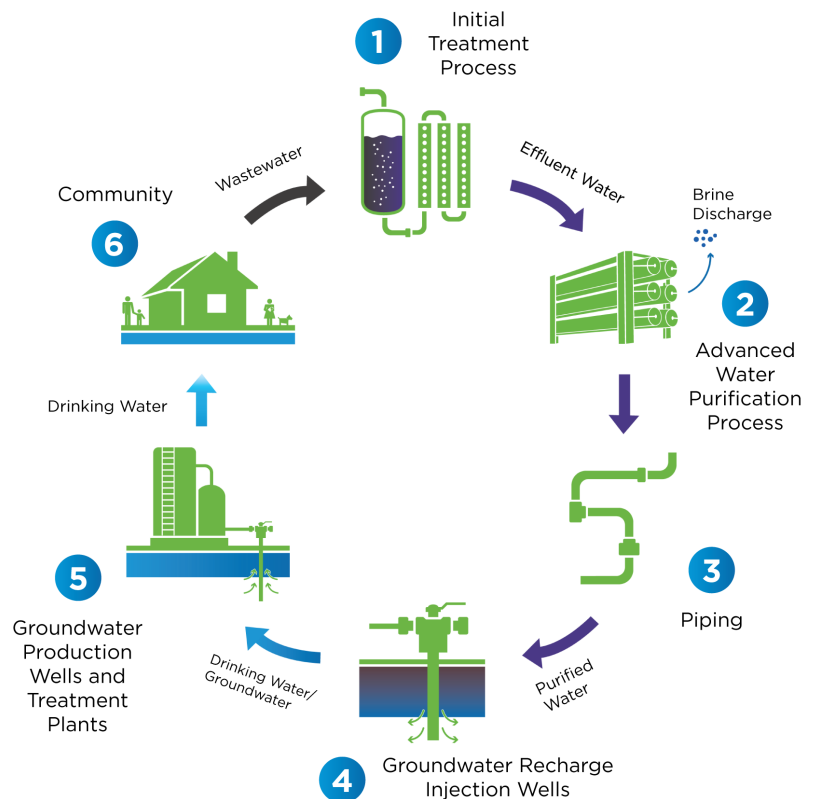
District embarks on its environmental review and development of an EIR

TO PROTECT our endangered groundwater resources, ensure water reliability and resiliency to our customers, and prepare for climate change and other future challenges we may face, the District adopted an action-oriented Community Water Plan (CWP) in 2015. This plan was based on community input and includes: water conservation; being proactive with our groundwater management program; and seeking supplemental water supplies such as advanced water purification for groundwater replenishment, desalination, and river water transfers to meet our water needs.

The District has identified advanced water purification (AWP) for groundwater replenishment as the 'preferred option' and completed a feasibility study earlier this year.

The proposed project would involve taking municipal wastewater from the Santa Cruz County Sanitation District or the City of Santa Cruz, purifying it to produce high-quality water, and then injecting it into the ground to recharge the aquifer and provide a barrier to seawater intrusion.

There are several communities in California that are currently operating this type of project. Orange County Water District has been purifying



Advanced water purification will produce high-quality water that meets or exceeds state and federal standards. The purified water can then be injected into the ground to recharge the aquifer and provide a barrier to seawater intrusion.

recycled water to drinking water standards for groundwater injection for over 40 years. Areas such as San Diego, Monterey, San Francisco, Oxnard, and the Silicon Valley are also considering purification.

This June, the District embarks on its environmental review and development of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). This public process will be conducted in 2016-2017. The District is also actively pursuing opportunities for state and federal funding.

For more information on our Community Water Plan, visit:

<http://www.soquelcreekwater.org/our-water/planning-our-water-future>

Our Board of Directors meetings are open to everyone and comments from the public are heard at each meeting. To view our upcoming meetings schedule and board packets visit www.soquelcreekwater.org/who-we-are/board-meetings

Taking Action to Save Money and Water

JOHN “JAY” HUGHES of Aptos was frustrated that his water bills were consistently reaching \$500 per month, even though he lived alone. At the same time he was becoming more aware of where his water comes from and the environmental issues surrounding it. So, he took action.

His first step was to meet with District Conservation Specialist Roy Sikes for a free water-wise housecall to better understand where his water was being used. Roy determined that irrigation was driving his high water use and also discovered two leaks in the irrigation lines. Mr. Hughes had the leaks fixed and installed a weather-based irrigation timer (for which there is currently a \$75-\$125 rebate). Roy helped set the run times for each irrigation zone, and even turned off a zone where irrigation was not necessary. Hughes still calls on Roy occasionally, often in the spring and summer, when he needs help re-adjusting his irrigation times to water his landscaping efficiently. He also chooses more water-efficient landscape plants.

“There’s no doubt about it, irrigation was the biggest culprit,” Mr. Hughes said. He also bought a more efficient clothes-washing machine (\$100 rebate available) and is looking into the possibility of more efficient toilets and lawn replacement.

Some of his habits have changed, too. “I prefer handwashing dishes but I would leave the water running while rinsing, so I use the dishwasher now,” Mr. Hughes said, noting that shorter showers are part of his routine as well.

As a result, he has successfully cut his water use by nearly half since 2013. There are now two people in his household, but his water bills are down to around \$100 per month.

To schedule a free water-wise house call, contact Roy Sikes, our conservation specialist, at (831) 475-8501 x146



John “Jay” Hughes of Aptos in an irrigated area of his backyard. Mr. Hughes cut his water use by nearly half mainly by reducing over-irrigation.

“There’s no doubt about it, irrigation was the biggest culprit,” Mr. Hughes said.

“It was not a big deal,” he said, of reducing his water use. “Now if I could just figure out my electric bill.”

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

Liquid Spotlight

Customer Service Field Crew

OUR EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT focuses on the District's Customer Service Field Crew: Rob Jaime, Joe Antos, Page Applegate, and Chris Freels.

You may see this hardworking group all around the District, collecting meter-reads, and investigating and responding to a variety of customer concerns related to water service. Some of the most common issues are related to water pressure, leaks, questionable meter readings, water quality or inoperative meters.

This skilled crew is 'at your service' by locating leaks, analyzing meter problems, taking chlorine readings, performing meter repairs, maintenance or replacement, and retrofitting couplings on the customer side of the meter.



Customer Service Field Crew (from Left to Right): Rob Jaime, Joe Antos, Page Applegate, and Chris Freels

We asked Rob Jaime, Customer Service Field Crew Leader, what customers can do to help in the response to water service issues:

Keep meter boxes accessible: “Customers should think about the location of their water meter boxes and access for themselves and SqCWD employees. Sometimes we see homeowners or landscapers get excited about their projects and end up covering the meter boxes with mulch, plants, and fences. Overgrown plants and shrubbery make it difficult to locate a meter box which can cause delays in resolving problems.

Objects and parked cars over the box also make it hard to find and promptly correct problems, especially if a natural disaster or emergency situation occurs and locating and shutting off water service is needed.”

Keep meter boxes free and clear of debris: “Customers should periodically open the lid of the meter box and clear out rocks, weeds, and dirt from around the meter itself.”



5180 Soquel Drive
P.O. Box 1550
Capitola, CA 95010

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

More information is available at:
www.soquelcreekwater.org

Other ways to connect with us!

