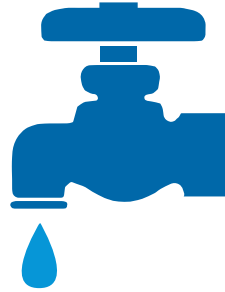


# What's On Tap



AT THE SOQUEL CREEK WATER DISTRICT

## Using Rainfall to Water Your Garden

**With winter just around the corner, now is a great time to consider how you can use rainfall to create beautiful landscapes and help prevent stormwater runoff.**

Impervious surfaces and drainage infrastructure, common in urban settings, discourage rainfall retention and infiltration into the soil by quickly directing storm flows into drains and other water bodies. This creates problems with flooding, poor water quality and erosion, and it reduces groundwater recharge. Homeowners and businesses can help solve these problems and

turn runoff into a resource by slowing it down, spreading it out and sinking it into the ground! The following practices not only provide a benefit to groundwater but may also provide wildlife habitat and improve the appearance of landscapes:

- Collect runoff in rain barrels
- Plant a rain garden
- Create a rock-lined or vegetated swale
- Redirect downspouts to landscape
- Use permeable materials for patios and driveways

The District offers rain barrel rebates of \$25 per barrel or \$25 per 100 gallons of storage capacity. You can also get a rebate of up to \$40 per downspout (maximum of 2 downspouts allowed) for rainwater downspout re-direction. Visit [soquelcreekwater.org](http://soquelcreekwater.org) or call our Conservation Department at (831)475-8500 for more information.

Want to learn more? The Santa Cruz Resource Conservation District has created a guide called "Slow It. Spread It. Sink It!" which can be found at [rcdsantacruz.org/publications](http://rcdsantacruz.org/publications).



*A rain garden is a garden of native shrubs, perennials, and flowers planted in a small depression, which is generally formed on a natural slope. It is designed to temporarily hold and soak in rain water runoff that flows from roofs, driveways, patios or lawns.*

## District Wins National Award

**The District won the Award for Excellence in Outreach and Education from the National WaterReuse Association.**

The WaterReuse Association presented the Annual Awards for Excellence on Monday, September 10 during the 33rd Annual WaterReuse Symposium in Austin, Texas. The National WaterReuse Association annually recognizes member agencies, individuals, and projects that have made significant contributions in raising awareness, increasing knowledge and research, and/or implementing greater acceptance and understanding of water reuse.

## Update



### Pure Water Soquel:

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was released in Summer of 2018. A final EIR is expected in the next 3-6 months.



### River Water Transfers

The water quality study to evaluate blending treated river water into our long-standing groundwater-only infrastructure is complete. We hope to begin water transfers this coming winter as part of our next phase of the 5-year pilot project. There are two years left on this 5-year pilot study.



### Storm Water Capture

Analysis on stormwater recharge is currently on hold pending receipt of access agreements at identified locations at Seascape Golf Course.



### Desalination

We continue to watch the progress of Deep Water Desal, the private company pursuing a proposed desalination project in Moss Landing.

**For more information, visit**  
[soquelcreekwater.org/cwp](http://soquelcreekwater.org/cwp)

# Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency

**The Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency (MGA) is a state mandated regional water agency created to oversee groundwater management in the Mid-County Groundwater Basin.** The basin covers 35,872 acres from just west of Live Oak to La Selva Beach and from the Santa Cruz Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. Legislation passed in 2014 (California's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act) requires our critically over-drafted groundwater basin to develop a plan by January 2020 and achieve Groundwater Sustainability by 2040. The MGA has an 11-member board made up of two elected water agency officials from Central Water District, City of Santa Cruz, County of Santa Cruz, and Soquel Creek Water District and three private well representatives. The MGA, with policy support from staff and its Groundwater Sustainability Plan Advisory Committee, has an important job: to protect our fresh water supplies from saltwater intrusion, provide adequate groundwater to support local habitats, and to ensure a reliable water supply that is sustainable during times of drought. For more information visit [midcountygroundwater.org](http://midcountygroundwater.org).



SOQUEL CREEK WATER DISTRICT  
RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT &  
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY PARKS  
PRESENTS

# WATER HARVEST FESTIVAL

FREE FAMILY FUN DAY

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20TH**  
12 – 3 PM • HEART OF SOQUEL PARK

HANDS-ON DISCOVERY ACTIVITIES ABOUT WATER  
COSTUME CONTEST  
ARTS, CRAFTS & FACE PAINTING

[SoquelCreekWater.org/WaterHarvestFestival](http://SoquelCreekWater.org/WaterHarvestFestival)

SOQUEL CREEK WATER DISTRICT  
Santa Cruz County Parks  
RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

# The Finance of Water Part 2 — Rate Setting

**The District evaluates rates and goes through a rate-setting process approximately every three years.** The last rate study was conducted in 2015 and we are currently conducting a new rate study. This District is a not-for-profit local government agency and because of the legal complexities involved in setting water rates, independent financial consultants are hired to develop rates that are fair and equitable for the customer and provide the revenue necessary for the agency to continue to deliver safe, reliable water. The District hired Raftelis Financial Consultants to develop our next series of water rates, which we expect will be presented to customers for consideration in late 2018.

California voters passed a ballot initiative back in 1996 known as Proposition 218, or The Right to Vote on Taxes Act. It provides the legal framework that the District must comply with when increasing water rates and fees. Proposition 218 requires the District to develop rates based solely on the cost to provide service to our customers. The services the District provides include both water delivery and management of our groundwater resources. The cost to provide these services are outlined in the District's finance plan. The first step in a rate study is to develop the finance plan, which the District is actively working on with the help of Raftelis. Because the finance plan forecasts costs into the future, it relies on estimates from engineers and consultants on which projects will be undertaken and how much they are expected to cost. A draft finance plan was presented to the District's Board of Directors on August 21, 2018.

After the finance plan is completed, the next step is to allocate those costs to different customer classes and develop appropriate rates. The District currently has five different customer classes, all of which use water in slightly different ways — single-family residential customers, multi-family customers, commercial customers, irrigation or outdoor use customers, and fire service customers.

In rate-setting terms, these demands are referred to as “peaking” behaviors, and the entire water system needs to be designed large enough to meet peak demand. We need to have enough wells, tanks,



*The Rates Advisory Committee meeting with Raftelis.*

and pumps to meet the highest potential water demand. We use peaking behavior to determine how to assign the costs to provide water service and manage the groundwater basin to different customer classes. Then we divide those costs by the number of customers or the size of the meters in that class to arrive at rates. This is why water bills can differ from one customer class to another. In addition, every rate consultant approaches rate development in slightly different ways. A new rate consultant may recommend more tiers or fewer

***Independent financial consultants who specialize in rate setting are hired to develop our rates because of the financial and legal complexities involved in these calculations as well as to make sure they are fair and equitable.***

tiers, consolidation or expansion of customer classes, or even an entirely new rate structure.

In 2017, a water rates advisory committee was formed that is comprised of District customers, board members and District staff. In our next article, we will explore the efforts that committee has made to evaluate various rate structures and to determine which structure might be the most beneficial in promoting ideals such as fairness, conservation, and financial stability. Developing a finance plan and allocating costs to different customer classes are only the first steps in the very complex task of setting water rates.

# 2018 Employee District Service Awards

**Our employee spotlight casts a wide glow this month, as we shine the light on a loyal group of Soquel Creek Water District employees celebrating employment milestones.** When asked about the work-culture at SqCWD, employees always comment, *“It’s the people that make working here so great.”*

A special recognition on September 25th honors staff for their years of service and dedication to the District and also acknowledges the long-term dedication of Board Member, Tom Lahue for his 15 years as a District Board Member.

## 2018 HONOREES

### 20 Years

Jayne Wallner, *Customer Service Representative*



Jayne



Roy



John

### 15 Years

Carol Carr, *GIS Analyst*

Roy Sikes, *Water Conservation Specialist*



Cirano



Leslie



Carla

### 10 Years

John Henderson, *Operations Supervisor*

Cirano Olivo, *Operations & Maintenance Worker*

Leslie Strohm, *Finance & Business Services Manager*



Doug



Karen



Tom

### 5 Years

Carla James, *Water Quality Program Coordinator*

Doug Martin, *Construction Inspector*

Karen Reese, *Executive Assistant/Board Clerk*



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Fax: 831-475-4291  
custserv@soquelcreekwater.org

More information is available at:  
[www.soquelcreekwater.org](http://www.soquelcreekwater.org)

Other ways to connect with us!



## GET THE SCOOP ON LOCAL DRINKING WATER ISSUES!



with Soquel Creek Water District  
Board & Staff Members

October 12 • 9–11am  
Pacific Coffee Roasting Company  
7554 Soquel Dr, Aptos

November 9 • 11am–1pm  
Gayle's Bakery  
504 Bay Ave, Capitola

CONNECT • SHARE • LEARN