

The ACWD Aqueduct

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News and Information for the Customers of
the Alameda County Water District

Winter, 2018

A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

Having served the local community for more than 100 years, ACWD's mission remains clear – to provide a reliable supply of high-quality drinking water at a reasonable price to the communities of Fremont, Newark, and Union City. But as we enter our second century of service, ACWD needs to adapt to the changes in the world around us to ensure the continued reliability and high quality of your water service.

Adapting to change is not easy, and the path is not always clear. Although ACWD successfully weathered the recent historic drought, many uncertainties lie ahead: climate change, future environmental and water-quality regulations, urbanization, a changing workforce, and evolving technology.

That is why ACWD's Board of Directors recently completed a series of Strategic Planning workshops to consider the big picture, and set the direction for the District's future. Through this process, the Board delved into the most important current and future issues – the challenges (and opportunities) facing the District. This included taking inventory of where we have been, and where we need to be in the future in the areas of water supply, water quality, cost-effectiveness, staffing resources, financial stability and resiliency, emergency preparedness and response, and community outreach and engagement to ensure that ACWD continues to be successful in meeting its mission and respected by the community that we serve.

The Strategic Planning process consisted of three public workshops, out of which ACWD will produce a set of strategic goals and a road map to chart the District's long-term future and priority actions for the next five years. We look forward to sharing the results of this process with you, as well as communicating progress on our goals.

Stay tuned to our website for future updates, and we encourage members of the public to attend future workshops and Board meetings to join the discussion of District-related activities. To request to be added to our notification list for special Board meetings, please email SpecialBoardMeetingsandEvents@acwd.com.

While adapting to change might not be easy, with a solid plan in place following this effort, we'll be well on our way to tackling the challenges ahead!

Robert Shaver
General Manager

District's Support of California WaterFix Will Strengthen Our Local Water Supply

On October 12, 2017, the ACWD Board of Directors voted in support of the California WaterFix project, which will improve the reliability of the State Water Project and protect one of the District's key water supplies.

The District relies on the aging State Water Project delivery system for 40 percent of its annual water supply. The California WaterFix project will protect and enhance this supply for future generations, while also providing for restoration and protection of the Delta ecosystem. Once complete, the WaterFix project will help to ensure a reliable and resilient water supply for our customers. Based on the information received to date from the

Department of Water Resources, the District's analysis indicates the WaterFix project is an effective way to meet the District's long-term water supply reliability goals.



The State Water Project brings water to the Bay Area from the Sierra Nevada mountains and through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. In the Bay Area alone, more than 2.5 million customers rely on the project for water.

The Board's vote came after periodic staff briefings on the project since February 2016 and the development of a business case. With the Board's action, the District joined water agencies throughout the state in supporting the California WaterFix.

For more information on the California WaterFix, visit www.californiawaterfix.com.

New Water Rates Effective March 1

As of March 1, customers will see an increase of 5 percent to both the fixed service charge and the per-unit water consumption charge on their bills. This is the second phase of a two-year rate increase that was approved at a public hearing on February 9, 2017.

For the average residential customer using 16 units of water every two months (about 200 gallons per day) and with a 5/8 or 3/4 inch meter, the increase will be \$5.72 on each bimonthly bill, or \$2.86 per month.

Increasing rates is not an easy decision to make, and in February 2017 many customers voiced their opposition to rising rates. Following this input and consideration of all available options, the Board of Directors approved a smaller increase than what was originally proposed.

The District continues to cut costs where possible and operate efficiently, yet we have an obligation to ensure the water continues to flow and that quality standards are not compromised. In the face of recent circumstances, including the drought, meeting this obligation has required tough decisions be made to meet our long-term goals.

To view a full schedule of water charges effective March 1 please visit, www.acwd.org/rates.



SPREAD THE WORD!

Help on Tap Provides Bill Payment Assistance

ACWD offers a \$15 bimonthly bill credit to income-qualified customers. To see if you qualify, visit www.acwd.org/HOT or call 510.668.4200.

The People of ACWD

You might recognize her face and think to yourself: "Where have I seen her before?" That is because Sharene Gonzales is ACWD's Senior Public Affairs Specialist. With an extensive background in communications and public relations, she is responsible for the District's outreach, communications, and community relations. With the goal of informing customers of ACWD's programs, she can be found at annual events such as Newark Days, at community meetings, or you may have seen her on the local news. Sharene oversees the District's social media sites, newsletter publications, website communications, and so much more. As a member of the Public Affairs team, she works to elevate awareness, and each day embraces new and exciting challenges without hesitation.



Sharene Gonzales
Senior Public Affairs Specialist

Tell me about your role here at ACWD.

As the Senior Public Affairs Specialist, I help to implement District communications and community engagement goals. I am fortunate to have the opportunity to work on a variety of projects and collaborate with all departments throughout the District. I take pride in my work knowing that water is such an essential part of life

and I get to share information about its importance.

Can you talk about a particular assignment that was challenging for you?

One of the most challenging yet rewarding projects to date was to coordinate a volunteer effort to paint water conservation murals on District facilities along Alameda Creek. There were detailed components to the project and the timeline was very short, which is often the case in public affairs, but the outcome was great! ACWD staff and volunteers worked together and to this day the murals remain an artistic way to remind us to all conserve water.

What is most rewarding about your job?

That is easy – knowing the work I do raises awareness about water, and with that, we can each have a positive impact on our environment. When I am talking with customers and children during events or tours, I get to share in that "ah-ha" moment when folks learn the ripple effects of conservation, that some of their water comes from the Alameda Creek watershed, or that ACWD operates a desalination facility in Newark.

Recently, I worked with over 200 First LEGO League Challenge participants giving them tours of our treatment facility and discussing our treatment processes. I love when I can be creative and take technical and complex topics like treatment and make it fun and relatable. When I see the excitement in kids' eyes and know I sparked interest in their young minds or piqued curiosity that may evoke change – that is the real reward.

In your free time, what do you enjoy doing?

I enjoy being active – hiking, practicing yoga and taking spontaneous day trips. I teach Hot Pilates and enjoy leading my students through their wellness journey. And yet, I am also happy to relax at home, cook, and binge watch true-crime investigation shows.

Since you are involved in the Water Education Program at the District, what is your favorite fact about water?

We drink the same water dinosaurs drank! The water cycle is an amazing thing and through its process allows water to recycle.

2018 Water Main Cleaning Program in Effect to Improve Water Quality

To maintain the high quality of your tap water, ACWD routinely cleans water mains to remove buildup in pipes that may cause discolored water. Each year, from January through June, ACWD crews clean about 25 percent of the water mains in the Tri-City area. Main cleaning is performed between 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. on designated days. Residents in the immediate vicinity of the cleaning may notice a temporary slight drop in water pressure, cloudy water from air in the lines, or sediment in the water.

Episodes of discolored water may continue until the cleaning process is complete. Despite its appearance, discolored water does not indicate that the integrity of the water main has been compromised or that the water is unsafe. A disinfectant residual is maintained at all times to ensure that the water remains safe for household use, such as cooking and drinking. However, the discoloration may stain laundry; it is suggested customers avoid washing white or light-colored laundry if main cleaning is occurring in your neighborhood.

During or soon after the main cleaning, you may notice some discoloration or sediment in your tap water. To clear the discoloration from your household plumbing, run the cold water faucet of your bathtub or other unscreened tap for 2-3 minutes until the water runs clear. If the water does not clear, turn off your faucet and repeat the process after waiting another hour.

To save water, you can irrigate your yard while running the outdoor spigot several minutes or until the water clears. After the tub or outdoor spigot runs clear, flush all of the other cold water household faucets; starting from the front of the house (nearest the street), then the rest of the cold water faucets within the home.

A postcard reminder will be sent out near the program start. To find out if, and when, your neighborhood is scheduled for cleaning this year, please visit www.acwd.org/maincleaning between January and June 2018 or call our Operations Department at 510.668.6500.



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Board meetings are open to the public and held in the ACWD Board Room, 43885 South Grimmer Blvd., Fremont. Please visit www.acwd.org/BoardMeetingUpdates for 2018 Board meeting dates.

Robert Shaver, *General Manager*

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