

2017: A Challenging, Impactful Year for Water in the Golden State

As 2017 draws to a close, we look back upon an important year as it relates to your water. Most importantly, 2017 brought an end to California's crippling multi-year drought. Even with the abundant rain and snowpack that have revitalized statewide water supplies, OMWD customers continue to make conservation a way of life in California. OMWD appreciates your efforts to continue using water efficiently!

As Sacramento has intensified efforts to implement new statewide water use efficiency measures, OMWD continues to advocate for local control of water supply, sensible drought regulations, and the protection of recycled water from future statewide water use restrictions.

A few highlights from 2017 include:

Legislative Strides

At the state level, OMWD sponsored Assembly Bill 869 (Rubio), which would prevent limiting recycled water during drought conditions. Recycled water is highly treated wastewater that is used for non-domestic applications, such as irrigation, and serves as a drought-resilient alternative to imported water. General Manager Kimberly Thorner testified in front of the Assembly Water and Environment Committee in April, and AB 869 was one of only two bills that passed out of committee unanimously that day. Although the bill did not pass in 2017, it will be revisited in 2018, and language it proposed has been incorporated into other water use efficiency bills that will be considered next year. Additionally, OMWD worked with state agencies to ensure California's Model Water Efficiency Landscape Ordinance contains variances for recycled water reflective of its salt content levels. These are big wins in protecting your investments in recycled water, as it allows greater flexibility in the sustainable use of this locally produced water supply.



OMWD customers continue to embrace water-wise landscaping



OMWD met with congressional representatives to pursue grant funding for recycled water projects

OMWD had successes at the federal level as well. OMWD has become a leader in intergovernmental partnerships via the North San Diego Water Reuse Coalition, which consists of nine northern San Diego County water and wastewater agencies collaborating to develop regional recycled water infrastructure to maximize reuse of wastewater supplies. OMWD worked with congressional representatives to include new water supply projects in the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act. This ultimately allowed OMWD and its partners to submit to the US Bureau of Reclamation a successful Title XVI Feasibility Study for the North County WaterReuse Coalition 2020 Project. The project was one of only 38 projects nationwide that were approved in May. The 2020 Project will result in nearly 800 million gallons of new recycled water deliveries and nearly 2.2 billion gallons per year of additional recycled water production at existing treatment plants for use throughout Coalition partners' service areas.



Published by Olivenhain Municipal Water District in the interest of an informed public.

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BOARD MEETING DATES

Please visit our website at www.olivenhain.com for dates.

MISSION STATEMENT

Olivenhain Municipal Water District is a multi-functioning public agency that is dedicated and committed to serving present and future customers in a service-oriented manner by:

Water

Providing safe, reliable, high-quality drinking water while exceeding all regulatory requirements in a cost-effective and environmentally responsive manner.

Recycled Water

Providing recycled water and wastewater treatment in the most cost-effective and environmentally responsive method.

Parks

Safely operating the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve and providing all users with a unique recreational, educational, and environmental experience.

Emergency Management

Complying with policies and procedures that adhere to local, state, and federal guidelines for national security and disaster preparedness.

Sustainable Operations

Pursuing alternative and/or renewable resources with the most sustainable, efficient, and cost-effective approach.

Legislative Strides - continued from page 1

OMWD is ultimately pursuing \$20,000,000 in federal funding for all aspects of the North San Diego County Regional Recycled Water Project through 2035. With the Coalition receiving over \$5,000,000 in grant funding to date, OMWD is hopeful to continue our successful record of obtaining grant funding to reduce the burden costs of critical new infrastructure to our ratepayers.

Financial Picture

Despite reduced water sales due to California's wettest year in history, OMWD operated under a balanced budget. OMWD conducted our annual review of water, recycled water, and sewer rates. We continue to be one of only a few agencies that have kept rate increases in the single digits each year over the past 12 years by continuing to exercise sound management, controlling costs, and operating on a lean, highly productive workforce. Our rates continually fall in the lower half of the spectrum for median and average water users in the county.



Awards and Honors

OMWD continues its commitment to excellence as evidenced by the following awards this year:

- American Public Works Association San Diego and Imperial Counties Chapter Honor Award for the Rancho Santa Fe Farms Road Realignment Project



- APWA San Diego and Imperial Counties Chapter Honor Award for Village Park Recycled Water Project
- American Council of Engineering Companies California Engineering Excellence Award Merit Award for Village Park Recycled Water Project
- Government Finance Officers Association Distinguished Budget Presentation Award and Government Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting
- Special District Leadership Foundation District of Distinction accreditation
- Special District Leadership Foundation District Transparency Certificate of Excellence
- OMWD's General Manager was also reaccredited as a Special Districts Administrator via the Special Districts Leadership Foundation

OMWD's safety record of over 11 years without a lost-time, preventable accident is unprecedented. Keeping employees safe at work benefits ratepayers by minimizing workers compensation costs.



Charting New Waters

OMWD remained hard at work on water supply projects that will ultimately reduce our reliance on expensive water supplies imported from Northern California and the Colorado River.

Groundwater

OMWD completed the grant-funded San Dieguito Valley Brackish Groundwater Desalination Study to determine the groundwater basin's storage, recharge, and extraction capabilities. This project received over \$250,000 in grant funding, significantly reducing ratepayer costs as OMWD determines the best alternative for future water supply reliability.



Recycled Water

OMWD also completed the conversion of three additional recycled water sites served by the Village Park Recycled Water Project; this is anticipated to ultimately reduce potable water demand by 300 acre feet each year (an acre foot provides for the annual water usage of two families of four). With partners Santa Fe Irrigation District, San Dieguito Water District, and San Elijo Joint Powers Authority, OMWD will conduct a feasibility study in 2018 to evaluate a joint project to increase recycled water availability to large, commercial customers in and around Rancho Santa Fe.

Potable Water

In addition to developing new supplies, OMWD also continues to assess our existing infrastructure to minimize the cost associated with repair and replacement. OMWD completed a pipeline condition assessment in May and developed a 2018 action plan to replace the OMWD pipelines identified as medium to high risk (less than 5 percent of total pipelines). OMWD continues to implement the Advanced Metering Infrastructure project, and over 11,000 meters in the southeastern portions of OMWD's service area now have new equipment to transmit reads directly to our office, rather than relying on meter readers driving to each meter every month.

Project Spotlight: OMWD's Valve Replacement Project ***The Cost Savings of Preventative Maintenance***

Valves throughout the water distribution system allow for the isolation of sections of pipeline in the event of leaks, hit hydrants, or other damage. Older valves may not work properly in these emergency situations, potentially requiring costly, unplanned replacements during which customers receive little or no advance notice of a service interruption.

Our valve replacement project is an ongoing effort to replace valves in our water distribution system that no longer function as designed and cannot be counted on to control segments of the system when needed. For example, many of these valves serve fire hydrants and functional valves ensure that we can promptly discontinue the flow of water if a car hits a hydrant.

Currently, overall costs for each valve replacement average \$12,500 per valve, while the same valve replaced during an emergency can cost twice that amount. The planned replacement of these valves dramatically reduces costs and inconvenience to OMWD customers.



Looking to the Future

In 2018, OMWD will continue our leadership role in advocating for customers as the state moves toward permanent water use restrictions and future statewide drought-response measures. We will fight for water agencies to retain local control of water management rather than a one-size fits-all approach to statewide drought response. It is also critical that we protect our ratepayers' investment in drought-resilient, sustainable recycled water, and OMWD will strive to have recycled water exemptions, credits, or variances included in any reduction targets set by the state.

OMWD will continue efforts to expand recycled water use in our service area as well as the regional recycled water network as part of the North San Diego Water Reuse Coalition, seeking grant funding wherever possible. Additionally, OMWD will continue to evaluate the feasibility of alternative water supplies such as potable water reuse and brackish groundwater desalination.

2018 will also see the continuation of many successful projects and programs such as the expanded use of Advanced Metering Infrastructure saving time, money, and resources as well as reducing pollution with less vehicles on the road.

As always, OMWD encourages public participation in decisions affecting our community's drinking water and any other water issues. Our board of directors holds up to two public meetings each month. Dates and times of these meetings vary, so please check www.olivenhain.com/meetings for current information.

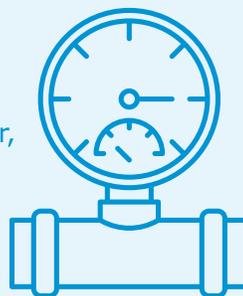
OMWD is proud to continue our mission of providing reliable, high-quality water while protecting ratepayers, and we wish you the best in the coming year.

The Important Role of Water Pressure Regulators

Water pressure varies throughout our service area due to differences in elevation and other factors. To achieve optimal system pressure, OMWD operators maintain over 100 pressure control systems throughout our service area. OMWD is responsible for the water pressure leading up to your water meter, and property owners are responsible for the water pressure after the meter.

Depending on your home's location, a water pressure regulator may be in place to prevent damage to your plumbing fixtures and fittings. Without one, water pressure could go beyond the capacity of your fixtures, leading to expensive and inconvenient repairs. An indoor pressure range of 45 to 65 pounds per square inch (PSI) is ideal for most toilets, dishwashers, and other appliances. As houses age, pressure regulators need to be inspected and replaced.

Customers can call 760-753-6466 for a quick approximation of the pressure serving their homes. A video on water pressure, including how to locate and adjust your pressure regulator, is available at www.olivenhain.com/meter.



Thank You for Helping to Keep Equipment Free from Damage

If you need to shut off water to your property by closing the valve in your meter box, but you find that radio reading equipment is in the way, it is okay to move these components gently to the side so you can access the valve. Please be sure to replace the components, being careful not to pinch or disconnect any of the wires. For assistance, please call OMWD at 760-753-6466.

Water Meter Box Landscape Clearance

