

OMWD's AAA Bond Rating Reaffirmed

Fitch Ratings, a global rating agency that offers independent credit opinions, once again reaffirmed OMWD's "AAA" bond rating. AAA is the highest possible rating assigned by Fitch, and OMWD is one of only a handful of Southern California water agencies that have achieved this rating.

In reaffirming OMWD's AAA rating, Fitch cited OMWD's prudent rate-setting, low operating cost burden, adequate capital investment, and a very strong financial profile. Additionally, despite annual water rate increases attributable primarily to increased wholesale water costs, Fitch reported that OMWD rates remain highly affordable.

Higher bond ratings equate to a lower risk of default, so achieving a high bond rating will afford OMWD lower interest rates when issuing bonds to finance critical new water facilities. Since the debt will be repaid over many years, any improvement in the interest rate for repayment of these bonds will result in significant savings. This protects ratepayers from bearing undue financial burden as OMWD moves forward with water supply projects designed to ensure customers enjoy a reliable water supply well into the future.

We're Here For You

Safe and reliable water service is essential to the quality of life we enjoy. To maximize the affordability of water service, OMWD offers the lowest rate possible to all of our residential customers for the first six units of water used. Additionally, our rates remain in the lower half of all San Diego County water districts.



During the COVID-19 pandemic, we understand that many are facing unexpected financial strain. OMWD has temporarily suspended water service interruptions for non-payment during the current state of emergency. However, per the California Constitution, Article XVI § 6, a water provider is not able to ultimately forgive or reduce bills, and all unpaid bills will be collected once the emergency has subsided. We've been working on payment plans or deferrals to help in affording water service and reducing any accumulated past due amounts. If you are having difficulty paying your bill, please contact our office so we can help you set up a payment arrangement by calling 760-753-6466.

OMWD to Receive \$750,000 in State Funding

California's Department of Water Resources approved in July a grant package to provide \$2.8 million in funding to expand and upgrade recycled water infrastructure in North County. Projects constructed by Olivenhain Municipal Water District, San Elijo Joint Powers Authority, and the City of Oceanside will add approximately 80 million gallons of recycled water to the region's supply portfolio each year. This will offset the potable water demand of nearly 500 households annually.

OMWD will receive \$750,000 for a project to install 3,700 feet of recycled water pipeline along the southern portion of El Camino Real in Encinitas, allowing more customers to convert to recycled water. The project will offset nearly 15 million gallons per year of potable water to irrigate landscape, such as school playing fields, green space, and homeowner association common areas.





Municipal Water District

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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 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.

Always Engaged to Protect Customers' Interests

Every year, OMWD works with state and federal legislators to provide input into developments in Sacramento and Washington that may have an impact on our ratepayers.

Staff provides critical information and feedback to influence legislation such as the Furthering Underutilized Technologies and Unleashing Responsible Expenditures for Drought Resiliency Act. This legislation, which is currently making its way through Congress, would invest in US water infrastructure by providing grant funding for water recycling and groundwater storage and recharge projects.



Recycled water is a sustainable, drought-resilient, and lower-cost alternative to imported water. Investments in recycled water make this locally produced water supply increasingly accessible to neighborhoods, homeowner associations, commercial properties, parks, and open spaces throughout OMWD's service area.

At the state level, the State Water Resources Control Board is developing new regulations that are intended to minimize the loss of water to leaks and inefficiency. While well-intentioned, blanket performance standards across the state could prove problematic and lead to requirements that are not cost-effective or could negatively affect water quality.

OMWD is a leader in distribution system water loss prevention and implements many proactive measures to minimize water loss including cathodic protection, valve replacement, leak detection, and meter replacement. However, water loss performance standards must be flexible and consider costs to avoid unnecessarily burdening our ratepayers. As a result, OMWD has regularly engaged the SWRCB to better shape these regulations.

OMWD has also advocated for the inclusion of specific provisions in COVID-19 relief packages that would provide much-needed financial relief to the San Diego region. These provisions include providing aid to low-income ratepayers.

As the state legislative session comes to an end on August 31, OMWD will continue to engage legislators to ensure water efficiency regulations and legislation impacting OMWD operations do not negatively impact water rates or quality of service.

Ratepayers can contact their state representatives to voice opinions on water-related developments. Find your representative at findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov.



Five Things To Do If You Receive a Bill That Is Higher Than You Expected



We've all been there. You open your monthly utility bill and are unpleasantly surprised to find that it's higher than you expected. If this happens to you, OMWD recommends that you take the following actions to identify the cause of the increase.

1. **Make sure your last payment posted to your account.** If a past due amount is shown on your bill, confirm that your last payment was received. At OMWD, bills are sent out on the last day of each month. It is possible that the bill was created before the payment posted to your account. You can log into your account at www.olivenhain.com/ebills to see your current account balance.
2. **Identify the usage period.** Water use is billed about one month in arrears. The bill that is sent out at the end of each month is charging for water service during the month prior. Note the meter read dates on the bill in question. Did anything happen during that time that could have resulted in increased water use?
3. **Check for a leak.** A simple way to see if you have a leak is to check your water meter. First, make sure no water is being used in the home (this includes dishwashers and clothes washing machines). Next, look at your water meter. It should not be registering any water flow. If flow is detected, you probably have a leak. Detailed leak detection techniques are available at www.olivenhain.com/leak.
4. **Check your irrigation.** The majority of water used during summer months is for irrigation. Even small changes to irrigation timers can lead to significant increases in water use. Check your timer to ensure the settings are ideal for your landscape. Also, since people often water their landscapes in the cooler evening or early morning hours, problems such as misaligned or broken sprinkler heads can go undetected. When troubleshooting the cause of high water use, it's a good idea to run an irrigation cycle during the day and inspect each station.



5. **Schedule a water use evaluation.** OMWD is proud to offer this free valuable service to our customers. A certified landscape auditor will visit your home and answer questions on programming your irrigation timer, checking for leaks, and improving water efficiency. To schedule your evaluation, visit www.olivenhain.com/evaluation.



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Maximizing the use of local recycled water resources reduces North County's dependence on imported water and improves regional water supply reliability. DWR's funding allows OMWD to help our community become more sustainable, assist local businesses and associations in reducing their water and sewer costs, and conserve a valued resource.

Prevent Backups by Keeping Your Drains Free From Wipes and FOG



So-called “flushable” wipes and FOG, or Fats, Oils, and Grease, are a leading cause of sewer backups. Damage to sewer infrastructure on both the public and private side create health and environmental hazards and can result in expensive property damage.

The packaging may state that some wipes are safe for your drains, but the truth is that only the three P’s should be flushed (pee, poo, and toilet paper). Wipes do not break down in water like toilet paper, and can easily get stuck in pipes causing a dangerous and

expensive situation.

FOG occurs when cooking fats are poured down the drain and coat the inside of pipes, eventually forming a blockage. Prevent backups by storing cooled fats, oils, and grease in a grease disposal bag or lidded container and disposing of it in the garbage. Minimize the use of your garbage disposal and scrape food scraps from dishes and pans into the trash before washing.

Clear the
FOG



OMWD’s Renovated Headquarters

OMWD’s services have expanded greatly within our 48 square mile boundary during the 61 years since we were established, and facilities at our main campus were in need of upgrades to meet demands. In the spring of 2019, OMWD began a renovation project at our headquarters, located at 1966 Olivenhain Road in Encinitas.

Construction efforts involved the joining of two administrative buildings, grading, and realignment of the driveway and parking area. Now that the project is nearly complete, customers can enjoy safer ingress, a larger-capacity community boardroom to allow greater participation in public meetings, and a new lobby.

Please familiarize yourself with our new campus before your next visit at www.olivenhain.com/headquarters. Also, please visit www.olivenhain.com or call 760-753-6466 to check for closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

