

2022

Celebrating Another Year of Pure Excellence

Although OMWD continues to face challenges such as drought conditions, state-mandated water use restrictions and regulations, and increased wholesale water rates, we achieved significant accomplishments in 2022. We are pleased to provide an overview of highlights during this past year.



Maintaining Fiscal Accountability

- Our water rates remain in the lower half among San Diego agencies. Over the past 17 years, OMWD is one of only a few agencies that have kept rate increases to single digits each year by continuing to exercise sound fiscal management, controlling costs, and operating on a lean, highly productive workforce.
- Fitch Ratings, a global rating agency that offers independent credit opinions, reaffirmed our "AAA" bond rating with a stable outlook. 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, which results in significant savings for our ratepayers in financial transactions.
- OMWD is the lead agency in the North County Water Reuse Coalition that received \$17.8 million dollars in federal funding in 2022, of which OMWD will receive approximately \$2 million for multiple recycled water projects.
- OMWD employees actively seek out ways to reduce operational costs through grant funding, create economies of scale through partnerships with other agencies, and generate alternative revenue. Since 2005, these cost-saving efforts have saved our ratepayers over \$62 million. Currently, OMWD is awaiting award decisions on an additional six grant proposals that would offset more than \$5 million in costs in future years.



Investing in Reliability

OMWD is committed to providing our customers with safe, reliable, and high-quality drinking water. In fact, we celebrated the 20th anniversary of our David C. McCollom Water Treatment Plant in 2022, which can produce up to 34 million gallons of drinking water each day.





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.

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To help prevent unplanned interruptions to your neighborhood's water needs, we take a proactive approach in repairing and replacing aging water infrastructure. For example, as part of the **Manchester Avenue Potable Water Pipeline Project**, 3,700 feet of pipeline in Encinitas were replaced and relocated in 2022, as they were approaching the end of their lifespans. Water main breaks can waste millions of gallons of treated water while requiring costly emergency repairs. Installing new pipeline will reduce water loss and avoid leaks. As the impact of California's drought continues to escalate, projects like this, which save potable water, are even more critical.



OMWD's 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, functional valves ensure that we can promptly discontinue the flow of water if a fire hydrant is hit by a car. In 2022, technicians ensured the working order of approximately 2,000 valves and replaced 60 underperforming valves.

We completed Phase 7 of the **Advanced Metering Infrastructure Expansion Project**, converting over 2,000 meters to AMI technology. This technology allows us to read meters without driving by your house each month, drastically reducing labor and fuel costs. By 2025, OMWD will read all meters in our service area by AMI.

Discover the Digital Dashboard



Over 2,000 new subscribers enrolled in the **MyWaterUse dashboard powered by AquaHawk** in 2022, which provides access to hourly water usage, consumption trends, and other conservation tools to help users manage their water use. Customers can set alert thresholds for spikes in usage to help detect potential leaks. Learn more at www.olivenhain.com/mywateruse.

Be sure to sign up for alerts so you'll know if there's a sudden spike in your water use!



To expand the availability of recycled water, OMWD is completing the construction of the **Manchester Avenue Recycled Water Pipeline Project**. The pipeline project involved the installation of approximately 1.4 miles of six-inch diameter recycled water pipeline in Encinitas. The new pipeline expands recycled water service to the corridor along Manchester Avenue and South El Camino Real. In 2023, crews will begin to connect new recycled water users along the corridor so they can irrigate with recycled water rather than drinking water. Once all customers are connected, imported potable water demand will be reduced by more than 10 million gallons every year.

Manchester Recycled Water Project



Our **California-friendly Demonstration Garden** was completed this year to model water-efficient landscaping techniques that can save water and money. Customers can visit the garden at our headquarters on any day of the year. The garden provides a tangible example of sustainable landscapes for San Diego County. Visit the garden online at www.olivenhain.com/garden.



Celebrating its 30th anniversary, **Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve** accomplished a lot in 2022, including hosting approximately 112,000 visitors on our 11 miles of hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian trails; and partnering with the Escondido Creek Conservancy to host field trips for over 2,000 students.



AWARD-WINNING AGENCY

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

- California Special Districts Association named us as a “District of Distinction–Platinum Level,” its highest level of accreditation for transparent governance and fiscal responsibility.
- OMWD won two American Public Works Association project of the year awards for the El Camino Real Pipeline Replacement Project and the Indian Head Canyon Emergency Repair that ensured water supply reliability to customers.
- WaterReuse California recognized OMWD’s recycled water outreach with an Award for Excellence.
- OMWD achieved two of the highest honors in financial reporting, winning the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada’s “Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting” and “Distinguished Budget Presentation” awards.

Drought: Looking ahead to 2023

The west continues to experience what scientists deem the worst megadrought in 1,200 years. Our region has experienced little drought relief from fall storms, and La Niña weather patterns are still expected this winter, reducing the chance of strong storms that replenish California’s water supplies.

Southern California relies on runoff from the Sierra Nevada snowpack and the Colorado River Basin. Both supplies are provided to OMWD by water wholesalers, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and San Diego County Water Authority.

Drought...continued from page 3

Both water supplies are also under considerable strain.

- **Dry Sierras**

Deliveries from the State Water Project, the system that brings water from Northern California to the south and typically delivers about 30 percent of the region's annual supplies, have been so dramatically reduced over the past three years that some parts of MWD's service area do not have enough water to meet normal demands.

- **Colorado River Drought**

The Colorado River Basin has experienced the driest 23-year period recorded in more than 100 years of recordkeeping. Federal officials have warned river users to prepare for deeper cuts next year and beyond.



In response to these conditions, MWD is

mandating drastic cuts in water use and restricting outdoor watering to one day per week in areas to the north that depend on state project supplies. In October, MWD's board voted to permanently ban the use of turf grass that is solely ornamental and not regularly used for recreational purposes or community events. MWD's board has warned that further measures, including water cuts, may become necessary in 2023.

SDCWA has assessed local supply conditions and determined that investments in diversified water supplies can protect the San Diego region from drought. However, state officials may choose to implement mandatory statewide restrictions, regardless of local supply conditions. Throughout 2022, OMWD continued to evaluate legislation and engage with state leaders to oppose a "one-size-fits-all" state mandate and to protect investments already made to improve water efficiency and reliability.

OMWD Ratepayer Investment in Alternate Water Supplies

To become drought-resilient, our ratepayers continue to diversify our water supply sources to reduce reliance on imported water. For example, OMWD is working on several recycled water expansion projects and we continue to explore the feasibility of a brackish groundwater desalination facility. A special workshop was conducted in 2022 to review project economics and possible next steps of the potential San Dieguito Brackish Groundwater Desalination Project. Additionally, our customers benefit from regionally developed, highly reliable water supplies such as the Carlsbad Desalination Plant and Imperial Irrigation District water transfers. Because of investments over the last few decades in alternative water supplies, OMWD is not currently experiencing a water supply shortage.

Additionally, OMWD customers have become more efficient in how they use water and, since October 2021, have reduced water use by an average of 11 percent when compared to usage during the same period in 2013.

PUBLIC TOURS ARE BACK!

- What does it take to turn water from the Colorado River into the water that comes out of your tap?
- How does OMWD transform wastewater into recycled water that is used for irrigation?
- Why does my water district operate a 784-acre recreational reserve?

Learn the answers by joining us on our next public tour. OMWD offers public tours for customers interested in a behind-the-scenes look at our daily operations. Visit www.olivenhain.com/events for more information and to register for our January 12 tour.

COMING SOON!

Home Pay My Bills AutoPay	
1/1/2020	Payment Amount
12/31/2022	\$ 76.98
\$76.98	Payment Method + Add
	Pay Date

OMWD's online customer portal will have a new look in 2023. The updated portal will offer a variety of new features, such as text-message notifications and autopay using a credit card. **Current users will need to reset their passcode the first time they log into the new system and update any bookmarks they may have saved.** Visit www.olivenhain.com/serveyoubetter in the new year to enroll.