

# On Tap

Spring 2010



## Water Savings Still Needed, Despite Storms

### CCWD to Review its Water Supply and Drought Program on April 7

Contra Costa Water District customers have been very successful at conserving water since the District started its Drought Management Program last May. Over the past nine months, customers have used about 17 percent less water than they used during the same months in 2005, 2006 and 2007. The District applauds this strong conservation effort and encourages customers to continue saving water.

Water levels in the state's reservoirs fell well below normal over the past three dry years, and even ample amounts of snow and rain this year might not be enough to completely replenish the reservoirs. No one can predict how much more rain and snow will fall before the dry summer months arrive, so the District is planning for the possibility of below-normal water supplies.

At the Board of Directors meeting on April 7, the District's water supply status will be reviewed and a decision will be made on whether the District needs to continue, modify or discontinue its existing Drought Management Program. The meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. in the District's Board Room at 1331 Concord Avenue, Concord.

Last summer, customer response to the District's Drought Management Program was overwhelmingly positive and summertime water use was reduced significantly. Many of the customers who saved successfully in 2009 did so with the help of free resources offered by the District. These resources are still being offered and will continue to be offered throughout 2010. For more information about water conservation resources, visit [www.ccwater.com/consERVE](http://www.ccwater.com/consERVE).

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Snow and rain that fall in the areas shaded red and yellow supply the Sacramento River, Shasta Reservoir, the San Joaquin River and the Delta with water. During the dry season, Delta water supplies are maintained by water releases from Shasta Reservoir.

### An Important Note:

If your tap water and water bills come directly from the Contra Costa Water District, you are in the District's Treated Water Service Area and the Drought Management Program applies to you. The Treated Water Service Area consists of Concord, Clayton, Clyde, Pacheco, Port Costa and portions of Martinez, Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek.

If you are a water customer in Antioch, Bay Point, Pittsburg, Oakley or part of Martinez, you receive tap water from either a city government or water district that purchases untreated water from the District. That puts you in the District's Untreated Water Service Area, and you also need to conserve. You can obtain information about your water provider's conservation program by contacting your water provider or by visiting [www.ccwater.com/consERVE](http://www.ccwater.com/consERVE) and clicking on the link to your water provider's website near the bottom of the page.

Below are a few things you can do now to make sure you are conserving as much water as possible:

■ **Start Reading Your Water Meter:** If you are not already reading your water meter between bills, you probably could benefit from learning this skill and making it part of your regular routine. By reading your water meter, you can determine your daily use, check for leaks and control your water usage better. Detailed instructions on how to read your meter can be found at [www.ccwater.com/consERVE](http://www.ccwater.com/consERVE).

■ **Plan Now to Conserve in Your Landscape:** Now is a good time to assess your landscape and decide where you can cut back. To help, the District offers free face-to-face Home Landscape Water Evaluations for single-family homes that have irrigation systems. Schedule a survey by calling the Conservation Department at **(925) 688-8320**.

■ **Get Serious About Mulch:** A 2- to 3-inch layer of mulch around your plants reduces your need to water by reducing water evaporation from the soil by as much as 70 percent. Make mulch a priority on your yard work checklist.

■ **Fix Leaks and Stop Drips:** Fixing your leaky faucets indoors and outdoors will go a long way toward saving water.

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### CCWD Board of Directors:

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- **Use Less Water for Your Daily Tasks:** Taking short showers with a low-flow showerhead and a timer, turning off the faucet while you brush your teeth or shave, installing aerators in your faucets and not running the dishwasher until you have a full load are good conservation measures.
- **Report Water Waste:** A Water Savings team has been established to investigate and eliminate water waste. To report water waste, call **(925) 688-8044**.

As a community, we all need to work together. If everyone does their part to conserve water, we can continue to enjoy a good quality of life, even in a difficult drought.

## Rebates Offered for Replacing Lawn with Water-Efficient Landscapes

To help customers make landscaping changes that will significantly reduce their water use for years, the Contra Costa Water District (CCWD) is offering rebates to customers who replace their front lawns and other publicly visible lawns with water-efficient landscaping.

The program is open to residential, commercial, and municipal customers in the District's service area, which consists of Clayton, Clyde, Concord, Pacheco, Port Costa, Martinez, Antioch, Bay Point, Pittsburg, Oakley and parts of Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek and Brentwood.

The rebate is fifty cents per square foot for lawn replaced. The maximum rebate is \$500 for residential customers and \$5,000 for commercial and municipal customers. No additional rebate is available for material or labor costs. Existing lawns must be in good condition and irrigated by an existing sprinkler system in good working order. Sites must be pre-approved by CCWD before any work is started in order to be eligible for a rebate.

Complete program details can be obtained by visiting [www.ccwater.com/conserves](http://www.ccwater.com/conserves) or by calling **(925) 688-8320** for a program brochure.



## Fun Weekend Programs Offered at Los Vaqueros

The Contra Costa Water District is offering more than 30 fun recreational and educational programs over the next few months at the Los Vaqueros Watershed, just south of Brentwood.

The programs are offered on weekends and are family friendly. In most cases, they are free of charge, however there is a parking fee of \$4 per car for ratepayers. More information and a full schedule of the weekend programs are available at [www.ccwater.com/losvaqueros](http://www.ccwater.com/losvaqueros), or call **(925) 688-8000** to have a Los Vaqueros Visitors Packet mailed to you.

Some of the programs offered include:

### Those Amazing Animals!

*Saturday, February 13, 10 a.m.*

Los Vaqueros Interpretive Center  
Kids will play a game that introduces them to the concepts of animal adaptation and protective coloration, which allows animals to be camouflaged in their surroundings.

### Birds of Prey

*Saturdays and Sundays – February 20, 27 and 28, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.*

Los Vaqueros Interpretive Center  
Drop in on the Interpretive Center anytime between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. and meet magnificent birds of prey.

### Spring Discovery Hike

*Sunday, March 7, 9 to 11 a.m.*

Meet at the Los Vaqueros Interpretive Center  
Take a fun and easy hike along Kellogg Creek, learning about animals and the watershed along the way. Great for school-aged kids!

### Los Vaqueros Bike and Hike

*Saturday, March 20, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.*

Los Vaqueros Dam  
Celebrate the first Saturday of spring at the top of Los Vaqueros Dam. Ride your bike, or hike to the top of the dam. We'll have some refreshments.

### Wildflower and Bird-Watching Hike

*Saturday, March 20, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.*

Meet in the Marina Parking Lot  
A leisurely hike that will include identifying birds and wildflowers. Bring water, snacks, cameras and binoculars. Dress according to weather conditions.

### Astronomy Night – Saturn at Opposition

*Saturday, March 20, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.*

Kellogg Creek Picnic Area  
Saturn, the ringed planet, will be at its closest approach to Earth. This is the best time to

view and photograph Saturn and its moons. Rain or complete overcast will cancel the event.

### Vaquero Day

*Saturday, April 3*

Kellogg Creek Picnic Area  
Learn about the rich agricultural history of California, including the Los Vaqueros Watershed. Country-Western Musician Dave Stamey will be performing.

To see a full schedule of all weekend programs, visit [www.ccwater.com/losvaqueros](http://www.ccwater.com/losvaqueros).

## Take a Tour to Learn More About Your Water Service

Do you know what it takes to deliver tap water to your home? It takes millions of dollars worth of equipment, pipelines, energy and labor to pump water from a source, treat it so that it's safe to drink, and reliably deliver it to homes and businesses every day.

If you'd like to learn more about your water service and its value to you, sign up for one of two bus tours the District will be offering in the spring. The all-day tours are scheduled for two Fridays: April 16 and May 14. Participants will spend a day in central and eastern Contra Costa County and see first-hand how water is pumped from the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta, stored in the Los Vaqueros Reservoir, treated in treatment plants and sent to homes and businesses.

There is no cost, but you must be over age 18 and a District customer. No group bookings, please. For more information, visit our web site at [www.ccwater.com](http://www.ccwater.com), or call **(925) 688-8175**.

