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On Tap

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Tap Water is an Excellent Value Delivered Directly to You to Meet Your Needs

You probably know that your drinking water comes from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, but do you know what it takes to reliably deliver safe, clean water to your tap? This article presents a basic overview of what it takes to provide you with high-quality tap water whenever you need it. It also illustrates the excellent value your tap water represents at about half-a-cent per gallon.

A Strong Commitment to Quality and Reliability

The Contra Costa Water District and its partner agencies are responsible for serving safe, high-quality drinking water to 500,000 people in the District's service area, which includes Central and Eastern Contra Costa County. That responsibility is taken very seriously, and a sophisticated infrastructure network has been developed over the years to pump, store, convey and treat Delta water to high standards. This infrastructure is efficiently and cost-effectively operated, maintained and upgraded by highly trained, experienced professionals.

Your drinking water was once snow in the Sierra Nevada. As it melted, it flowed into rivers and reservoirs. It eventually flowed downstream into the Delta and was pumped by the District from one of four Delta intakes located as far away as 40 miles east of Concord. These intakes are screened to exclude fish and equipped with industrial-sized pumps with a total horsepower of about 28,000. Currently, the District pumps from them at an average rate of 165 cubic feet per second (cfs), which is enough to fill an Olympic-sized swimming pool in about eight minutes.

Water pumped from the intakes can either be used to meet customers' immediate needs or stored in a reservoir for future use. The District depends largely on the Contra Costa Canal to convey water through the service area. The Canal is 47 miles long and stretches from eastern to central Contra Costa County, winding through parts of Central County before it ends in Martinez.

Once water enters a treatment plant, it is put through a process that removes impurities and disinfects it. At the District's two treatment plants, a state-of-the-art ozone gas disinfection process is used because it breaks up organic compounds to improve the taste and overall aesthetics of water.

After treatment, extensive sampling and testing verifies the safety and quality of the water before it enters customers' plumbing. Every year, thousands of samples are collected throughout the service area. These samples are analyzed in laboratories to ensure that the water is safe to drink when it arrives at its destination.

How Does Your Water Get to Your Tap?

Close to half of the water pumped by the District is sold directly to its retail customers as treated or untreated water. Untreated water is sold to industrial and irrigation customers while treated water is sold to residential and commercial customers. The portion of the service area where the District sells retail water directly to customers is Central Contra Costa County and consists of Clayton, Clyde, Concord, Pacheco, Port Costa, and parts of Pleasant Hill, Martinez and Walnut Creek. The District treats the water at treatment plants in Concord and Oakley. Water treated at the Oakley plant is currently conveyed to Central County by the Multi-Purpose Pipeline (MPP), a 20-mile underground pipeline that runs alongside the Contra Costa Canal from Oakley to Concord. Built to high seismic standards, the MPP ensures the delivery of treated or untreated water to either Central or Eastern Contra Costa County after a major earthquake, canal failure or other emergency.

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The rest of the untreated water pumped from the Delta by the District is delivered to the cities of Antioch, Martinez and Pittsburg for treatment in their plants and distribution to their retail customers. In Oakley, the Diablo Water District (DWD) owns a share of the treatment plant there, and water for Oakley-area residents is treated at that plant and distributed by DWD. Antioch, Pittsburg and DWD also have supplemental water sources, such as wells or their own Delta intakes. In addition, the District delivers treated water to the Golden State Water Company in Bay Point and Brentwood, and supplemental treated water to Antioch.

Want to Learn More?

As previously mentioned, this is a very basic overview of the process required to reliably deliver safe, clean tap water to the faucets in your home or business. To learn more and visit the District's Los Vaqueros Reservoir, sign up for one of the Facility Bus Tours offered by the District this fall. For more information, visit www.ccwater.com or call 925-688-8175.

Water Line Protection Now Available

In response to numerous consumer requests, Contra Costa Water District is offering an *optional* exterior water service line protection service through Home Emergency Insurance Solutions to single-family residential customers who receive their treated water directly from the District. This includes eligible customers in Clayton, Clyde, Concord, Pacheco, Port Costa, Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek and Martinez.

Customers who participate in this program would have access to a service that would send a licensed and insured local contractor to their home in the event of an exterior water service line break between their meter and their house. The cost of premiums would be added to participants' water bills.

Complete information has been mailed to all eligible customers and frequently asked questions (FAQs) have been added to our website. Interested customers should read the terms of the coverage carefully, including sections on eligibility, limitations and exclusions, to determine if the program is right for them. For more information, call 888-300-5063.

New Internet Payment Service Begins October 1

Starting October 1, the Contra Costa Water District will offer an expanded web-based billing service. It will allow customers who receive treated water directly from the District to view their bills online and pay them over the Internet or over the phone with a credit card, debit card or electronic check. A \$3.95 fee will be charged by the provider for each transaction to cover the cost of the new service.

Customers will continue to have other, no-cost options for paying their water bills. These options include using bank electronic bill-pay services, paying by check or participating in the District's automated *Easy Pay* direct-debit program.

To learn more about the District's electronic bill-pay service and other payment options, go to www.ccwater.com and click on the "Customer Service" tab, or call Customer Service at 925-688-8044.

Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Update

Construction to raise the Los Vaqueros Dam and expand the capacity of the reservoir by 60 percent to 160,000 acre-feet is progressing well. The project remains on schedule and on budget.

Much of the recent construction activity has focused on preparing and strengthening the rocky hills to which the larger dam will be anchored. This work is nearing completion, and crews are moving forward to install pressurized grout to the rock at the right shoulder. Meanwhile, construction is well under way on the upper and lower portions of the reservoir's spillway, and the first engineered embankment fill has been installed at the foot of the dam. The height of the dam is also being lowered to prepare it for the 30-foot increase in height.

To ensure public safety while construction is underway, the entire north side and parts of the south side of the watershed are closed. The Los Vaqueros Marina, rental boating and shoreline fishing on the south side will continue to be open and available to the public until October.

More information, photos of the construction, a video about habitat and wildlife protection on the project, and a live web cam that records construction progress can be found at www.ccwater.com.

Lawn Replacement Incentive Program Returns

For a limited time, single-family residential customers can receive a rebate of up to \$500 and commercial and municipal customers can receive a rebate up to \$5,000 when they replace their front and other publicly visible lawns with water-efficient landscaping.

This is the second year the Contra Costa Water District has offered this rebate program. It is open to customers in Clayton, Clyde, Concord, Pacheco, Port Costa, Martinez, Antioch, Bay Point, Pittsburg, Oakley and parts of Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek and Brentwood.

The program is not retroactive, and properties must be pre-approved by the District before any work is started. Complete details can be obtained by visiting www.ccwater.com/conserv or by calling 925-688-8320 for a program brochure.



Scan this QR code with your smartphone to learn more about Contra Costa Water District.