

# On Tap

Spring 2011



## Complex System Delivers Water to Home and Businesses

Most people put little thought into how their tap water arrives at their homes. Often, they don't realize that it takes millions of dollars worth of equipment, pipelines, energy and labor to pump water from a source, store and protect it, treat it so that it's safe to drink, and deliver it to homes and businesses every day.

The Contra Costa Water District provides a constant, reliable stream of clean tap water to 500,000 people in central and eastern Contra Costa County. The District starts with water drawn from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta at four intakes, each equipped with a state-of-the-art fish screen to protect Delta fisheries.

Once water is drawn from the Delta, it is conveyed by the 20-mile Los Vaqueros Pipeline and the 48-mile Contra Costa Canal to various destinations. For example, it can be stored in reservoirs for future treatment and use, immediately treated by the District and delivered to treated-water customers in central Contra Costa County, or sent to eastern Contra Costa County treatment plants for eventual distribution to the residents served by those plants.

### TAP INTO TAP WATER

To provide you with tap water that is clean and safe, the Contra Costa Water District and other public water agencies in central and eastern Contra Costa County carefully protect their water supplies, use state-of-the-art treatment technology and extensively test the water they send to homes and businesses. As a result, the tap water delivered to your home meets all drinking-water standards set by the state and federal governments.



This spring and summer, when the weather starts heating up, tap water is an excellent choice to quench your thirst. It provides sugar-free hydration at an affordable price, with the average cost of tap water in central and eastern Contra Costa County at about half a cent per gallon. Also, tap water can be carried in a reusable bottle, making it an environmentally sound choice.

Here are a few interesting facts about the District's complex and sophisticated water-treatment, storage and distribution system:

- Water in the Contra Costa Canal is lifted 124 feet above sea level by four pumping plants and conveyed over the Willow Pass and into Central County.
- The District has four untreated-water reservoirs capable of storing nearly 106,000 acre-feet of water. This includes the Los Vaqueros Reservoir near Brentwood, which is now being enlarged by 60 percent to hold 160,000 acre-feet of water. (One acre-foot of water is enough to serve a family of four for a year.)
- In Central County, the District provides treated tap water to nearly 61,000 homes and businesses in Clayton, Clyde, Concord, Pacheco, Port Costa and parts of Martinez, Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek.
- The District also provides untreated water to municipalities and water districts that treat and deliver water to homes and businesses in Martinez, Bay Point, Pittsburg, Antioch and Oakley.
- The District operates three treatment plants—one in Central County and two in East County—with the capacity to treat a total of 142 million gallons a day.
- Treated water deliveries can be made between treatment plants in East County and Central County by a 42-inch diameter, 21-mile-long pipeline called the Multi-Purpose Pipeline. This allows CCWD to optimize facility use and provide back-up in an emergency.
- In Central County, the District relies on 868 miles of pipeline and 31 pump stations for water distribution.
- Treated water is stored in 40 mostly underground tank-style reservoirs located throughout Central County. These reservoirs usually hold more than one million gallons of water each.
- The District employs more than 300 dedicated and well-trained professionals to maintain facilities, operate equipment and administer District programs.

To learn more, sign up for one of the free Facility Bus Tours the District offers its customers in the fall. For more information, visit [www.ccwater.com](http://www.ccwater.com) or call **925-688-8175**.

### *On This Issue:*

[Complex System Delivers Water to Homes and Businesses](#)

[Tap Into Tap Water](#)

[Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Now Under Construction](#)

[Los Vaqueros Recreation Update](#)

[Wise Water Use Is Good for Everyone, Every Year](#)

#### CCWD Board of Directors:

Joseph L. Campbell - President • Karl L. Wandry - Vice President • Bette Boatman • John Burgh • Lisa M. Borba  
Jerry Brown - General Manager • Gina Oltman - Writer/Editor

## Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Now Under Construction

Construction is under way to increase the capacity of the Contra Costa Water District's Los Vaqueros Reservoir by 60 percent to 160,000 acre-feet. The \$120 million project will ensure high-quality water deliveries to customers, improved reliability during drought and protections for Delta fisheries and the environment. Construction will be completed in a year.



"The District and many other local, state and federal agencies have been working on this project since 2001," said Joseph L. Campbell, president of the District's Board of Directors. "In these times of uncertainty for the Delta, an expansion of Los Vaqueros Reservoir will improve water supplies and water quality, create jobs, and help the environment."

The District is enlarging the reservoir by raising the height of the Los Vaqueros Dam by 34 feet. This work will entail removing the upper portion of the existing dam, then rebuilding it to be higher. This new configuration will enable the rebuilt dam to hold significantly more water in the reservoir.

Other elements of the project include relocating the Los Vaqueros Marina to higher ground, realigning trails to reflect the new shoreline and establishing mitigation areas. The Middle River Intake and Pump Station, which is the new pump station that will help the Old River Pump Station fill the enlarged reservoir, was built and put into operation in summer 2010.

While the enlarged reservoir will allow the District to hold more water in storage, the amount of its overall water supply remains the same. The District contracts with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation for its Delta supply, and those contracts have not changed.

The Bureau of Reclamation and the California Department of Water Resources funded the planning phase of the reservoir expansion project, and the District is financing the design and construction costs with water revenue notes that are funded within the current rate projections.

During construction, recreational programs, fishing and some trail access will be maintained to the extent possible, but there will be some temporary closures and program reductions to ensure public safety. For more information and access to a web cam showing construction, go to [www.ccwater.com/lvexpansion](http://www.ccwater.com/lvexpansion).

### Los Vaqueros Recreation Update

The north side of the Los Vaqueros Watershed is closed to ensure public safety while heavy construction is under way, however the south side of the watershed remains open for fishing, rental boating and hiking.

On the reservoir's south shore, you'll find the Los Vaqueros Marina with fishing supplies, electric boat rentals, snacks, watershed maps and plenty of helpful advice for recreation enthusiasts.

You can find the Marina using Internet mapping services by entering the address: 9990 Los Vaqueros Road, Byron, CA, 94513. More information is available at [www.ccwater.com](http://www.ccwater.com) or from the Marina at **925-371-2628**.

## Wise Water Use Is Good for Everyone, Every Year

The rain and snow that fell on California this year has provided the state with a sufficient supply of water. However, while it may be tempting to use water freely this summer, it is important to remember that we all have a responsibility to use water wisely so that everyone's water needs can be met.

Here are some free programs the District is offering to help you manage your water use:

**Get a Free Landscape Water Use Assessment:** CCWD is offering free Home Landscape Water Evaluations for single-family homes with irrigation systems. A trained surveyor will inspect your irrigation system, suggest improvements, and prepare a site-specific watering schedule. Just call the Conservation Department at **925-688-8320**.

**Get a Discount on Mulch:** A two- to three-inch layer of mulch in your landscape reduces the need to water by reducing water evaporation from the soil. Mulch usually needs to be replenished every spring, and the District is offering a money-saving coupon. You can find the coupon by visiting [www.ccwater.com/conserv](http://www.ccwater.com/conserv) and clicking on the "Mulch Mulch Mulch" logo.

**Save Money at Recycled-Water Car Washes:** CCWD has teamed up with a group of car wash companies that recycle water using multi-stage filtration systems and equipment that can wash your car thoroughly with less water than most people use at home. To get a car-wash coupon, go to [www.ccwater.com/conservation](http://www.ccwater.com/conservation) and click on the "Smart Wash Car Wash" logo.