

On Tap

Fall 2012



Los Vaqueros Dam and Reservoir: Bigger and Better!



Enlarged dam and reservoir.

After just more than a year of construction to raise the height of the Los Vaqueros Dam, the reservoir is now larger than ever. It can hold 160,000 acre-feet of water—60 percent more than its previous storage capacity of 100,000 acre-feet.

To mark this accomplishment, the expanded dam was dedicated on July 13. The following day, the north side of the watershed was reopened for recreation.

The larger reservoir improves water quality and the reliability of water service for District customers. During construction, its water level was drawn down, and it is now being refilled to take advantage of the new storage capacity. This refilling is expected to take two to three years, depending on weather, water-supply conditions and the rate at which customers use water.

When you visit the Los Vaqueros Watershed, you'll find that both the north and south sides of the watershed are open. Work continues, however, on the south side to move recreation facilities to higher ground to accommodate the larger reservoir. This work will be completed in late fall.

Even with some work still under way, there is plenty for visitors to do at Los Vaqueros. The Interpretive Center is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays. It features updated displays, fun weekend activities, shaded picnic facilities and a trailhead that will start you on a hike to the top of the newly enlarged dam.

Hikers will find plenty of trails open on both the north and south sides of the watershed, and fishing enthusiasts can continue to fish from the shoreline on the south side and in limited spots on the north side.

For more information about Los Vaqueros, including a schedule of fun activities offered at the interpretive center, visit www.ccwater.com and click on "Los Vaqueros" or call 925-688-8010 for brochures. For questions about fishing on the south side of the watershed, please call the marina at 925-371-2628 seven days a week. On weekends, the interpretive center can be called directly at 925-240-2440.



Toasting the project with water.

Bay Delta Conservation Plan: *What CCWD Customers Should Know*

Governor Jerry Brown and key federal officials recently announced a plan to build two 35-mile tunnels under the Delta as an alternative means of conveying water to the pumping facilities in Tracy.

This is a large project that has been under evaluation for several years and has a long way to go before it is ready to be built. At this point, a number of studies are still needed to determine

how this project would affect the Contra Costa Water District and its customers. The District's operations are independent of this proposed project, and will stay that way. However, this proposal could affect water quality at the District's Delta intakes.

The District is monitoring the developments closely, actively reviewing information about the proposal and submitting comments

to ensure the project meets mandated co-equal goals to provide water supply reliability, enhance the Delta ecosystem and protect water quality. The District is also working hard to ensure that its customers' financial interests are protected.

The District encourages all customers to be informed. Updates on the Bay Delta Conservation Plan are available at www.ccwater.com.

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Lose a Lawn, Get a Garden



Home and business owners throughout California are realizing the benefits of replacing water-thirsty lawns with water-efficient gardens.

Some are replacing small sections of lawn over a period of time, while others are replacing their entire lawn all at once. Locally, you can even earn a rebate when you replace your lawn by participating in the Contra Costa Water District's Landscape Rebate Program*.

So what are the benefits of replacing a lawn with a water-efficient garden?

Save Water and Money. You can reduce your water use by more than half by converting your lawn to water-efficient landscaping. For a 900-square-foot lawn, the savings are more than 25,000 gallons of water per year! Savings can be even greater when sprinklers are replaced with drip irrigation. And saving water means saving on your water bill, which is always a good thing.

Improve Aesthetics. In a recent evaluation by the District, all of the customers participating in the Landscape Rebate Program loved the new look of their gardens compared to their old lawns. Their new front yards are beautiful, eye-catching gardens that include a variety of colors and textures.

Save Time. Removing your lawn ends that weekly commitment to mowing. No more aerating or fertilizing, either. Depending on the design and plants chosen, a water-efficient garden can be very low maintenance.

Rebates Available. The District's Landscape Rebate Program is being offered for a limited time to customers in central and eastern Contra Costa County. This program can kick-start your efforts to replace your water-thirsty front lawns with water-efficient landscaping. 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 for replacing a front lawn and other publicly visible lawn with water-efficient landscaping.

The District offers a full range of rebate and other programs to help you conserve water and save money. These include rebates on high-efficiency toilets and clothes washers. To learn more, visit www.ccwater.com/consERVE.

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

EasyPay: It's Free and Makes Bill Paying Easy

If you are a Contra Costa Water District treated-water customer who receives a bill directly from the District, you can pay your bills with a free service called EasyPay. With EasyPay, money is automatically transferred from a checking account to pay bi-monthly water bills. There's no need to write a check or use a postage stamp, and bills are always paid on time.

How Does EasyPay Work? When you sign up for EasyPay, you also sign an authorization form that allows the District's bank to deduct money from your checking account to pay your water bills. Ten days before a deduction is made, you'll receive a water service statement that includes the amount due. If you have any questions about the charges, you can contact Customer Service at 925-688-8044.

What Are the Benefits of EasyPay to Customers?

No check writing, no postage, and bills are paid on time. Just review your water service statement to make sure the charges are correct.

What Are the Benefits of EasyPay to the District?

There is no need to process your payment. The accounting is handled bank to bank. No paper is involved, saving time and money for the District and its customers. Ultimately, the savings help keep water rates lower.

How Do I Sign Up?

You can obtain a sign-up form by visiting www.ccwater.com/customerservice and clicking on "EasyPay" or by calling Customer Service at 925-688-8044. When you submit the completed form, be sure to enclose an original check marked "VOID" or a photocopy of a check for the checking account you wish to have debited. Deposit slips cannot be accepted.

More Questions? Call Customer Service Office at 925-688-8044 for more information.

To qualify for EasyPay, you must be a Contra Costa Water District treated-water customer in Clayton, Clyde, Concord, Pacheco, Port Costa, Pleasant Hill, Martinez or Walnut Creek.



Prevent Backflow Contamination to Keep Your Drinking Water Safe

By the time your drinking water reaches your water meter, it has been carefully treated and is safe to drink. If you have another source of water on your property, it's possible for untreated water from that source to "backflow" into your treated-water lines and contaminate your drinking water.

That's why it's very important to have a backflow prevention device at your meter if you have more than one source of water on your property. These sources include wells, water storage tanks, irrigation systems connected directly to a canal, and swimming pools supplied by a separate water source or without a satisfactory air gap or anti-siphon device on the inlet line.

Please notify your treated-water supplier if your property is being supplied with an additional source of water. Your supplier can determine if you need a backflow prevention device, then work with you to ensure it is installed and checked regularly.

For more information about backflow prevention, please call the agency that provides your treated water:

Contra Costa Water District	925-688-8129
City of Martinez	925-372-3588
Golden State Water Company (Bay Point)	800-999-4033
City of Pittsburg	925-439-0469
City of Antioch	925-779-6950
Diablo Water District (Oakley)	925-625-3798