

On Tap

Summer 2013



A Commitment to Safety is a Commitment to Excellence



Safety messages are printed on the back of crew T-shirts.

The Contra Costa Water District is committed to employee safety, and that's good for business. In an injury-free workplace, employee morale and work quality are high and the costs of workers' compensation insurance, emergency medical care and work delays are minimized.

The District has always maintained a safe workplace, but several years ago it began to implement improvements. Today, the District is safer than ever for its employees and the public, and its long record of reliably delivering high-quality water has been reinforced.

In 2012, the District set records for the number of days without an injury that caused missed workdays. Like last year, this year is off to a safe start. So far, fewer injuries have occurred at District facilities, resulting in less lost time and more productivity. Strict safety practices are indeed benefiting employees and contractors, pedestrians and customers.

Despite the excellent progress being made in this area, work remains to be done. The District has an ambitious goal of zero on-the-job injuries. To achieve this goal, existing business practices are being examined closely and potential improvements are being identified.

The District Safety Committee explores best practices and employee suggestions to ensure things are being done in the safest, most efficient manner.

Because a well-trained staff and safe facilities are the keys to preventing injuries, there is a strong focus on training and facility upgrades. During fiscal year 2012, District staff spent 3,631 hours on training and more than \$1 million on safety, training and facility improvements for safety.

Like other aspects of business, safety is integrated in all job activities. At the end of the day, the District knows a healthy and safe workforce is essential to providing the consistency and reliability customers have come to expect.

Planning Strengthens Emergency Response

In a natural disaster, your drinking water can quickly become unavailable or unsafe to drink. By planning before the disaster, your water provider is strengthening its ability to restore service as quickly and as efficiently as possible. In May, the Contra Costa Water District joined the Diablo Water District and the Cities of Antioch, Brentwood, Martinez and Pittsburg in a statewide exercise based on a catastrophic earthquake. In such an event, these water providers have plans for mutual aid and resource sharing to restore your water service. All of these agencies are currently participating in a Regional Capacity Study to evaluate regional water supply and treatment to improve water supply reliability and efficiency.

You can also prepare for an emergency. Clean water should be an essential part of your emergency kit. Plan to store one gallon per person per day. This supply can hold you over until regular water service is returned or other accommodations have been made. You can find more preparedness tips at <http://72hours.org/>.



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District Honored



CCWD Assistant General Manager of Engineering Steve Welch, center, accepts the Larry C. Larson Safety Award on behalf of CCWD in October.

Employee safety is a top priority for the Contra Costa Water District. So it's no surprise the District's safety efforts were recognized last fall when it received the 2012 Larry C. Larson Safety Award from the California-Nevada Section of the American Water Works Association. In June, those same efforts won the Association's national Wendell LaDue Utility Safety Award. These distinguished awards honor utilities that have made employee health and safety a main priority.

Keeping Safe Near the Contra Costa Canal



A bicyclist enjoys the trail near the Contra Costa Canal.

The two recent deaths in the Contra Costa Canal are tragic reminders of the hazards the water moving in the canal presents to people. With warm and sunny weather drawing more people to the trails near the Contra Costa Canal, it is important to know how you can keep yourself and your children safe.

Because the open canal is a hazard, swimming in the canal and fishing or playing on its banks are prohibited. Never climb the canal fence, even to retrieve an item or pet. In emergencies, always call 911 for assistance.



The 48-mile canal is the primary way Contra Costa Water District moves water west from its Delta intakes to customers in East and Central County. The current in the canal is strong. Please keep your children safe and remind them of the dangers of the canal. Children can learn about canal safety and earn a safety pal certificate by completing a safety quiz online at www.ccwater.com.

The signs along the canal are there to keep you safely out of the water:

- **No swimming.** The water in the canal may look slow, but it is really moving fast. The swift current could pull you down and you could drown.
- **No climbing.** The fence is there to keep you out of harm's way. The sides of the canal are steep and slippery. If you see a person or pet in the water, call 911 for help.
- **No fishing.** Fishing in the canal is strictly prohibited for safety reasons. It is dangerous and you could be ticketed by Canal Patrol for doing it.

The District employs a Canal Patrol to remind trail users of safety practices and to respond to emergencies. Help us keep the area around the canal a safe place for people to enjoy. If you see anyone breaking safety rules, or if you notice an opening in the fence, call the CCWD Canal Patrol at **925-688-8356**.

Use Caution Near Construction

Construction sites can be fascinating and people often want a closer look at what's going on. Yet these sites have their dangers—which often are not visible—and should be treated carefully. When the Contra Costa Water District is doing work in your neighborhood, it could be for routine maintenance, infrastructure upgrades or emergency repairs.

At the construction site, you'll likely see workers wearing hardhats, steel-toe work boots and other safety equipment. This is because heavy equipment and dangerous conditions make construction sites a risky place for people. Workers are trained for these circumstances, but you'll want to steer clear of these sites.

If you see the District working at a location near you, please keep a safe distance and slow down if you're in a car. Follow these tips to ensure your safety and the safety of our workers:

- **Stay outside the barricades.** Cones, fencing and other temporary barricades are set up for your safety. Heavy equipment, unstable or uneven ground, and deep trenches could cause severe injury to pedestrians and the public.
- **Be aware of surroundings.** Warning signs and detours are prepared for your safety and the safety of construction crews. Pay attention when you are near a construction site. Distractions like a mobile phone could cause you to accidentally slip or enter a construction site and risk injury.
- **Drive slowly.** When you see a worksite in the road ahead, drive at a reduced speed to avoid an accident.

The District knows there is a general curiosity about these projects. Crews are generally happy to talk about what's going on, but cannot allow the public into the worksite for a closer look for their safety and yours.

If you see anything that causes concern about your safety or the safety of a District employee, contact us immediately at **925-688-8374**.



Drive slowly through construction sites.

Don't Miss a Drop!

Want to find out about local water issues and upcoming events? Like **Contra Costa Water District** on Facebook and follow **@CCWD** on Twitter.



Tell Us What You Think

Satisfaction surveys help the Contra Costa Water District improve customer service and safety. If you were given an evaluation form, please fill it out and drop it in the mail. Your feedback lets the District know what it's doing right and what could be done better. If you've lost your form or have a general comment, you can always call customer service at **925-688-8044**.