

Water Outlook is Positive Heading into Winter

The new water year began on October 1, and we've been keeping an eye on the weather forecasts to see what kind of year it will be. Despite below-average precipitation in water year 2018, Los Vaqueros Reservoir was storing 93% of its capacity—or more than 48 billion gallons—heading into the 2019 water year. Much of that storage is attributed to the above-average rainfall in 2016, the expansion of the reservoir completed in 2012, and improvements you have made in using water efficiently.

The amount of water stored today in Los Vaqueros represents more than ever before in our history and nearly double the annual water needs of our service area. While the water in Los Vaqueros Reservoir is primarily used for blending to keep water quality consistently high, it also provides drought and emergency supply to complement our water supply in the Delta.

So whether or not the current predicted El Niño conditions materialize, our water supply is looking strong given the storage we have. As always in California, there's not a drop to waste. Water use efficiency keeps your water bill low and your water supply prepared for any kind of year.

We continually strive to provide resources for our customers who are making water use efficiency a way of life. Our e-newsletter covers topics relevant to conservation and water-use efficiency year-round. Sign up to receive our conservation newsletter on our website, ccwater.com/conserve.

Here's what you can do:

Home Water Use Survey

Maximize your water use at home with a free in-person evaluation of your irrigation system. Our water conservation technicians also demonstrate how to check your toilets for leaks, explain how to read your meter so you can monitor your water use, and provide tips and suggestions to help you avoid high water bills. Request your survey at ccwater.com/conserve or by calling 925-688-8320.

My Water Report

View and track your water use history with this user-friendly tool. We offer our treated water customers a portal that allows you to set alerts to be notified when your water use is higher than normal, which could let you know about a leak or see how your water use compares to similar households. Register for a free account at ccwater.com/mywaterreport. You'll need your account number from your Contra Costa Water District bill.

Start Planning for Spring

Winter is a good time to start planning your water-wise landscape. We understand that a lawn to garden transformation is an investment that takes time and effort to plan and implement. Check out our free resources and information on our Lawn to Garden Rebate, that includes the option for Landscape Design Assistance at ccwater.com/lawntogarden.



Photo by Nick Janes

Los Vaqueros Reservoir

Congratulations to Our 2019 Calendar Contest Artists



Contra Costa Water District's 2019 wall calendar—illustrated by talented local children—is an artful display of tap water's importance in our community. Monthly topics range from source protection to water use efficiency. We received dozens of entries from across our service area with incredible visual messages about water.

The 12 winning entries were recognized in October during the regular meeting of our Board of Directors. Each budding artist received a framed copy of their artwork, a signed certificate of appreciation and a \$50 gift certificate to an art supply store.

Calendars are now available for pickup at our offices, 1331 Concord Avenue, Concord.

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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.

Proposed Rates for 2019

Our rates are based on the actual cost to provide water to your home or business. We evaluate our costs every year to make sure there will be enough revenue to cover expenses. Rate increases are the last resort. All efforts are made to keep costs, and therefore your rates, as low as possible. You can read about the proposed rate updates that, with Board approval, would take effect in February 2019 at ccwater.com/rates.

Working Toward a Modern Canal

Congratulations to Our 2019 Calendar Contest Winners

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In This Issue:

On Tap

Winter 2018/2019

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Working Toward a Modern Canal

There are many waterways in Contra Costa County. Crisscrossing our communities are creeks, flood channels, wasteways and aqueducts that help manage our local water resources. There's one, however, that is vital to our ability to provide safe reliable water to the community—the 48-mile Contra Costa Canal.

The main canal, which makes up the first 26 miles of the Contra Costa Canal, sees flows of up to 82 million gallons per day and delivers more than 99% of the water that will eventually arrive at your home or business. This waterway is more than 80 years old and needs to be modernized. While our customers have repaid the federal government for the cost of constructing the canal, it's still owned by the U.S. Department of the Interior. We're working to change that, starting with an Act of Congress.

Modernizing the canal requires a substantial investment, as well as consideration of how it will be used over the next 100 years. As a responsible steward of your rate dollars, it is important that we hold the title to the canal system before investing hundreds of millions of dollars in improvements. We've been in talks with the Department of the Interior, and the next steps can occur once federal legislators take action. Progress is being made and we expect to take full ownership in the next two years.

Modernizing the canal is a tremendously important step toward securing greater seismic protection and water supply reliability for this and future generations. You'll be hearing more about this in 2019.

Where is the Water?

If you walk the Canal trail in Central County, you may notice the canal is empty from December to April. We use these months when water use is usually lowest to clean the canal and perform necessary maintenance. Water is still able to reach customers in Martinez via our Shortcut Pipeline. The main section of the canal, in East County, is cleaned twice a year. We recently completed its fall cleaning.

