

pipeline



SPRING 2017

A NEWSLETTER FOR CUSTOMERS OF THE OTAY WATER DISTRICT



Governor Declares End to Statewide Drought Emergency

Otay Customers Encouraged to Use it, Not Waste It



Due to exceptional water conservation and record-setting winter rain and snow, Governor Edmund G. Brown formally declared the end of the drought emergency on April 7.

It is important for Otay customers to be aware that the San Diego region's water supply reliability is stronger now than when the drought began due to the efforts of San Diego County water ratepayers. That includes you! Thanks to Otay customers and others throughout the county, ratepayers have invested more than \$3.5 billion over the past three decades to advance the region's drought resilience – for instance, with new water storage capacity and new locally controlled, drought-proof water supplies from the Carlsbad Desalination Plant.

The county's residents and businesses also beat the State's emergency water-use reduction mandates during 2015 and 2016, and they continue to use less water than they did in 2013 even though drought conditions have ended. Since the State's conservation mandate began in June 2015, Otay customers have saved an average of 18 percent more water compared to 2013 water-use totals. Thank you for doing your part during the drought!

The District worked with its wholesale supplier, the San Diego County Water Authority, to use this balanced approach of water-use efficiency combined with supply investments to serve its customers during the drought, and it should be part of any statewide drought-management efforts in the future.

It is critical for water agencies and regulators to maintain credibility with the public by recognizing the dramatic improvement in water supplies, which is why Otay worked with the Water Authority to pass a resolution declaring the end of the drought conditions for the county in January.

The State Water Resources Control Board will still require water districts to report urban water use and prohibitions on wasteful practices. These wasteful practices include watering during or after rainfall, hosing off sidewalks and irrigating ornamental turf on public street medians. So in other words, use the water you need, but do not waste it.

Visit otaywater.gov for more information on the drought emergency repeal and what actions the District is taking to encourage legislators and the State Board to develop long-term water use efficiency measures that include drought-resilient supplies and are also appropriate to hydrological conditions.

Online Bill Payment through Your Own Financial Institution Saves You Money!

Save money on postage and checks by paying your water bill using online bill payment through your own financial institution. The District accepts payment made through your financial institution's bill pay service. We typically receive payment electronically within 24 to 72 hours. If you're not sure how to get started call your financial institution or contact the District via email at customerservice@otaywater.gov or call (619) 670-2222.





LIVE
WaterSmart
PHOTO CONTEST
instagram.com/sdcwa
San Diego County Water Authority

Live WaterSmart Photo Contest Promotes Water Awareness Month

Two Grand Prizes to Be Awarded

In celebration of Water Awareness Month, the San Diego County Water Authority is launching the Live WaterSmart photo contest to highlight the value of water and promote water-use efficiency as a lifestyle regardless of the weather.

The Water Authority will host the photo contest on its Instagram page @sdcwa from May 1 to May 31. The final deadline to submit contest photos is by 5:30 p.m. on May 31. To participate, take a photo that demonstrates how water is an essential part of your life – indoors or outdoors – and submit it via email to sdcwa@sdcwa.org.

Two grand prizes will be awarded. Thanks to the Balboa Park Cultural Partnership, one of the prizes will include a four-pack of Explorer One-Day Passes to visit up to five museums in Balboa Park.

Photos that meet contest rules will be featured on the Water Authority's Instagram page beginning May 1. For more information on contest rules, sponsors and prizes, go to sdcwa.org/live-watersmart-photo-contest.

242 Miles of Pipelines Inspected through Otay's Leak Detection Program

Through Otay Water District's Leak Detection Program, a contractor surveyed approximately 242 miles of water mains throughout the District's service area starting in January and finishing March 3. To detect leaks, the contractor used devices that magnify the sound made by water escaping from a pressurized pipe. As a result, there were 42 small leaks found and repaired in the District's distribution system. In addition to the 42 District leaks, there were 162 potential customer-side leaks identified. Otay staff notified each customer of any potential leak that may have been occurring inside or outside their home or business. If the leak is on the customer's property, it is the customer's responsibility to get the leak fixed. This could help customers save money in the end. Detecting small leaks before they become bigger helps the District and its customers save money and water, and reduces water service interruptions. For questions, visit otaywater.gov or call (619) 670-2222.



Think Before You Flush

Using the toilet as a personal trash transporter is simple — one flush and it's gone. But, is it really? Sending items labeled "flushable" or "disposable" down the toilet, only means you are disposing of them into your pipes, running the risk of significant plumbing problems and costly repairs. Items such as disposable wipes are made of woven fibers that do not easily dissolve. Instead, they stay intact within the wastewater system and cause sewer system failures and environmental pollution. Avoid the temptation of using the toilet as a substitute for a trashcan. This will help you to save water too! Consider that each flush can use up to five gallons of water, depending on the model. Next time, think before you flush!

Avoid flushing the following items:

wet wipes (even those labeled "flushable") | paper towels
disposable diapers | cotton balls & swabs | band-aids
prescription medication | dental floss | cigarette butts
feminine products | cat litter | fats, oils & grease
fertilizer, herbicides, pesticides, insecticides

OTAY WATER DISTRICT - Board of Directors

The Board of Directors meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 3:30 p.m. in the Board meeting room. The public is encouraged to attend at 2554 Sweetwater Springs Boulevard, Spring Valley, CA.

President
Mark Robak, Division 5
mrobak@otaywater.gov

Vice President
Tim Smith, Division 1
tsmith@otaywater.gov

Treasurer
Mitch Thompson, Division 2
mthompson@otaywater.gov

Board Member
Gary Croucher, Division 3
gcroucher@otaywater.gov

Board Member
Hector Gastelum, Division 4
hector@otaywater.gov

For class information, visit
thegarden.org



Saturday, May 20, 10 a.m. – noon

Spring/Summer Seasonal Garden Care

Join Mannah Gbeh, the Garden's landscape technician and owner of Bee Valley Farms, to learn appropriate techniques and tips on how to maintain moist soil and happy plants in the warm months ahead. Register at thegarden.org. Members: No cost; Nonmembers: \$10

Sunday, May 21, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Water Agency Customer Appreciation Day

The Garden will host a special event for ratepayers of Helix Water District, Otay Water District, Sweetwater Authority, and the City of San Diego. Come enjoy special presentations by Ms. Smarty-Plants and Clayton Tschudy. Food, refreshments, and children's activities will also be available. Gain information provided by the water agencies. Free admission.

Saturday, May 27, 10 a.m. – noon

Crafts for Your Garden

Join Garden docents to make three unique wooden birds, along with a special decorative plant box to add character to your garden. Class includes four art pieces for you to take home. Register at thegarden.org. Fee: \$30 (includes all supplies).

Thursday, June 1, 3:30 – 6 p.m.

Education & the Environment Teacher Workshop

The Garden will present an end-of-the-year fieldtrip for teachers. Participants will gain access to FREE curriculum, including student workbooks by the California Education & Environment Initiative that teaches science, history, and English language arts through a local environmental lens. Register at thegarden.org or call (619) 660-0614 ext. 10.

ONGOING EVENTS

Free Docent-Led Tours | Saturdays, 10 a.m.

Enjoy an informative walk through the Garden with a docent tour guide to be inspired to create a water-wise landscape of your own. Visit thegarden.org for special themed tours.

Professional Landscape Design Consultations

The Garden offers 45-minute landscape consultations for residents looking to make changes to their landscape with water-wise plants. Call (619) 660-0614 ext. 10 to schedule. Members: \$60; Nonmembers: \$75

Ms. Smarty-Plants School Tours and Assembly Program

Join Ms. Smarty-Plants™ as she takes you on a magical, fun, and interactive journey through plant adaptations, the water cycle, conservation, and more. Become a Ms. Smarty-Plants™ Earth Hero! To book an educational tour of the Garden or a school assembly program, contact Jillian Quint at (619) 660-0614 ext. 16.

Upgrade of Automated Meter Readers Reduces Costs and Increases Productivity

In March 2017, Otay Water District began upgrading its more than 49,000 automated meter reading (AMR) meters in the District. The District will upgrade approximately 7,000 to 8,000 meters each year and expects the project to be completed by 2023. The District will notify customers via telephone and email when the project will take place in their area.



This upgrade will move the reading system from 3G to 4G, which will allow more meters to be read within a larger area and at a faster speed. AMR meters transmit water-use data via one-way radio signal from the meter to a meter reader up to half a mile away. This technology has proven to increase productivity and reduce costs due to the increase in the number of meters read during a typical eight-hour shift. By using the AMR technology, Otay has increased the number of meters read per day by nearly 300 percent. Prior to AMR, the District manually read thousands of meters in service that required nine full-time meter readers on a monthly basis. By advancing to AMR, the District has decreased its meter-reading staff from nine to three full-time meter readers.

In addition, AMR has increased staff safety and reduced the District's liabilities. Throughout the District, there are areas without sidewalks and meters are located in steep and treacherous terrain. AMR has allowed staff to read meters in these areas safely from a District vehicle. Staff can also pull data to assist customers with unexplained increases in their water usage. To increase efficiencies, District staff continue to explore other meter technologies. This phase of installation will also facilitate the replacement of batteries and is expected to be completed by 2023.

Remember to always keep your water meter box clear to ensure available access to Otay staff at all times.

Time to Spruce Up Your Sprinkler System for the Hotter Months

Did you know that outdoor water use accounts for more than half of all water used in a typical home? And with the onset of warmer weather, landscape irrigation is likely to increase during this time of year. The good news is that you can also save money and water by inspecting your outdoor water use. Follow these four simple steps to spruce up your sprinkler system:

- 1) **INSPECT** your sprinkler system for clogged, broken, or missing sprinkler heads.
- 2) **CONNECT** the sprinkler heads tightly to the pipes or hoses to avoid leaks. Check the rest of your yard for pools of water or soggy areas caused by loose pipe joints in your sprinkler system.
- 3) **DIRECT** sprinklers only to the landscape and away from your driveway, house, and sidewalk. Concrete or stucco will not grow with water. 🙄
- 4) **SELECT** the appropriate seasonal watering schedule that meets your landscape's needs. Resources are available here: otaywater.gov/conservation/for-your-home.

Also, consider using an EPA WaterSense-certified irrigation controller, which acts like a thermostat for your sprinklers. WaterSense products are certified to use at least 20 percent less water than regular models. For more information on how you can reduce water waste inside and outside your home, visit otaywater.gov/conservation.



El gobernador suspende oficialmente el estado de emergencia por la sequía

Se recomienda a los clientes de Otay que utilicen el agua sin desperdiciarla



El pasado 7 de abril, el gobernador Edmund G. Brown declaró formalmente el fin del estado de emergencia por la sequía. Todo esto gracias a los grandes esfuerzos de conservación de agua y las abundantes lluvias y nevadas que se registraron en la temporada invernal.

Los clientes de Otay deben saber que la confiabilidad del suministro de agua en la

región de San Diego es mayor actualmente que cuando la sequía comenzó debido a los esfuerzos de los contribuyentes de agua del Condado de San Diego. ¡Esto lo incluye a usted! Gracias a los clientes de Otay y otras personas en el condado, los contribuyentes han invertido más de \$3.5 mil millones en las últimas tres décadas para contrarrestar la sequía. Por ejemplo, una nueva capacidad de almacenamiento y suministros de agua localmente controlados y resistentes a la sequía provenientes de la Planta Desalinizadora de Carlsbad.

Los residentes y negocios del condado también superaron las órdenes de emergencia de reducción de uso de agua durante 2015 y 2016, sin embargo, continúan utilizando menos agua que en el año 2013 aún cuando las condiciones de sequía han terminado. Desde que comenzó la orden de conservación del estado en junio de 2015, los clientes de Otay han ahorrado un promedio de 18 por ciento más de agua comparado con el total de uso en el año 2013. ¡Gracias por su cooperación durante la sequía!

El distrito trabajó con su proveedor mayorista, la Autoridad de Agua del Condado de San Diego para utilizar esta estrategia equilibrada de uso eficiente de agua junto con inversiones en suministros para servir a sus clientes durante la sequía. Esto debería formar parte de los esfuerzos estatales que se hagan en el

futuro sobre gestión de la sequía.

Es fundamental que las agencias de agua y los reguladores mantengan la credibilidad entre el público al reconocer los mejoramientos extraordinarios en los suministros de agua. Por esta razón, Otay trabajó con la Autoridad de Agua para aprobar una resolución en la que se declara el fin de las condiciones de sequía en el condado en el mes de enero.

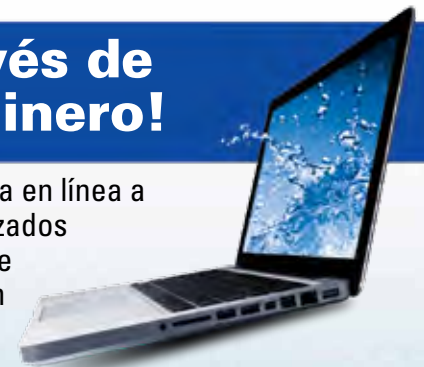
El Consejo de Control de Recursos de Agua del Estado de California continuará solicitando a los distritos que reporten el uso de agua en las ciudades y las prohibiciones contra prácticas de derroche del vital líquido. Estas prácticas de derroche incluyen el riego durante o después de la lluvia, limpieza de banquetas con manguera e irrigación de césped decorativo en los camellones de calles públicas.

En otras palabras, utilice el agua que usted necesita pero no la desperdicie.

Visite otaywater.gov para obtener más información sobre la derogación del estado de emergencia por sequía y las acciones que el Distrito de Agua de Otay está tomando para alentar a los legisladores y al Consejo Estatal a crear medidas eficientes y a largo plazo sobre el uso de agua incluyendo suministros resistentes a la sequía adecuados a las condiciones hidrológicas.

¡Pague sus facturas en línea a través de su institución financiera y ahorre dinero!

Usted puede ahorrar dinero en timbres postales y cheques si paga su factura de agua en línea a través de su propio servicio bancario. El Distrito de Agua de Otay acepta pagos realizados directamente a través del servicio de pago de su institución financiera. Generalmente recibimos el pago electrónico en un plazo de 24 a 72 horas. Para obtener información sobre esta opción, llame a su institución financiera o comuníquese con el Distrito llamando al (619) 670-2222 o escribiendo a customerservice@otaywater.gov.



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FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE OTAY WATER DISTRICT CALL 619.670.2222 OR GO TO WWW.OTAYWATER.GOV