

# THE CURRENT FLOW

Issue #2 - 2019



NEWS FOR THE VALUED CUSTOMERS OF LAS VIRGENES MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

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Stay current on water issues, tours and conservation. Follow us on:



## Solar Cup 2019 - Harnessing the Power of the Sun

### Area Students Compete in Regional STEM Competition

Every May, high school students from all over Southern California descend on Lake Skinner in Riverside County. This assembly of highly intelligent minds represents the culmination of a seven-month education program sponsored by The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) called Solar Cup; the largest solar powered boat race competition in the country. The challenge: to harness the power of the sun!

LVMWD is proud to be sponsoring two schools for this year's event - Oaks Christian High School (OC) in Westlake Village and Calabasas High School (CHS) in Calabasas. The local students participating in the Solar Cup program are tasked with building, and then racing, a 16-foot, single-seat electric boat powered by batteries and solar panels. The challenge requires the teams to compete in both endurance and sprint races on open water. All participating schools are sponsored by MWD member agencies like LVMWD.

These boats are constructed out of marine grade plywood provided by MWD. Each team then designs and installs the steering mechanism, batteries, motor and solar panels. The maximum weight of the boats cannot exceed 450 pounds, including the skipper. When powered by battery, these boats can obtain speeds up to 15 mph in the sprint race and then use power captured by solar panels to compete in the endurance challenge. Victory in the endurance challenge is determined by which boat can complete a 1.6 km course the most times in two 90 minute heats.

CHS enters as the veteran team having participated in the Solar Cup program since 2014. They have won multiple events and even placed 3rd overall in 2017. They bring a wealth of "been there done that" experience, but also high expectations that their boat will perform at an elite level. Each year they focus on ways to innovate their design and push the envelope of what the team can accomplish. This year they are using new tools, techniques and technologies to bring a winning boat to Lake Skinner.

For OC, this is their first year participating in the Solar Cup program. They have 16 students who will be attending the event with a mix of participants from freshmen to seniors who, along with their faculty advisors, are figuring it out as their boat is being built. At a recent visit, LVMWD representatives were impressed by the rookie team's progress. Despite building their boat in a storage trailer, the team's initial voyage into the competition is coming along swimmingly. They are expecting to make a thunderous splash at the race.

We, at the District, know that supporting these students in learning about renewable energy technologies, design and engineering processes, collaboration and teamwork, all in a hands-on setting, is an investment in our collective futures. Exposing these students to the types of sciences and trades involved in California's water industry is critical in filling our future staffing needs. The skills and theories these students learn through the seven-month process show the diverse career options available to them. We can't wait to see these two teams compete in May! 💧

# Ready in 3...Emergency Preparation is a Must

With the recent Woolsey Fire to pandemics to terrorism or earthquakes, we all should be prepared for any disaster at any time. According to the City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Department, the City of Angels is prone to 13 out of 16 federally-identified natural or man-made threats making it imperative that all residents be prepared.

Ensuring that you and your family are equipped to handle any event is not too challenging. It requires some organization and a designated area in your home to stock up on goods. Be Ready in 3. 1) Create a Plan, 2) Make an Emergency Kit, 3) Listen for More Information.



1. Making a plan consists of establishing a process to ensure that you can communicate with your family and friends during or after a disaster. It's better to have more than one platform to use (i.e. phone and email) to contact loved ones. Establish a pre-designated point-of-contact outside of the disaster area, a focal point, so all family members can be accounted for.

2. Making an emergency kit is imperative to preparing for and navigating through a disaster. Each member of your household should have, at a minimum, one gallon of water per person per day for three days (change out every six months). Every kit should have enough non-perishable food to sustain your family for several days. Emergency kits also should contain: batteries for radios and flashlights, first-aid kits, prescription medication, pet supplies, toiletries, infant needs like diapers and baby food, cash money in small bills, a can-opener, duct tape and scissors.

3. It is critical to make sure that you have access to information. Depending on the emergency, cell phone service, TV and the internet might not be available. Having a crank or battery operated radio will allow you to have a direct link to obtain additional information about the disaster or event to keep you and your family in the know.

It's not a matter of if, it's when. Being Ready in 3 will not only help you keep your family safe, it will also give you peace-of-mind that you are prepared. *For more information on how to be disaster prepared, go to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)*

## A Day for Our Planet is Not Enough...Make Everyday Earth Day

We celebrated Earth Day in April. Though not an official holiday, Earth Day serves as a global call to appreciate our planet and respect nature. Grassroots campaigns and events were held to celebrate the wonders of nature and to examine the consequences of human actions to the only planet that sustains us all. These celebrations underscored the importance of being stewards of the environment and encouraged engagement in community collaboration that is necessary to make lasting differences for generations to come.

Like so many important movements in our history, Earth Day evolved due to numerous events. In 1962, Rachel Carson wrote "Silent Spring," which became a New York Times best seller. This trail blazing, environmental work raised awareness and concern for the negative effects that pollution has on public health, the environment and all living organisms. This visionary piece acted as a catalyst for environmental protection becoming a part of our daily lives. In 1970, Gaylord Nelson, a U.S. Senator from the state of Wisconsin, wanted to leverage the momentum and energy of the student antiwar movement

to bring water and air pollution to the attention of the public. That year he created the very first Earth Day event, spurred to action by the oil spill that happened off the coast of Santa Barbara, California on January 28, 1969. This spill, at the time, was the largest to ever happen in U.S. waters and eventually grew to cover an area nearly as large as the City of Chicago. His goal was to make environmental protection part of the national political agenda and dinner table conversations. Because of the growing concern for the environment the EPA was created in December of 1970, putting protections in place for everything from clean water to endangered species to clean air.

Since the very first Earth Day, 49 years ago, so much has changed. Every Earth Day is given a unique theme to reflect the real time issues our planet and ecosystems are facing. The most recent theme "Protect Our Species" was meant to focus our attention on the many threatened and endangered species on our planet. Here, the LVMWD service area provides habitat

*(Continued on back: Earth Day)*

# Employee Spotlight:

## Deborah Peters

At Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, one of the most effective ways that we engage our customers is by meeting them face to face. For the last 26 years, when our customers have come to our booths at community events like Reyes Adobe Days, have participated in one of our quarterly facility tours, or just needed a question answered, the smiling face and cheery voice that greeted them is that of Public Affairs Associate Deborah Peters.

Deborah, or Deb as she is known throughout the District, began her journey with LVMWD on October 4, 1993. She started working in the newly formed Resource Conservation and Public Outreach department managing the small District library, District publications, rebates and facility tours. Following her vision of what she felt the position could be and the career she wanted to build, Deb embraced some on-the-job training to expand and grow the District's outreach efforts.

Soon she became a staple at community events throughout the District with an updated and dynamic booth that included water awareness trivia and games, promotional giveaways and informational brochures. A one woman team at this point, she also acted as the liaison between local schools and LVMWD through the annual Student Poster Contest and outdoor education program. In 1998, the District needed a presence on the "information superhighway" and Deb, never one to back down from a challenge, tackled creating the District's first website by teaching herself HTML. At this point, the job had grown so much she got some much-needed help to focus on publications, web design, education and community outreach.

Peters grew up on the Westside of Los Angeles. She was the youngest of four girls and spent most of her time either outside in the pool, on the playground or exploring her creative side, drawing and



coloring. As a teenager, she loved when the movie crews would come into her neighborhood to film. She would make dozens of chocolate chip cookies for the cast and crew, who were delighted to devour those freshly baked snacks. She also developed a love of fishing for albacore tuna out of San Diego.

Deborah got her first job at the age of 15 at Fotomat. She also worked in the family business and the two experiences taught her at a young age the importance of customer service, organization and administration. After graduating from high school with honors, Deb worked for Kelly Girls and then Xerox for five years where she handled everything from copier repair to customer service and billing. She eventually left the printer business to explore new paths, which brought her to LVMWD.

In the 26 years Deb has worked with us, she refused to just have a job where she showed up to. Instead, she built a career based on pride in a job well done, satisfied customers, a well-served and educated community and a wide ranging network of relationships built over the years with colleagues and customers. Her story is one of inspiration, personal growth and accomplishment. Deb often says that she grew up here at the District, but the truth is LVMWD grew up with her and because of her. 💧

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You may direct communications to LVMWD Board members by sending an e-mail to: [board@LVMWD.com](mailto:board@LVMWD.com)

Board meetings are scheduled at 9 a.m.  
on the second and fourth  
Tuesday of each month

Board Meetings are now live-streamed on the District's website at [LVMWD.com/BoardMeetingsSpeakerCard](http://LVMWD.com/BoardMeetingsSpeakerCard)

Las Virgenes - Triunfo JPA  
meets the first Monday of the month at 5 p.m.

Check [LVMWD.com/Board-Meetings](http://LVMWD.com/Board-Meetings) for  
Board meeting and agenda information

Customer Service -  
(818) 251-2200

After Hours Emergency -  
(818) 251-2100

Construction & Drought Hotline -  
(818) 251-2180

Report Water Waste -  
[StopTheWaste@LVMWD.com](mailto:StopTheWaste@LVMWD.com)

Rancho Las Virgenes Composting Facility  
Free Compost & Recycled Water Pickup  
Saturdays 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Rebate Information  
[LVMWD.com/Rebates](http://LVMWD.com/Rebates)

Potable Water  
Recycled Water  
Wastewater Treatment  
Biosolids Composting



4232 Las Virgenes Road  
Calabasas, CA 91302  
[LVMWD.com](http://LVMWD.com)



(Continued from inside: Earth Day)



for multiple endangered species such as the southern steel head and red-legged frog. Recently, experts have said that there is a one-in-four chance the majestic cougar could disappear from Southern California in the next 50 years.

Earth Day reminds us to keep fighting for our natural world and to examine our impact on the ecosystems around us. The more we care, the more likely we are to protect our planet and to remember that all living things are connected. As Rachel Carson wrote in 1962 “In nature, nothing exists alone.” Our choices matter, we can make a difference and we owe it to future generations to be mindful of our effect on the planet.

How will you remind yourself daily to appreciate, respect and understand that your actions do have positive or negative impacts on the planet? What are you willing to do?💧



## THE MISSING PIECE

What are the three components of being Ready in 3?

Send your response to:

**THE MISSING PIECE**, LVMWD, 4232 Las Virgenes Road, Calabasas, CA 91302, or send to [LittleDrop@LVMWD.com](mailto:LittleDrop@LVMWD.com) with “**Missing Piece**” in the subject line. ***Please include your mailing address in case you are a winner!*** Prizes are awarded monthly to 10 winners randomly selected from the correct responses. Watch for the answer in the next issue of *The Current Flow*.💧

Previous issue's **MISSING PIECE**:

**Name the benefits of Automated Meter Reading (AMR)/Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI)?**

**Answer:**  
***Improved Customer Service, Timely Leak Detection, and Reduction in Greenhouse Gas Emissions***

## Conservation Corner: Schedule for Savings

Much like a bear, our irrigation systems come out of hibernation in the spring. The days get longer and our landscapes begin to awaken. We find ourselves in the yard pulling weeds, planting new California native plants and prepping our lawns. One of the most common mistakes people make this time of year is not properly adjusting their irrigation timers for the change in seasons. This adjustment is especially critical in the spring and fall as temperatures can fluctuate daily and the weather patterns are more volatile.



*Weather-Based Irrigation Controllers can take the guesswork out of scheduling your irrigation needs.*

A weather-based irrigation controller (WBIC) can take the confusion out of setting irrigation schedules. This cutting edge technology harnesses the science of evapotranspiration and the combined measurement of water loss by plants caused by evaporation and transpiration. This, in tandem with the utilization of local climate data and weather information, means the WBIC is fine tuning the irrigation schedule to the actual site conditions of your property. Weather-based irrigation is the most effective way to support a drought tolerant and water-efficient landscape. Both over and under watering landscapes weakens the plants and makes

them more vulnerable to high temperatures and the dry weather.

Over-watering landscapes represents one of the largest sources of water waste in our district, state and country. The United States Environmental Protection Agency estimates that residential outdoor water use accounts for almost 9 billion gallons of water a day. As much as 50 percent of this is wasted from overwatering caused by inefficiencies in irrigation techniques and systems. Replacing a conventional timer with a WBIC can eliminate a large part of that wasted water by optimally scheduling your irrigation.

Additionally, LVMWD customers receive an “Outdoor Efficient” water allocation that is based on the combination of the square footage of irrigated area and the amount of evapotranspiration that occurred during that billing period, measured in inches. Installing a WBIC will match irrigation adjustments to the same data that establishes your unique “Outdoor Efficient” water budget. This synergy helps save money by preventing over-watering that can result in higher commodity costs and possibly administrative penalties.

Saving money and water is always in season! Replacing your outdated irrigation controller with a WBIC is a great way to do both.💧