

LVMWD Response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Emergency

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is LVMWD's water safe to drink?

Yes, LVMWD's water remains completely **safe** to drink. Our tap water goes through a rigorous treatment process that includes ozonation, filtration and chlorination, which removes or destroys harmful bacteria and viruses, including COVID-19. For more information on the quality of LVMWD's water, please visit www.LVMWD.com.

2. Should I buy bottled water right now?

There is **no** need to go out and buy large amounts of bottled water right now, particularly with the [County of Los Angeles Safer-at-Home Order](#) in place. For emergencies like earthquakes, LVMWD recommends that customers have a three-day supply of water for their households with one gallon per day required for each person.

3. How will I know if there is a problem with my tap water?

LVMWD would notify you along with local and regional media outlets. Also, you can always check www.LVMWD.com for current information on any water quality concerns.

4. Why did LVMWD declare a local emergency if the water is safe to drink?

The Board of LVMWD declared a local emergency on March 24, 2020 to provide its management team with all of the authorities necessary to respond quickly and efficiently to this unprecedented and dynamic situation.

5. What is LVMWD doing to minimize impacts of COVID-19 on its customers?

- **Avoid shutting off water service for non-payment.**
- **Discontinue the issuance of door tags and associated fees for nonpayment.**
- **Waive late charges for past due water and wastewater bills.**
- **Offer and execute interest-free flexible payment plans for customers with delinquent accounts stemming from hardship associated with COVID-19. The terms of such payment plans may be for up to 24 months with flexible amortization schedules to best address the unique challenges of customers. The applicable interest rate shall be zero percent (0.00%).**
- **Allow commercial customers to temporarily "suspend" service while their places of business are unoccupied to stop all water and wastewater charges. Also, normal fees for reinitiating service will be waived.**

6. What is LVMWD doing to protect its employees from exposure to COVID-19 and ensure the continuity of its services?

LVMWD's top priority in its response to the COVID-19 emergency is to protect the health and safety of its employees and customers. Beginning the week of March 16th, LVMWD initiated telecommuting for its office employees and established special alternate working arrangements for field staff to allow them to work more independently. Although LVMWD employees are not subject to the County of Los Angeles Safe at Home Order because water and wastewater services are essential, we are following the provisions of the order to maximum extent practicable, particularly those provisions related to social distancing. Also, LVMWD's offices were closed to the public, effective March 17, 2020, to reduce the potential exposure of employees to COVID-19. Together, these actions support LVMWD's ability to keep its employees healthy and maintain the continuity of its services.

7. Are additional measures being considered?

Yes. The Board has instructed LVMWD staff to consider and recommend additional measures that can be taken to minimize impacts of COVID-19 on customers. These measures may include, but are not limited to, extended payment plans with favorable financing terms to bring delinquent accounts back into good standing.

8. Will LVMWD be lowering rates, providing bill credits or waiving bills?

At this time, LVMWD is not proposing to change its rates (higher or lower), provide bill credits or waive payment of bills. It is important that customers continue to pay their bills to support the cost of operating and maintaining the water and wastewater systems.

9. I was told that I don't have to pay my bill at this time. Is that true?

No. Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-42-20 on April 2, 2020 that prohibited water shutoffs for non-payment, but it specifically did **not** eliminate "the obligation of water customers to pay for water service, prevent a water system from charging a customer for such service, or [reduce] the amount a customer may already owe to a water system".

10. Has the Governor mandated lowering rates?

No.

11. Why can't I come into the office?

On March 17, 2020, LVMWD closed its offices to the public to protect employees and customers from the potential transmission of COVID-19. However, LVMWD's Customer Service Representatives remain available at (818) 251-2200.

12. Did LVMWD adjust my water budget upwards because everyone is home all day and we need to wash our hands and flush toilets more frequently?

At this time, LVMWD has not increased customers' water budgets, which reflect an allowance of 55 gallons per person per day (gpcd) for indoor water usage. In general, 55 gpcd is sufficient to meet customer needs even with more frequent hand washing and toilet flushing. However, staff will continue evaluating water usage and consider the need for a budget increase.

13. How can I provide feedback to the LVMWD's Board on its response actions?

The Board is holding its public meetings on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 9:00 a.m. via teleconference, in accordance the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20. The public can access the meetings online with audio and limited video at www.LVMWD.com/LiveStream. Also, the public can participate and address the Board during the Public Comment period (orally or in writing) by submitting an electronic request at www.LVMWD.com/LiveStream.

14. How can I get help with a billing or customer service issue?

LVMWD's Customer Service Representatives remain available at (818) 251-2200. Alternatively, you can submit a question or request online at www.lvmwd.com/for-customers/contact-lvmwd/contact-comment-inquire.

15. Will LVMWD allow for bill payment plans?

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