

THE CURRENT FLOW

Winter 2022



NEWS FOR THE VALUED CUSTOMERS OF LAS VIRGENES MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT



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Despite December Rain, Still Too Early to Let Up

California has been experiencing much needed rain and snow that is helping to combat the ongoing drought. No one can look past their windows and not see that it has been quite wet for a while. This is tremendous news for the State's depleted reservoirs, arid soils, and thirsty trees. But what may have been a wet winter so far may not be the case in the months ahead.

LVMWD's service area receives all our drinking water from the State Water Project via the California Aqueduct through the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD). Our water travels over 400 miles from Lake Oroville at the base of the Northern Sierra Mountain range. Because of our location within MWD's distribution system, we cannot receive adequate Colorado River supplies to meet the demands of residents and businesses throughout the region. Snowpack and rain comprise our drinking water supply entirely. The District does recycle about 20 percent of this water for use in landscape irrigation.



The California Department of Water Resources issues daily hydrologic conditions throughout the year. On average the Northern Sierra Mountains receives 53.2 inches of precipitation annually. In the 2016-2017 water year, 94.7 inches of precipitation was recorded making it the wettest year on record, while last year, 24 inches of precipitation was recorded making it the third driest year on record. To begin the year, only 30.2 inches of precipitation has fallen on the Northern Sierras.

The precipitation has allowed Lake Oroville (pictured) to fill to 42% of its capacity thus far, creating optimism among water agencies. "LVMWD is seeing what you are seeing... much needed rain and snow in the Sierra Nevada Mountains and here in parched Southern California," said John Zhao, LVMWD's Director of Facilities and Operations. "The rain is making up the deficit in

the State's water storage supplies, but we need a few more precipitation events like these to climb out of drought conditions."

LVMWD continues to ask customers to eliminate all excessive or wasteful water use to avoid penalties and to minimize outdoor irrigation which is not permitted for 48

hours after a measurable precipitation event. All residents control how much or little water they use. Minimizing water usage is a community effort which benefits everyone. California is on the front line of climate change impacts as we are now observing with these periods of drought lasting longer and coming more frequently.

Erratic weather patterns like we have experienced in recent years demonstrates that "Conservation is a California Way of Life" and that we cannot be assured that wet trends will continue. "Many of our customers have stepped up and significantly curbed their water usage in recent years," said Dave Roberts, LVMWD's Resource Conservation Manager. "Our new normal is prioritizing water use efficiency so our supplies can be stretched when it's dry."

Regional Partnership Forms In Face of Water Supply Shortages

A collaborative of local water districts including Las Virgenes Municipal Water District (LVMWD), Triunfo Water & Sanitation District (TWSD), and Calleguas Municipal Water District (Calleguas) are urging significant water use reductions by their customers after the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) announced a 0% initial allocation from the State Water Project (SWP) for the upcoming year. After record snow and rain, DWR more recently revised their allocation to a 15% allocation, which is still far too little to meet the regions historical water demands.



With limited to no local sources of water, LVMWD, along with TWSD and Calleguas, depend heavily on imported water from the State Water Project (SWP) purchased through the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD). Given their location in MWD's service area, all three agencies substantially rely on SWP supplies; only a limited amount of Colorado River water can reach the westernmost portion of MWD's service area due to pumping and infrastructure constraints – increasing the urgency to step up conservation actions locally. Logistically, insufficient allocations from the SWP will impact this region the most.

LVMWD, TWSD, and Calleguas have developed universal materials that they hope to inspire the region to kick their water conservation actions into high gear. The hope is to link the historic low reservoir levels to the water each agency delivers to their customers and drive home the fact that outdoor water waste must be curtailed, where up to 70% of all residential water use occurs. Replacing thirsty turf with drought-tolerant landscaping, installing efficient drip irrigation systems, checking for leaks, and replacing old watering timers with smart irrigation controllers can provide significant water and money savings.

LVMWD customers can visit LVMWD.com/DroughtResponse for more information on the District's Local Drought Emergency, restrictions under Stage 3 of its Water Shortage Contingency Plan, and penalties for excessive water use and wasteful practices.

Conservation rebates can be found at www.socalwatersmart.com

LVMWD Tools to Help Customers Save

More information on LVMWD water budgets can be found at www.LVMWD.com/WaterBudgets

Rebates for water saving devices can be found at www.LVMWD.com/Rebates

Rachio users can watch a tips and tricks video including how to reduce you irrigation by 25% at www.LVMWD.com/Rachio

Information on picking up free compost can be viewed at www.LVMWD.com/Community-Compost

Register for your WaterSmart portal and take advantage of near real time water use and leak detection www.LVMWD.watersmart.com

Important Information for LVMWD Customers:

Due to worsening drought conditions and anticipated water shortages, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District (LVMWD) has notified customers via mail or email that the District has reduced outdoor watering budgets for billing periods after November 30, 2021. LVMWD has declared a State of Emergency and escalated its Water Shortage Contingency Plan from Stage 2 to Stage 3 – Water Shortage Emergency. At this time, we are anticipating a shortage in water supply, which calls for mandatory reductions in water use and are requesting all customers to use water efficiently if they have not been doing so already.

Outdoor watering budgets have been reduced by 25 percent. Customers with outdoor water budgets or with water accounts that are dedicated for irrigation, including recycled water accounts, will have a reduced water budget. We will also begin implementing the assessment of penalties that are triggered under a Stage 3 – Water Shortage Emergency. Customers that exceed their revised water budgets by more than one and a half times (150%), will be subject to these penalties and enforcement actions. All customers will be subject to these penalties.

Summary of Penalties (Section 3-4.202 and 7-1.112 of the Administrative Code)

- **1st penalty: A warning will be provided.**
- **2nd penalty: An extra charge of \$2.50 per unit of water (748 gallons) over 150% of water budget.**
- **3rd penalty: An extra charge of \$5.00 per unit of water over 150% of budget. Customers that receive a 3rd or subsequent penalties are also subject to the installation of a flow restriction device.**
- **4th penalty: An extra charge of \$7.50 per unit of water over 150% of budget.**
- **5th and subsequent penalties: An extra charge of \$10.00 per unit of water over 150% of budget.**

To avoid these penalties, please be aware of your revised outdoor water budget in the coming months and adjust your outdoor watering schedule accordingly. If you typically use all or more of your outdoor water budget, the simplest course of action is to reduce the runtime on your irrigation system by 25 percent compared to the same time last year. More detailed information is available at www.LVMWD.com/DroughtResponse. Should you have any questions or need assistance from us, please contact Customer Service at 818-251-2200 or by e-mailing us at Customer_Service@lvmwd.com.



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District Counsel
Olivarez Madrugá Lemieux O'Neill, LLP

You may direct communications to LVMWD Board members by sending an e-mail to: board@LVMWD.com

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

Board Meetings are now live-streamed on the District's website at LVMWD.com/LiveStream

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

Check 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.

Rebate Information
LVMWD.com/Rebates

Potable Water
Recycled Water
Waste Water Treatment
Biosolids Composting
Advanced Water Treatment



4232 Las Virgenes Road
Calabasas, CA 91302
LVMWD.com

Advanced Meter Project Update

One of the most effective tools customers can leverage to help them stay in budget is the LVMWD WaterSmart portal. As part of our Advanced Meter Project, which replaces old meters at the end of their useful lifespan with advanced meters that can provide near real-time water use data and leak detection monitoring, the WaterSmart portal is the customer's window into the water that passes through their meter and onto their property.

Currently, the Advanced Meter Project is running on schedule with approximately 9,500 of 21,000 meters already installed and the remainder slated to be in place by June of 2022. This means that a large segment of our customers can already access their water use data through the WaterSmart portal and now have a number of tools to help them maximize the efficiency of their water use. Some of the tools WaterSmart provides are:

- ***View hourly, daily and historical water use from any internet connected device***
- ***Check for unusual or excessive water use which could indicate a leak***
- ***Set alerts and communication settings to ensure you are staying in budget***

If you have not had your new advanced meter installed, look for a postcard in your mail about 3 - 4 weeks in advance of installation that provides details. Customers don't have to be home for the new meter to be installed and a District contractor, following proper social distancing protocols, will knock on the door to notify you that the meter is being replaced. The process will take about 20 minutes to complete and will require the water to your home to be shut off. After installation is complete, a door hanger will be left with additional information about the WaterSmart portal and benefits of your new advanced meter. Visit www.LVMWD.com/AdvancedMeter to view a tutorial on how to register and optimize your WaterSmart portal, additional project information and to view the project installation schedule.

The WaterSmart portal is a way for customers to monitor the water they use and prevent wasteful leaks and excessive use. **Registration for WaterSmart is FREE and EASY - just follow the instructions below.**



**Create Your New
Advanced Meter
Account Now!**

**Visit our new Customer Connect Portal and setup your
account in 3 easy steps:**

- STEP 1:** Go to www.lvmwd.watersmart.com on your computer or smart device
- STEP 2:** Enter your account number and zip code and click "find my account"
- STEP 3:** Provide an email address and a password to access your portal in the future