

# Groundwater Quality Protection and Assessment Districts

The Mission Springs Water District Groundwater Quality Protection Project is a comprehensive water resource management effort that:

1. Eliminates known pollution sources.
2. Reclaims water to reduce demand on limited groundwater resources.
3. Protects underground storage capacity.
4. Leverages multiple funding opportunities.

The Mission Springs Water District **Groundwater Quality Protection Project** is a comprehensive water resource management effort that:

- 01 | ELIMINATES KNOWN POLLUTION SOURCES**
- 02 | RECLAIMS WATER TO REDUCE DEMAND ON LIMITED GROUNDWATER RESOURCES**
- 03 | PROTECTS UNDERGROUND STORAGE CAPACITY**
- 04 | LEVERAGES MULTIPLE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

Mission Springs Water District requests continued consideration in the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) 219 Work Plan:  
Funding Priority for 2024  
- \$3.6 million for the Design, Repackaging and Construction of Area J-2 Wastewater Collection System. Serving 325 Homes/Parcels  
MSWD requests that Congress increase funding for Section 219 Environmental Infrastructure Projects for FY 2024



The Groundwater Quality Protection Project overlies a region where high-quality, potable water is delivered, but not treated for direct reuse. Expansion of the sewer system and regional wastewater treatment plant will reclaim water to reduce groundwater demand and protect underground storage capacity – providing a sustainable water future for generations to come.

**MAKING PROGRESS**

- Completion of the Henry Wright Regional Water Treatment Plant, which will treat up to 100% of the MSWD wastewater system, allowing more homes to transition to the system and making MSWD one step closer to meeting its groundwater protection goals.
- 80% of the seven AD 31 sub-catch basins designed and will be substantially complete by the end of 2023. To date, more than \$28 million in private investment has been leveraged by the Assessment Districts, in concert with \$54 million in State/Federal grant funding has resulted in:
- More than 4,800 parcels made sewer service-ready
- More than 33 miles of sewer lines installed
- More than 11,600 additional Desert Hot Springs residents provided with wastewater service
- More than 30 million gallons of sewage will be prevented from percolating into the groundwater each year

GROUNDWATER QUALITY PROTECTION PROJECT | MAKING PROGRESS

## Assessment Districts

MSWD is dedicated to protecting our local groundwater supply. One of the most important ways we do this is by replacing septic systems with central sewer to treat wastewater in an environmentally sound manner. More than \$25 million in local match funds through property-secured Assessment...

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**KEEPING OUR HEAD ABOVE WATER**  
Every Little Drop Helps

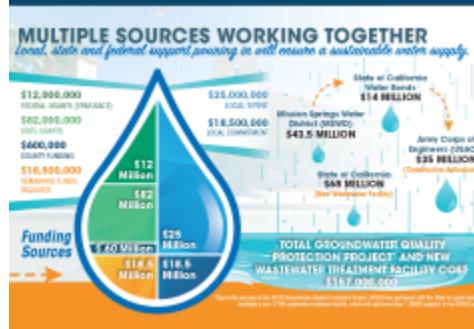
- 1995: Septic enforcement program initiated
- 1996: MSWD starts identifying septic systems as primary groundwater threat
- 2000: Reclaiming authorization (RAST) passed by voters
- 2004: AD12 passed by voters
- 2006: AD11 completed; 1,400 parcels connected to sewer
- 2008: AD11 completed; 1,400 parcels connected to sewer
- 2007: RAST construction authorization received; \$35 million for AD12 design
- 2009 - 2010: Received \$1.2 million in grants from the State for design of Areas A and G
- 2011: Received \$1.2 million in grants from the State for design of Areas A and G
- 2012: AD12 design completed; 1,400 parcels connected to sewer
- 2013: AD13 passed by voters
- 2014 - 2015: Areas E-E.5, M-L-D-3, E5-G, J-E, and K-E completed; 1,400 parcels connected to sewer
- 2016: Received \$1.2 million in grants from the State for design of Areas A and G
- 2017: AD14 passed by voters
- 2018: Received \$1.1 million in grants from the State for design of Areas A and G
- 2019: AD15 passed by voters
- 2020: New reclaimed wastewater plant completed, totaling 7.4 MGD capacity
- 2021 - 2022: Received \$1.1 million in grants from the State for design of Areas A and G
- 2023: Accepted \$4.9 million grant from the State for design of Areas A and G

GROUNDWATER QUALITY PROTECTION PROJECT | EVERY LITTLE DROP HELPS

## History of ADs & Wastewater Capacity

Residents of the Desert Hot Springs area have long recognized the need to protect our groundwater. This guardianship extends back prior to the 1970's when AD-1 was successfully formed and the Alan L. Horton Wastewater Treatment Plant was constructed. Since that time, area residents have approved...

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[List of MSWD Assessment Districts](#)

Residents of the Desert Hot Springs area have long recognized the need for protecting our groundwater. This guardianship extends back prior to the 1970s, when AD-1 was successfully formed. Since that time, area residents have approved a total of eight assessment districts in and around Desert...

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[Find My Home or Parcel](#)

To find your assessment district, enter your street address or parcel number into the MSWD Geoviewer.

[Read More](#)

## Supporting Documents

[Assessment District Map 2.15 MB](#)

## Related Questions

### **How do I know if my home is in an Assessment District**

Visit our public [Geoviewer](#) and input your address and or parcel number to determine if you are in an MSWD assessment district.

### **I am a homeowner and need a copy of the Notice of Assessment, who do I contact?**

For a copy of your Notice of Assessment filed with the County of Riverside, please contact our Accounting Department at 760-329-6448, ext 118.

### **I am an escrow agent and need a lien payoff, who do I contact?**

Please contact MSWD's Customer Service Department at 760-329-6448 or by email at customerservice [at] mswd.org

### **One my street has been sewered, how long do I have to connect?**

Once sewer is available in your area, homeowners have 90-days to apply for sewer, abandon their septic tank, and connect to the sewer lateral. The District offers financial assistance programs to help you with this process. If for some reason you are unable to connect within the 90-day requirement, we can provide an extension; however, you should contact the District to discuss options and programs available to help you connect. Please contact the District at 760-329-5169 ext. 131 or 149 more information.

# **What criteria does MSWD use when deciding, which areas get sewer first?**

In 1998, MSWD established three areas of consideration in establishing the alphabetical ranking (priority) sequence in which sewer projects would proceed. Their three areas of consideration were:

- 1) Concentration of septic tanks near potable wells
2. Septic tank failures in each area
3. Proximity to currently seweried areas

With new sewer construction projects on the horizon in 2006, District staff revisited the original priority criteria expanding the original criteria to include the following:

- 1) Demographic concerns
- 2) Economic feasibility for the District
- 3) Density of homes
- 4) Total parcels
- 5) Hot Water Zone
- 6) Development levels of the area
- 7) Septic tank failures in the area
- 8) Proximity to current seweried areas
- 9) concentration of sewer tanks near wells
- 10) Additional weight for design or installation of facilities costs

Staff has made numerous public meeting presentations regarding the priority list, including a joint presentation to the City Council and our Board in recent years. Of course, everyone wants their area completed first; however, the criteria evaluation provides the District with a fair and equitable method for assigning the sequence, unfettered by bias, influence, or preference.

# **What is a "Notice of Assessment" and why is there one attached to my property?**

After an Assessment District has been approved by voters, MSWD files what is known as a "Notice of Assessment" on all homes/parcels within the AD with Riverside County so that potential buyers understand that at some point, when we are ready to construct the sewer lines on that street, they will be responsible for the cost of construction.

After the Notice of Assessment is filed, there is no lien to release or pay, this is simply a notice for the future. Once construction is complete, we will communicate with the property owner on file, and at that point, we will alert them of the sewer assessment. They can then pay the amount in full or let it go onto their property taxes with a 20-year payoff schedule.

# **What is an Assessment District and how are they legal?**

Assessment Districts are a financing/purchasing tool used to guarantee a loan. Typically, they are used to divide the cost of large public infrastructure projects between numerous recipients who receive benefits from those projects.

In 1978 Californians enacted Proposition 13, which limited the ability of local public agencies to increase property taxes based on a property's assessed value. Since that time, Assessment Districts, which have been in existence since the early 1900's, have been used on a widespread basis as an alternative method for financing public improvements. Currently, about one in three properties in California is part of an [Assessment District](#).

# **Who do I contact for more information related to Assessment Districts?**

For more information related to Assessment Districts, please contact MSWD's Public Affairs team at 760-329-6448 ext. 145 or email us at [pr \[at\] mswd.org](mailto:pr@mswd.org).

# **Why is sewer important?**

Expansion of the sewer system saves money and protects our aquifer, our only source of drinking water. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the cleanup of

contaminated groundwater is 10 to 100 times the cost of prevention.

[View All FAQ's](#)