

# Water Matters



## Improving water quality to create a stronger community

Mission Springs Water District is recognized worldwide for its great-tasting, high-quality water earning an unprecedented ten medals at the International Water Tasting Competition in Berkeley Springs, West Virginia. **The secret ingredient is our groundwater.** To preserve this valuable resource for generations to come, MSWD broke ground recently on its Regional Water Reclamation Facility. Construction of the \$68 million wastewater treatment plant and related projects marks the beginning of a better future for water in the Desert Hot Springs area.

The new plant will expand treatment capacity and allow the District to transfer an additional 700 homes and businesses from septic tanks to the centralized sewer system. Property owners will no longer need to worry about maintaining their personal systems, and the entire community will benefit from improved wastewater treatment. The sewer system ensures untreated wastewater from septic tanks doesn't seep into and contaminate groundwater.

When the facility is operational next fall, it will process up to 1.5 million gallons of wastewater each day – a 75% increase in system capacity when coupled with the District's existing Desert Crest and Alan L. Horton Wastewater Treatment Facilities. Other upgrades include more than 17,000 feet of pipes connecting additional customers to the system.

The project provides additional benefits for current and future customers. Reduced wastewater volume at the Horton Wastewater Treatment Plant will extend the operational life of that facility by about 10 years. The increased treatment capacity will also support future growth in Desert Hot Springs and the surrounding area.



**Arden Wallum**  
General Manager

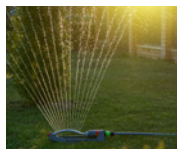
## Nighttime is the right time for outdoor watering

### New approaches to help you conserve

Dry conditions persist across California, intensifying drought impacts in all regions of the state. While MSWD has access to a stable supply of groundwater sufficient to meet demand, the District is taking action to protect supplies and reduce water use during the drought.

In June, in response to state drought emergency orders, MSWD moved to Level 2 of its Water Shortage Contingency Plan. Water waste patrols are increasing, restaurants are only allowed to serve water upon request, overseeding lawns is discouraged and outdoor irrigation is prohibited during daylight hours.

Not only is it important to water early in the morning during a drought to minimize evaporation, but this is also key to ensuring plants and grass retain moisture. Watering during the night and early morning allows more of the water to reach the roots.



## Save water by using our new Customer Connect Portal

Overnight watering is only a first step to water conservation. MSWD's new Customer Connect portal also presents a water-saving opportunity by providing information and insights on consumption, possible leaks and inefficiencies. The online resource offers customized suggestions on ways to reduce water use and the amount of money that can be saved by making small changes over a year.

See how simple it is to start tracking your water use and saving water! Use this QR code to watch a short video on how to sign up and start enjoying all the features of our new web portal.

### Follow these steps to enroll:

1. Visit [MSWD.org/CustomerConnect](http://MSWD.org/CustomerConnect)
2. Enter your MSWD account number and ZIP code
3. Click on "Find My Account" to set up your username and password

**If you have questions or need further assistance, please call our office at 760.329.6448.**



## Share your water knowledge to win prizes!



Students can show-off their creativity and water smarts by entering MSWD's Water Conservation & Groundwater Protection Calendar Drawing Contest.

Submissions should be based on one of the below themes:

- Save water
- Properly dispose of fats, oils and grease (FOG)
- Clean cars at a car wash
- Protect drinking water quality
- Don't flush wipes
- Use of water-efficient desert landscaping

The contest is open to all K-12 students at schools within the MSWD service area. Each student may submit one drawing that focuses on one message only.

Twelve winning entries will be showcased in our 2023 community calendar, with prizes of up to \$150 in Amazon gift cards awarded to the winners. **The deadline to enter is October 3, 2022.**

### How to Enter:

- Draw or paint an original picture depicting one of the six themes.
- Send entries and a completed application form to:  
**Mission Springs Water District**  
66575 Second Street, Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240

To receive an application form and learn more about the contest, please visit [www.MSWD.org/calendarcontest](http://www.MSWD.org/calendarcontest) or call **760.329.6448 ext. 121 or 145.**

## Cash in on conservation rebates

**Water-saving upgrades will reduce water use and save you money over time.** To sweeten the deal, MSWD offers cash rebates to help offset the initial costs of these upgrades.

### Ditch the grass with an outdoor makeover!



Reduce outdoor water usage by converting lawns to desert-friendly landscaping. The Turf Removal Rebate Program offers rebates of \$2 per square foot for turf replacement. Residential customers can receive up to \$3,000 in rebates and commercial customer rebates top out at \$10,000.

### Don't flush money down the drain!

Replace your toilet with a high-efficiency model and get up to \$100 back from MSWD. Residential customers qualify for rebates on toilets that use 1.28 gallons or less per flush. Proof of purchase and evidence of recycling of the old toilet is required.

Visit [www.mswd.org/rebates](http://www.mswd.org/rebates) to learn more about these programs.

## Behind on your bills? Help is available to avoid disconnections!

**At Mission Springs Water District, we believe that supporting our neighbors builds a stronger, more connected community.** Due to restrictions in California's Constitution, MSWD cannot offer discounted water rates or bill credits/forgiveness to low-income or senior customers. However, the District offers payment plans to help customers bring their accounts current. MSWD has also partnered with multiple community agencies to help customers in need.

The Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) is a temporary emergency assistance program to help low-income families with past due water/sewer bills, up to \$2,000. To qualify, you must be a Riverside County resident, have an unpaid water/sewer bill, and meet income guidelines. MSWD has also partnered with United Way of the Desert to create Help2Others, a fund that provides bill assistance to low-income customers. MSWD employees and vendors contribute thousands of dollars each year to Help2Others and United Way of the Desert to meet this need.

Eligible MSWD customers who participate in Help2Others can receive a \$100 credit on their water bill once in a 12-month period. Renters may also qualify for utility assistance through United Lift. All MSWD customers can also set up payment plans to provide additional time to become current on their accounts. To learn more about LIHWAP, Help2Others and other assistance programs available to MSWD customers, visit [MSWD.org/billassistance](http://MSWD.org/billassistance) or call **760.329.6448.**

### MSWD IS HERE FOR YOU!

Contact us if you have questions or concerns about your water bill. We are here to help answer questions and provide assistance. Give us a call at **760.329.6448.**

### MSWD BOARD MEETINGS

The Board of Directors meets on the third Monday of each month, and the Thursday prior to that Monday for study session. Meetings begin at 3 p.m. The public is encouraged to attend these meetings to learn more about the water district. Meeting agendas are posted online days prior to a meeting and include the time and location. Meeting agendas will contain information about any adjustments to participation procedures due to COVID-19.