

# Water Features

Goleta Water District News – Winter 2015



*Even with winter rains, we are in a*

**Stage II Water Shortage Emergency**



**Drought in the Goleta Valley**  
*Saving water together.*

***Learn about FREE programs to help you save water!***

The Goleta Water District declared a Stage II Water Shortage Emergency in September which established mandatory water use restrictions for the District and its customers. Water thrifty Goleta Water District customers are already saving water, but conserving more helps extend water supplies and delay a Stage III Drought declaration. You can save even more water with District rebate programs, devices, and simple practices.

***Plus: Water is Essential to the Life of Our Community.***

*[Photo: Our principal water source, Lake Cachuma]*







# Drought Status Update

First, a big thank you to Goleta Water District customers for your commitment to conservation, and your prudent past investment in the diverse water supply that will get us through this current drought. There are communities throughout California that no longer have water when they turn on the tap. Here in the Goleta Valley despite receiving only 45% of our normal delivery from Lake Cachuma we can make up that shortfall with significant conservation and by utilizing the drought buffer in our groundwater basin. Even with winter rains, conservation remains critical. A Stage II Water Shortage Emergency was declared in September 2014, but as the projected twelve month water supply drops to 76% of normal supplies we are rapidly approaching a Stage III declaration if conservation does not increase.

Living with a history of drought means Goleta Water District customers understand the value of water and the need to conserve. Overall, customers have cut back their water use by 10% system wide since the Stage II Water Shortage Emergency was declared in September of 2014. Residential per capita water use has continued to decline, from 62 gallons per day in October to 46 gallons per day in November, and there is high consciousness among customers of the need to conserve water supplies. The use of low-flow devices is wide-spread in Goleta Valley households. Our local agricultural customers employ some of the most aggressive water efficiency protocols in the state of California with drip irrigation, and the use of California Irrigation Management Information System (CIMIS) monitoring stations that allow them to sync irrigation to local weather patterns.

Conservation is needed for reasons beyond this drought; we also face future water supply challenges, both in terms of supply and the costs associated with delivering water to customers. Please take a few minutes to read about the water supply hurdles our community faces in the near future.

The District is committed to helping you save water, and that includes providing you the tools and information to do so. You'll find more information on the District Demonstration Gardens, the Smart Landscape Rebate Program, and some of the water saving devices available at the District office. Whether you are a residential, commercial, or agricultural customer there are rebate programs and assistance for everyone.

Let's all save water together.

John McInnes

General Manager

## Stage II Water Shortage Emergency Restrictions Reminder

- ◆ Hoses used for any purpose must be equipped with a shut-off nozzle.
- ◆ Direct application of water to sidewalks, pavements, open ground, or other hard surfaced area is generally prohibited.
- ◆ Washing buildings, dwellings or other structures is generally prohibited.
- ◆ Vehicles and boats may only be washed at commercial car washing facilities or with a hose equipped with a shut-off nozzle.
- ◆ Use of water in outdoor fountains, reflection ponds, and decorative water features is prohibited unless located on a residential property or home to aquatic life as of September 9, 2014.
- ◆ Outdoor landscape irrigation is limited to no more than two times per week during early morning or late evening hours, as follows:
  - Manual watering (including with a sprinkler attached to a hose) is only allowed before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m., any two days per week.
  - Use of fixed (i.e., installed) sprinkler systems must comply with the following schedule:
    - Residential properties may water Wednesdays and Saturdays, before 7 a.m. or after 7 p.m.
    - Commercial and institutional properties may water Tuesdays and Fridays, before 7 a.m. or after 7 p.m.

# Recycled Water – New Signs for the Times

The District has created new signage aimed at educating the public on the role of recycled water in preserving potable water supplies, and in helping meet Stage II Water Shortage Emergency Regulations. Customers will be seeing the new signs at parks, golf courses, UCSB and on other landscaping that uses recycled water. As everyone is being asked to cut back, these signs let the public know that these properties are doing their part to preserve water for drinking, health and human safety.



*District recycled water sign placed in a drought tolerant garden at the Storke Ranch condominium properties.*

Q&A

## Recent Customer Questions & Answers

### **Q: How come there's development during a drought?**

**A:** Under state law the District is obligated to provide water service to projects that have pre-existing water entitlements. Any development which is occurring now is utilizing pre-existing water entitlements. The District is not, however, obligated to provide new water service if a water shortage emergency has been declared and a proposed project does not have pre-existing water entitlements. Since the District has declared such an emergency, proposed development projects without pre-existing water entitlement are not being processed and are not being hooked up to the District water system. This is consistent with the terms of the District's voter-approved SAFE Water Supplies Ordinance which stipulates when and under what conditions new water connections can be approved. It is important to recognize that the District is not a land use agency and does not have the authority to approve or deny development. That is the responsibility of City Councils and County Boards of Supervisors. That's why the District encourages the City of Goleta and County of Santa Barbara to incorporate water conservation requirements into their respective land use processes as they consider development proposals that come before them.

### **Q: Why is my bill the same from month to month – to the penny? How can that be?**

**A:** The District bills water usage in hundred cubic feet (HCF) which is one full turn of the dial on the meter (1 HCF = 748 gallons), so it is not uncommon for customers to be billed the same amount several months in a row unless there is a significant change in outdoor watering or the residence is vacant for part of the billing period. Because the District rounds down to the nearest full HCF and does not bill on tenths or hundredths of an HCF, the same monthly consumption amount may be reflected on several bills. As the monthly service charge also does not typically change over time, for many customers their total bill amount may be identical to the previous bill down to the penny.

### **Q: I heard there are some state efforts to protect groundwater basins – are you involved with that?**

**A:** The new state laws focus on basins that currently lack any formal oversight. The Goleta Groundwater Basin, which is the largest basin within the District, is largely unaffected by the new rules as it is an adjudicated basin governed under a longstanding court decision. The Wright Judgment establishes who has rights to the basin and what the sustainable yield is that those parties can extract each year. Many of the practices already in place in the Goleta Valley are the same types of practices that other areas will be required to comply with in the future as new state laws are implemented. The District supports this state effort to protect community groundwater supplies.

### **Q: In some places statewide, people are drilling water wells that go into community aquifers – can that be stopped during this drought?**

**A:** Our groundwater supplies are precious and critical to provide for the community's long term sustainability. The District vigorously protects the water rights of its customers and has gone to court to enforce them. The District is opposed to any attempts to drill in the basin outside of the Wright Judgment, or to drill into a connected basin in a way that would have an adverse impact on the Goleta Groundwater Basin.



# Helping Customers Save Water!

Water thrifty Goleta Water District customers are already doing their part to save water, but conserving more helps extend water supplies and delay a Stage III Drought declaration. Find out additional ways you can save even more water with these rebate programs, devices, and simple practices.

## Water Saving Devices Distribution Program

Looking for an easy-to-install, cost effective way to save more water? The District is giving away free water saving devices such as low-flow shower heads and shut-off valves, faucet aerators, shut-off nozzles for hoses, as well as toilet leak detection kits to customers.\* Not only do these devices help you save water, they also comply with the Stage II Emergency Water Shortage Restrictions that require all hoses to be equipped with a shut-off nozzle, and for leaks to be addressed within 48 hours. A leaky toilet can waste 200 gallons of water a day!



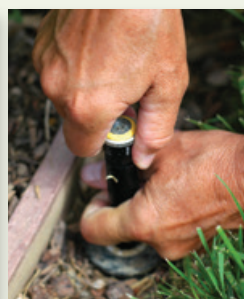
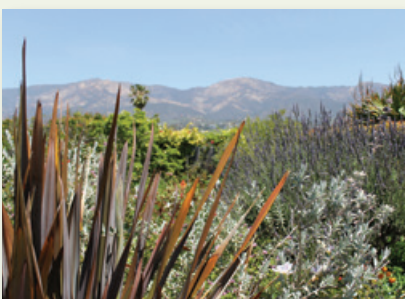
For more information please call (805) 964-6761 or visit [www.goletawater.com](http://www.goletawater.com).

*\*While supplies last, for pick-up at the District office.*

## Smart Landscape Rebate Program

Outdoor irrigation accounts for nearly 50% of water use. The Smart Landscape Rebate Program offers up to \$1,000 for residential customers to put in water efficient landscaping. Eligible expenses include design services, waterwise plants, pool covers, graywater laundry system parts, and water efficient irrigation equipment. Commercial, multi-family (HOA), and dedicated landscape irrigation meter customers qualify for up to \$2,000 per meter, up to two meters.

Please call (805) 964-6761 or visit [www.goletawater.com](http://www.goletawater.com) for a full list of program details.





# Drought Tolerant Landscape



## Demonstration Gardens

In order to help customers create beautiful gardens that also conserve water we offer our attractive Demonstration Gardens at the Goleta Water District Office at: 4699 Hollister Avenue, Goleta (across from San Marcos High School). The Demonstration Gardens feature 7 garden “rooms,” including Southern California Native, Traditional, Mediterranean, Perennial, Desert, Exotic, and the new Edible Garden. These gardens demonstrate waterwise plants and efficient irrigation techniques such as mulching, drip irrigation systems, low-profile sprinklers, sustainable drainage and rain catchment systems, and even hugelkultur, which utilizes a hill mound that acts like a sponge to store and release rainwater.

Plant lists and garden maps are available at [www.goletawater.com](http://www.goletawater.com), and the gardens are open to the public for free during regular business hours, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## Recycled Water Hauling Program

The District, for the first time, is offering delivery of recycled water by truck. In response to current drought conditions, the NEW Recycled Water Hauling Program conserves drinking water supplies during the drought by providing recycled water for outdoor irrigation. Now all Goleta Water District customers can apply to purchase recycled water. Recycled water is typically used for landscape irrigation, but can also be used for dust control, agriculture and construction, though there may be restrictions and specific needs to consider depending on the intended use.

Please call (805) 964-6761 or visit [www.goletawater.com](http://www.goletawater.com) for additional program information including a rate sheet.



*Goleta multi-unit property landscaped with orange trees and irrigated with recycled water.*

## Winter Outdoor Water Saving Tips

- Turn off your sprinklers before, during and immediately after it rains.
- With cooler winter temperatures plants need less water. Adjust your irrigation controller using the water adjust calculator at [www.WaterWiseSB.org](http://www.WaterWiseSB.org) to accommodate winter watering best-practices.
- Check for and fix leaks in your irrigation system.
- Enroll or encourage your gardener to get certified in landscaping best practices as a Green Gardener. Learn more at [www.WaterWiseSB.org/greengardener](http://www.WaterWiseSB.org/greengardener).
- Install a rain-barrel catchment system to capture and reuse winter rain runoff.
- Redirect downspouts to capture water or direct runoff to garden areas.

For more water saving tips and information visit [www.WaterWiseSB.org](http://www.WaterWiseSB.org) and follow the **Goleta Water District** on **Twitter** and **Facebook!**

[facebook.com/GoletaWaterDistrict](https://facebook.com/GoletaWaterDistrict)    [twitter.com/GoletaWater](https://twitter.com/GoletaWater)



# Water is Essential to the Life of Our Community

Over the last 70 years, the Goleta Water District has invested substantially to develop a diverse water supply portfolio and the infrastructure needed to deliver that water to the Goleta Valley. That multi-decades effort has been made possible in large part by you, our ratepayers. This preparation, combined with community-wide conservation efforts and the District's current infrastructure investment and maintenance plans, will help us all get through this long, difficult drought. Yet even the most proactive management efforts will not completely protect our Goleta Valley community from critical water supply challenges on the horizon.

## Emergency Pumping System Ready and Able at Lake Cachuma

Lake Cachuma has dropped to a level not seen since the 1980s-'90s drought. Without significant late winter rains, the surface of the lake will soon be below the level of the intake gate that connects to the delivery pipeline for the South Coast. Keeping the water flowing to over 250,000 people has required the Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board (COMB), comprised of the Goleta Water District and other local water agencies, to build a \$7.7 million emergency pumping system. While the emergency pumping facility has been partially funded through grants from the State Water Resources Control Board and the Department of Water Resources, the ongoing cost of operating and maintaining the system will be a large financial burden that will continue until the lake elevation rises substantially and the gravity-fed system can resume. Additionally, because of the low lake level, the District and the other South Coast water agencies will receive only 45% of their usual annual supply from the lake this year.



*The COMB Emergency Pumping System at Lake Cachuma will ensure water deliveries even as lake levels fall.*

## Groundwater Wells Working Overtime

In part because the District anticipated reduced Cachuma supply, we have committed significant resources to expanding our groundwater well operations. The District's groundwater wells have increased production by 400% and are now providing over 50% of the water delivered to our customers. This is possible because of the ongoing investment the District, through our ratepayers, has made in protecting the long-term sustainability of the Goleta Groundwater Basin. The basin contains a bank of water that has been saved for times of drought. Behind this critical drought supply program is the District's long-term sustainable water management plan, consistent with the Wright Judgment, which adjudicated the basin, and the voter-approved SAFE Water Supply Ordinance.

In order to meet customer water needs in 2015, the District will rehabilitate three existing wells and develop plans for two new wells. This increased reliance on groundwater wells brings with it significantly increased costs, both for the energy used in pumping and the work to maintain aging wells and enhance their pumping capabilities.



*The District is tapping into its diverse groundwater supplies with state of the industry technologies.*



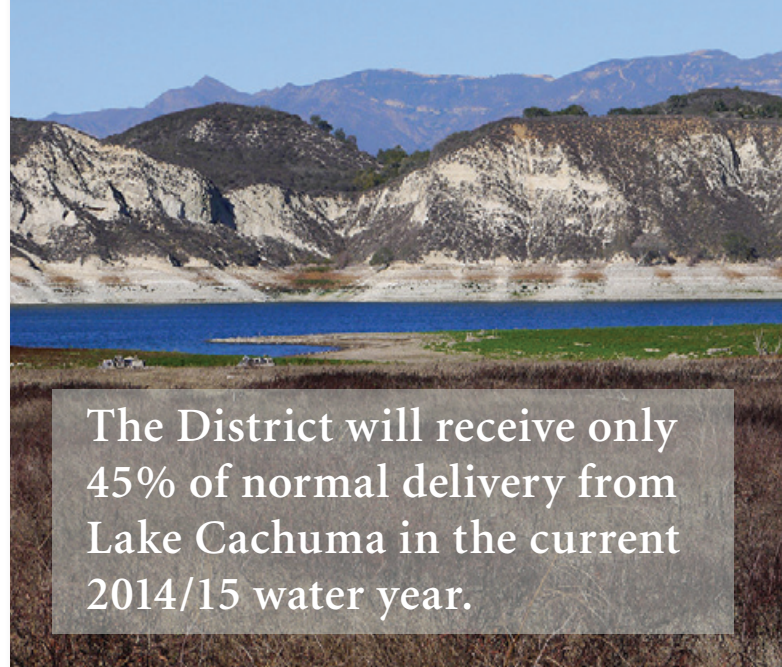
# Cachuma Water Rights Policy Heats Up

As you may know, Lake Cachuma, our principal water source, is a federally-owned facility. The District and the other South Coast water agencies purchase Cachuma water from the federal government. For over 20 years, these five Cachuma member water agencies, including the District, have assisted the federal government and stakeholders along the Santa Ynez River to develop fish management programs that protect both the federally-listed endangered Southern California Steelhead as well as the region's drinking and agricultural water supplies in the lake. This collaboration includes the development and implementation of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) 2000 Biological Opinion, which mandated the enhancement of habitat for the Southern California Steelhead population in the Lower Santa Ynez River below Lake Cachuma. Since 1993, over \$20 million has been invested in these habitat management activities. Even during the current drought, the federal government continues to release 10 acre feet, or 3.25 million gallons of water, from Lake Cachuma every day to comply with the requirements set forth in the Biological Opinion.



*Southern California Steelhead Trout.*

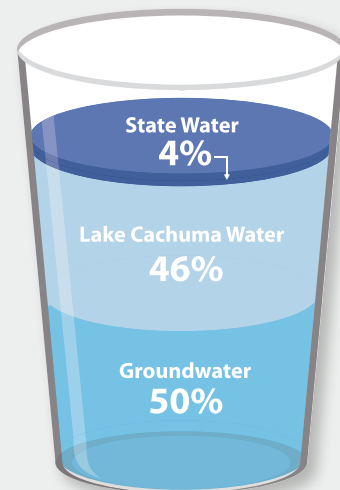
Two federal agencies – the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) and NMFS – are finalizing a review, or re-consultation, of this 2000 Biological Opinion. As the re-consultation nears completion this year, many local officials are deeply concerned that the federal government will issue an updated Biological Opinion that mandates the annual release of substantial additional water from Lake Cachuma into the Lower Santa Ynez River for the Steelhead. Such a requirement, above and beyond the current continuing, successful fish habitat efforts, may result in additional loss of drinking water supplies for the region and add millions of dollars of new costs to District customers. The District is strongly encouraging USBR to recognize and build upon two decades of collaborative fish habitat management projects that have proven that providing sustainable water supplies to both fish and people is possible.



The District will receive only 45% of normal delivery from Lake Cachuma in the current 2014/15 water year.

*The future of Lake Cachuma is in the hands of the federal government.*

The District, on behalf of our customers, has long supported the co-equal goals of supplying water for the many needs of the Goleta Valley community and complying with the federal Endangered Species Act. We will do everything in our power to make local concerns known to the two federal agencies updating the Biological Opinion. But it is very important for our customers to be aware that the ultimate decision about the future of Lake Cachuma, the fish in the Santa Ynez River, and the impacts to District customers, is in the hands of the federal government. We will keep you posted as we learn more.



*Projected District potable water supply sources with percentages for Water Year 2014/15*

**Goleta Water District customers will weather the drought, but a storm over Cachuma water rights looms on the horizon.**



**GOLETA WATER DISTRICT**  
 4699 Hollister Avenue  
 Goleta, California 93110  
 805/964-6761  
[info@goletawater.com](mailto:info@goletawater.com)

**REMEMBER, YOU CAN NOW PAY YOUR BILL ONLINE**

**Visit our website for more information**

[www.GoletaWater.com](http://www.GoletaWater.com) is a great resource  
 Water-Wise Landscaping Tips and Planting  
 Resources | Board Meeting Agendas and  
 Minutes | Information About Rates | Water Quality  
 and more...

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**Dirty Cars Are Drought Chic!**



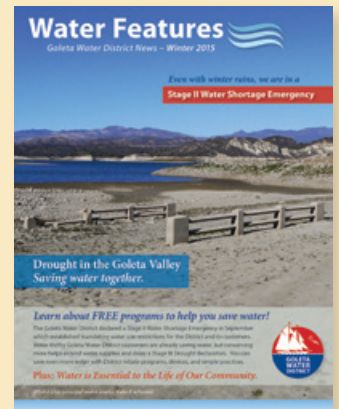
**Take a break from washing your car...** Because a dirty car is stylish during a drought. Want to save water when you do wash? Go to a commercial car wash. Commercial car washes recycle water on-site or send it to a water treatment facility, where it is cleaned and returned to the water cycle. Washing your car at home can use 2 to 3 times more water than a commercial car wash, and the water that flows into the street can't be recovered and reused. If you do wash your car at home, to comply with the Stage II Water Shortage Emergency regulations and state law you must use a shut-off nozzle on your hose.

For more information and water conservation tips, visit [www.WaterWiseSB.org](http://www.WaterWiseSB.org).

**Paperless News! Sign up to receive our e-newsletter.**

The Goleta Water District newsletter is printed with vegetable based inks on recycled paper. As part of our ongoing sustainability efforts, we now offer customers the option of receiving a paperless digital edition of the newsletter. To learn more and sign up, or to download the newsletter, please visit our website at:

[www.GoletaWater.com/newsletters-and-press](http://www.GoletaWater.com/newsletters-and-press).



**Contact us:**

**Call us:**  
 (805) 964-6761  
**Press 1** for drought information

**Visit our office:**  
 4699 Hollister Avenue  
 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mon. – Fri.

**Send us an email:**  
[eNews@GoletaWater.com](mailto:eNews@GoletaWater.com)

**Visit our website:**  
[www.GoletaWater.com](http://www.GoletaWater.com)

**The District Board of Directors** meets on the second Tuesday of every month at 5:30 p.m. at the District office. The public is always welcome.