

The Waterline

Novato's Service Area Newsletter | Volume 21 | Issue 44



**NORTH MARIN
WATER DISTRICT**

Water Supply Update Spring 2020

Drew McIntyre, General Manager

Current Water Supply as of June 1

This year, rainfall in Novato was 70% of average, which is similar to what we experienced in 2018. On the Russian River, Sonoma County Water Agency reservoirs supplying Novato (i.e., Lake Sonoma and Lake Mendocino) are at or above 77% capacity. While ample, multi-year water supply is available in Lake Sonoma, water stored in Lake Mendocino is projected to fall to very low levels. Both water sources are necessary to meet in-stream flow needs for the endangered salmon populations in the Russian River as well as the needs for agriculture and upper Russian River urban users. The current situation on the upper Russian River is similar to what occurred in 2013.

Locally, Stafford Lake water storage capacity is at 68% and is identical to what it was on June 1, 2018. Water production at the Stafford Lake Treatment Plant began in April. Recycled water facilities at both Novato and Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary Districts are operating, and highly treated recycled water is being delivered by NMWD to over 90 large landscape irrigation users and three local gas station car wash facilities. NMWD will continue to utilize our local supplies to the fullest extent possible.

Fisheries Protection

Construction will continue this summer on a 10-year project to enhance fish habitat in Dry Creek, which is downstream of Lake Sonoma and a tributary to the Russian River, at a cost of \$7 million this budget year. Three miles of habitat restoration have occurred to date, and a total of six miles of habitat enhancement are needed. NMWD and other water retailers receiving Russian River supplies are obligated to pay for necessary fishery enhancements on the Russian River system to protect Coho and Chinook salmon, and steelhead trout. Regarding Eel River issues, in May of this year, five diverse entities jointly proposed an ambitious plan to advance restoration of Eel River fisheries while maintaining water security for Russian River basin water users. The Feasibility Study Report Project Plan was filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) as the



next step in the effort toward securing a new license for the Potter Valley Project, which is currently owned by PG&E.

Water Supply Resiliency

Reliance on our existing available supplies from the Russian River and Stafford Lake, expanded use of recycled water to offset potable supplies now used for outside irrigation, and continued emphasis on water use efficiency are vitally important to our water supply resiliency. In addition, NMWD is participating in a Regional Water Supply Resiliency Study with SCWA and the other water retailers to improve integrated water resources coordination and make the region more resilient to potential short and long-term water shortages.

Water Use Efficiency

Novato customers continue to use less water when compared to the state's 2013 benchmark, decreasing their water use from 144 gallons per capita per day (GPCD) in 2013 to 115 GPCD in 2019. This is well below our state-mandated 2020 conservation target of 137 GPCD. As reported in previous newsletters, the state is developing additional long-term water conservation measures that are aimed at making conservation a way of life in California. Customers are urged to participate in the many water conservation programs offered by NMWD. See nmwd.com for details.

New Low Income Rate Assistance (LIRA) Program

Julie Blue, Auditor/Controller

This program is available to eligible low-income customers and provides a credit on a two-month billing cycle of \$15 per bill or \$90 per year. A direct water customer who has a single-family residential account and is eligible for PG&E's income-based CARE program is eligible for the District's LIRA Program. Once approved, the discount would apply to your first billing cycle after July 1, 2020. To request an application or for further information, call our billing department at 415-897-4133 or visit the website at nmwd.com.

District Elections Transitioned to Division-Based

Teme Kehoe, District Secretary

In June 2019, the District established five electoral divisions and transitioned to a division-based election in which each Board member is elected by a specific division within the District. All five board members continue to participate and vote on District-wide matters regardless of the division they represent. Visit nmwd.com to view an interactive map tool that will help you determine the division in which you reside.

Tap Water Is Safe From Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Pablo Ramudo, Water Quality Supervisor

Water served by NMWD to customers is purified using modern treatment techniques to remove pathogens, including bacteria and viruses. Our continuous monitoring ensures that it surpasses all state and federal regulations for health and safety. NMWD staff are working 24/7 to make sure that water is available to you at all times. As you make any preparations to deal with the risks of coronavirus, know that your tap remains a safe, reliable and affordable source of clean water. Quick Fact – it costs less than 30 cents to wash your hands 100 times for 20 seconds per washing.



Pay your bills online.

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NMWD Lawn Replacement Programs

Ryan Grisso, Water Conservation Coordinator

Cash for Grass

NMWD offers a cash incentive for removing regularly maintained and automatically irrigated lawn areas and replacing them with District-approved low water use plantings on drip irrigation. The incentive will pay you up to \$50 per 100 square feet of lawn area you replace (maximum \$400 per single family dwelling). Pre-qualification site visit and re-landscaping plan approval are required for participation.



Lawn Be Gone

This program is for “do-it-yourselfers” who want to replace lawn areas by covering and composting in place – a process known as “sheet-mulching.” NMWD offers delivery of free compost, cardboard, and mulch for eligible sheet-mulching projects. Pre-qualification site visit and landscape plan approval are required prior to participation. Delivery will be performed by NMWD’s designated contractor.



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Water Smart Savings Program

North Marin Water District wants to help customers use water efficiently. That’s why we’ve put all of our water saving promotions under one umbrella. The Water Smart Savings Program encompasses all you need to get started on saving water and saving money. Call (415) 761-8944 for program details or visit nmwd.com.

Water Smart Home Survey

This free service includes thorough indoor and outdoor water efficiency checks.

Water Smart Landscape Rebate

Rebates available for water efficient landscape equipment, such as a new drip irrigation system replacing a spray system or a rain shut off device.

Cash for Grass Rebate

Get cash for removing irrigated and maintained lawn and replacing it with low water use plants. Pre-qualification is required.

High Efficiency Clothes Washer Rebate

NMWD offers a rebate to customers when they purchase a qualifying high efficiency clothes washer.

Rainwater Catchment Rebate

Rebate for collection and storage of rainwater.

High Efficiency Toilet Rebate

Customers who replace an old water-guzzling toilet with a high efficiency toilet may be eligible for a rebate.

Water Smart Savings Program



Find out more at nmwd.com

Weather-Based Irrigation Controller Rebate



A weather-based irrigation controller, or Smart Controller, is an effective technology for reducing water usage outdoors. Unlike a standard automatic timer that turns water on at set intervals regardless of weather and plant needs, a weather-based irrigation controller uses weather data and site information such as plant type and sprinkler system output to automatically adjust watering times and frequency. This increases water use efficiency, reduces run-off, and improves the health of your landscape. A weather-based irrigation controller can save 30% or more on your landscape water use, and it is less expensive than you might think. Many available models can also be controlled with an app on your phone or tablet. **To learn more about this rebate, visit nmwd.com**