

# The Waterline

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## Water Supply Update Fall 2020

Drew McIntyre, General Manager

This year has presented many challenges, including low winter rainfall, regional wildfires, ongoing power shut-offs, and a global health pandemic. These events strengthen the importance of water and the need to value it as a vital resource. Protecting our currently available water supplies from the Russian River and Stafford Lake, expanding our use of recycled water for outside irrigation to offset potable supplies, and continuing to emphasize water use efficiency are all vitally important to our water supply resiliency. In addition, North Marin Water District is participating in a Regional Water Supply Resiliency Study with our wholesale water agency, Sonoma County Water Agency, to improve integrated water resources coordination and to make the region more resilient to potential short- and long-term water shortages.

This summer, North Marin Water District continued to supply customers with high-quality, potable water from the Russian River and Stafford Lake. In cooperation with Novato Sanitary and Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary Districts, we have significantly expanded our distribution of recycled water over the last six years to large landscape irrigation customers and various commercial car washes in Novato. In total, recycled water delivery capacity is quickly approaching 30% of Stafford Treatment Plant capacity. This directly addresses the District's 2018 Strategic Plan Goal No. 1: To increase local control and long-term water supply reliability.

State legislation passed in November 2009 (SB7X-7) required a 20% reduction in per capita water use by 2020. North Marin Water District's current total water use of 115 gallons per day per capita (GPCD) represents a 35% reduction in water use, which



is well below the state's 20% reduction target to 139 GPCD. As previously reported, the state is developing long-term water use efficiency measurements based on legislation passed in 2018. The measurements focus on urban and agricultural water use and drought resiliency. New regulations are expected in 2022, with compliance triggers starting in 2023.

Regardless of the upcoming winter's rainfall levels, we recognize that water use efficiency must continue and customers are urged to participate in the many water conservation programs offered by North Marin Water District.

During fiscal year 2019/20, the District continued to invest in significant infrastructure projects, expending close to \$2M to ensure the reliable delivery of good quality water. The current cost of water service for a typical Novato customer — at the median of 16 comparable urban area retail water agencies — continues to offer good value.

## New Low Income Rate Assistance (LIRA) Program

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](http://nmwd.com).

## Novato Water Rate and Structure Changes

Rate and structure changes for Novato Potable and Recycled Water went into effect October 1, 2020. Due to these changes, a partial bill was sent out for the period of water use from your last bill through September 30, 2020. This bill was for water use only, may not represent a full billing period, and was sent out in order to bill you properly at the previous rate.

Additionally, your next bill may also be for a shorter period than the average two-month billing period. Normal billing will resume for upcoming bills issued after November 27, 2020. If you have questions, please contact the billing department at [billing@nmwd.com](mailto:billing@nmwd.com), or call 415-897-4133.

## Access Your Water Use

In 2018, the District commenced deployment of an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system to improve water use efficiency as well as meter reading efficiency, accuracy, and customer service. The project included meter upgrades for customers throughout North Marin Water District's Novato service territory. With the AMI system, digital meter data is sent securely via radio to North Marin Water District headquarters for billing purposes. This technology provides early leak detection and enables customers to view water use information online, thereby gaining a better understanding of their water use patterns.

A WaterSmart Portal was developed as a part of the new AMI system, and we encourage you to sign up and log in on the portal to get acquainted with the system and learn more about your water use. The portal gives customers access to hourly water use data and the ability to set up alerts for high use and leak events. Please visit the District's new website at [nmwd.com](http://nmwd.com) to learn more about accessing the WaterSmart Portal (and online bill pay). If you experience any issues registering or logging in to the WaterSmart Portal, please call 415-897-4133, and a staff member can guide you through the process.



## Pay your bills online.

Visit [onlinebiller.com/nmwd](http://onlinebiller.com/nmwd)





## Tap Water Is Safe From Coronavirus (COVID-19)

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.



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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](http://nmwd.com).

### Water Smart Home Survey

This free service includes thorough indoor and outdoor water efficiency checks. On hold during Covid-19, but will resume in 2021.

### 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.

### Weather-Based Irrigation Controller Rebate

Rebate for weather-based irrigation controllers that use weather data and site information such as plant type and sprinkler system output to automatically adjust watering times and frequency.



## Water Quality Precaution Advised as Businesses and Schools Reopen

As Marin County implements gradual, phased reopening of business and school buildings that were dormant for months, North Marin Water District recommends you fully flush your building's plumbing by running water from cold taps for several minutes before using. Flushing will remove any water that has become stale and has lost quality while in contact with metal plumbing and from dissipation of chlorine disinfectant. North Marin Water District staff are ready to answer your questions or help with water related problems you may be experiencing. Contact us by email at [info@nmwd.com](mailto:info@nmwd.com), or call 415-897-4133.

More information and guidance on procedures to restore water quality for building owners and operators can be found on the US EPA's website:

[www.epa.gov/coronavirus/information-maintaining-or-restoring-water-quality-buildings-low-or-no-use](http://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/information-maintaining-or-restoring-water-quality-buildings-low-or-no-use)