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NORTH MARIN
WATER DISTRICT

The Waterline

West Marin Area Newsletter | Issue 20



NORTH MARIN
WATER DISTRICT

Water supply update Fall 2021

Drew McIntyre, General Manager

In previous Waterlines we reported on unprecedented salinity intrusion levels occurring in two wells which North Marin Water District uses as sources of drinking water in the West Marin system. These wells, located near the former Coast Guard housing property in Point Reyes Station, have experienced periodic and seasonal salinity intrusion for many years but reached new highs in the 2020-2021 drought period. In 2015, NMWD completed permitting and construction of a well and pipeline that brings water from a different source, out of the reach of tides. This third well is situated a mile and a half east of Point Reyes station adjacent to the Gallagher ranch. Unfortunately, the third well is unable to produce enough water to meet 100% of the summer month volume demands and the salinity intrusion at the Coast Guard wells has continued to worsen. North Marin Water District continues to actively work on permitting approval to construct a second well at the Gallagher ranch site to provide an additional supply of water that is not prone to salinity intrusion. Although permitting delays have slowed our schedule, we are doing all we can to have this new source constructed and available for water supply in 2022.

Emergency water conservation measures remain in place as dry year conditions continue on Lagunitas Creek. This was the first time there have been two consecutive dry years since Water Right Order 95-17 was adopted by the State Water Board in October 1995, and 2014 was the only other prior single dry year condition. In 2020, as a result of dry year conditions, the Board of Directors declared a water shortage emergency



PRE tank 4 construction

in NMWD's West Marin Service Area on May 5, 2020, and an Emergency Water Conservation Ordinance was adopted (No. 39).

The water shortage emergency condition declared by the Board of Directors last year remains in effect this year. Beginning on July 1, 2021, a mandatory 25% reduction in water use (Stage 2) went into effect (when compared to the corresponding billing period in 2013). Customers are also required to implement other measures to help eliminate waste and conserve water. We are pleased to report that West Marin customers are exceeding this goal in 2021 (above 38%) and have conserved 29% more water than in summer 2020. Thank you very much for your effort to conserve water use during this second drought year.

The drought is not over, and customers are encouraged to use water efficiently this fall and participate in NMWD Water Use Efficiency Programs described below and at nmwd.com/drought.

The Water Smart Savings Program can help you save water

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. Rebate levels were recently increased in most programs in response to the current drought. 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. Virtual surveys or phone guidance offered at this time.

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.

Pool cover rebate

Rebates are available for replacement pool covers.

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/greywater rebates

Rebate for rainwater catchment and greywater system installation.

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.

Proactive actions to address increased salinity levels

Pablo Ramudo, Water Quality Supervisor

North Marin Water District is committed not only to serving water to customers that meets or surpasses all state and federal standards for quality, but also tastes good. Significant investments are being made for the permitting and construction of a new source well that is not vulnerable to salinity intrusion and is capable of meeting the production demands of the system.

Unfortunately, due to permitting delays beyond our control, this new source well was not available for use this Summer when salt levels were expected to increase again. Since a portion of NMWD's customers with severe sodium restrictions may again find it necessary to use alternative sources of water, NMWD planned to provide a source of low saline water via a filling station.

The filling station is located near our treatment facilities at the former Coast Guard Housing Property in downtown Point Reyes Station. The target threshold for the operating schedule of the filling station is a

sodium concentration of 115 mg/L. This threshold represents 10% of the recommended daily intake value for sodium presented by the FDA dietary guidelines.

Due to conservation efforts and strategic production from our wells, we were able to delay the need to activate the filling station this summer, however the sodium concentration reached the 115 mg/L threshold on October 4th. The filling station will be open to customers with sodium restricted diets Tuesdays from 1:30pm to 4:30pm and Fridays from 9:00am to 1:00pm until salinity levels drop below the target threshold. Please see our website for further details nmwd.com/WQ.

Water use monitoring and leak detection device pilot program

The District is continuing to offer a pilot program for the shared cost purchase and use of a water monitoring and leak detection device called Flume. These devices attach to your meter and relay real-time water use data and leak alerts through your Wi-Fi.

If you are interested in participating, please email your contact information and service address to waterconserve@nmwd.com, and staff can provide you with the website link for the shared cost purchase.

This pilot program is available to West Marin Service Area customers only.

