

Drought Continues

Written by: Robert McDonald, General Manager

As we finally get some distance from this winter's fires and floods, we see signs of plant life sprouting from the charred ground and can breathe clean air without ash or smoke. I'm glad for these little gifts of relief from such a devastating winter. These are some of the signs that we are recovering and will come back strong! In stark tension with these signs of recovery, some things remain the same...namely the relentless drought. While the rains in February 2017 partially refilled Lake Cachuma to 50%, we unfortunately experienced another below average winter this year. The Carpinteria Valley is facing conditions similar to those we experienced in May 2014: Lake Cachuma is low, State Water restrictions are in place, and water use regulations are being enforced. We know that it is tough to live in a perpetual drought; however, it is paramount to incorporate water-wise habits to help sustain our local water resources. At the beginning of 2018, the U.S. Drought Monitor upgraded the severity of Carpinteria's drought from moderate to severe and Santa Barbara County is among the driest in California. We urge our customers to embrace water conservation as a lifestyle and encourage you to spread the word to your friends, families, and neighbors. Stage II Drought Regulations are provided on our website for reference.

Many of you may have heard about the extreme water shortages in Cape Town, South Africa. Examples like this demonstrate why proactive water resource management and community water conservation are critical in prolonged droughts. It is uncertain when we will get enough rain to give us reprieve, so we need to use our available water supply efficiently. There are many ways to save water inside and outside of your home or business. The Water District has many resources available to customers that can help facilitate water-savings, including free water checkups and rebates. The Smart Rebates Program provides cash rebates for a number of water-efficient household appliances, rain barrels, and weather-based smart irrigation controllers. The WaterWise Landscape Rebate Program can help you transform your thirsty lawn into a water-efficient oasis. This program covers a portion of the cost of pre-approved irrigation equipment, water-efficient plants, mulch, artificial turf, and permeable surfaces. Did you know that approximately 50% of outdoor water use is wasted from inefficient watering methods? Improving your irrigation system or taking the time to inspect your current system is an easy way to eliminate leaks and overspray.

Aside from helping you conserve water, the District is working hard on developing new water supplies and making our existing supplies more sustainable. The proposed Recycled Water Project would diversify our water supply portfolio and reduce our dependence on highly variable surface water supplies. Future storm water capture projects will allow us to increase the amount of groundwater recharged into the Carpinteria Groundwater Basin. In addition, our current automated meter infrastructure (AMI) project will provide the District with near real-time water consumption data to assist with early leak identification. The AMI system can help to prevent water from being wasted and save our customers money. The District is also drilling sentinel wells to monitor for seawater intrusion of the groundwater basin. This is necessary to ensure that we maintain a long-term sustainable groundwater supply. In addition to these projects Carpinteria Groundwater Basin was recently re-designated by the California Department of Water Resources as a high-priority basin through the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. The District plans to move forward with the formation of a Groundwater Sustainability Agency starting this summer. For further information on this check the District's website. Each of these projects will help to ensure that the Carpinteria Valley has an adequate water supply in the face of droughts.

If you are interested in additional information about CVWD, please visit our website www.cvwd.net, follow us on twitter @CarpWater, and like Carpinteria Valley Water District on Facebook. Looking for water conservation inspiration? Make sure to check out the winning videos from

the 2018 WaterWise High School Video Contest linked on our social media pages. Congratulations to Kyril van Schendel and Diarra Pouye from Cate School who won 1st place and to Jeanette Fantone from Carpinteria High School who won 2nd place.