



Zone 7 Water Agency
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Waterways

A Newsletter from *Zone 7 Water Agency*



Issue No. 10

September 2009

WATER RATE PROPOSAL ON TAP

See inside for more information on a proposed increase in wholesale treated and untreated water rates for 2010 or check out our website at www.zone7water.com.

Join us at our next Board of Directors meeting:

DATE: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16TH

TIME: 7:00 P.M.

PLACE: 100 NORTH CANYONS PARKWAY, LIVERMORE

WHO TO CONTACT

For Questions Regarding Your Water

California Water Service Company • 925-447-4900
 City of Livermore • 925-960-8100
 City of Pleasanton • 925-931-5520
 Dublin San Ramon Services District • 925-828-0515

For Questions Regarding Your Storm Drains

Alameda County Public Works • 510-670-5480
 City of Dublin Public Works • 925-833-6630
 City of Livermore • 925-960-8100
 City of Pleasanton Public Works • 925-931-5500

CHANGES IN DELTA CONVEYANCE CRITICAL FOR ENVIRONMENT & WATER RELIABILITY

It is increasingly clear that the way water supplies are currently conveyed through the Delta is dysfunctional from both an ecological and water-supply reliability perspective, and that fundamental changes are necessary. That is why Zone 7 supports the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) process, a statewide effort involving water districts, environmental groups and wildlife agencies. In exploring conveyance fixes, the BDCP holistically addresses water-supply reliability and ecosystem restoration as co-equal goals.



Delta-conveyed water accounts for 80 percent of the water Zone 7 delivers to retailers serving Livermore, Pleasanton, Dublin and Dougherty Valley, and all of the water it supplies to area vineyards. In all, 25 million Californians, including 2.3 million in the Bay Area, rely on Delta-conveyed water via the State Water Project.

The estuary faces mounting issues related to endangered species, as well as threats of flooding, seawater intrusion from earthquakes, breaking levees and rising sea levels from global climate change. Adding stress are invasive species and contamination from agricultural drainages, wastewater treatment plant discharges and recreational activities.

The Delta's environmental crisis, which has led to court-ordered pumping restrictions aimed at protecting endangered fish, threatens water reliability/quality for existing Zone 7 customers. It also threatens the Agency's ability to meet the region's planned buildout, as determined by its cities, and its ability to serve additional irrigated agriculture.

(cont on page 2)

"One cornerstone of the BDCP strategy is the widely shared conclusion that the existing water conveyance system is fundamentally flawed and that continued reliance on that system as it currently exists is incompatible with the long-term restoration needs of the Delta"
 - Draft BDCP Conservation Strategy



ABOUT THE BAY DELTA CONSERVATION PLAN

(cont' from page 1)

The BDCP is looking at habitat restoration, through-Delta improvements and a second, around-the Delta conveyance facility to separate the movement of fresh water supply when environmentally appropriate. A new conveyance, favored by wildlife agencies, could create a more natural Delta estuary for native fish and reduce fish entrapment in south Delta pumps. It also would improve water quality for Zone 7 customers.



This around-the-Delta conveyance would be different than the Peripheral Canal project rejected by state voters in 1982. The conveyance facility contemplated in the draft BDCP Conservation Strategy would be considerably smaller, and would be built and operated as much with habitat protection as water-supply reliability in mind.

Alternative conveyance is bound to be controversial, and much depends on creating credible operational safeguards and environmentally friendly solutions. However, doing nothing is no longer an option.

Meanwhile, Zone 7 is aggressively promoting water-use efficiency and is exploring other potential water supply/storage alternatives, including desalination, increased water recycling, enhanced conservation, and participation in expansion of Los Vaqueros Reservoir. But ultimately, we believe we will always rely on the Delta for the majority of our water supply. Regardless of the solution, a long-term fix is going to cost money and impact the rates of water users.

SIGN UP FOR E-NEWS!

If you're interested in receiving conservation e-newsletters and other email news announcements, go to www.zone7water.com to sign up.

WATER PROJECTS ON TAP

This summer, Zone 7 completed several key projects aimed at meeting our mission and goal to improve the reliability and quality of our water in a fiscally responsible and environmentally sensitive way.

Altamont Pipeline, Livermore Reach

While construction of the Altamont Water Treatment Plant and Pipeline Project won't get started until at least 2013, we have completed an initial 5.6-mile segment of pipeline that will immediately improve water-supply reliability for a portion of eastern Livermore in the event of emergency outages of water deliveries from the South Bay Aqueduct.

Mocho Groundwater Demineralization Plant

Our new Mocho Groundwater Demineralization Plant will slow down the buildup of salts and minerals in the groundwater basin, thereby facilitating the use of recycled water for irrigation purposes. It also will help soften some of the groundwater supplies delivered primarily to the western side of our service area.

New Wells

We are also wrapping up construction of two new wells, with a pumping capacity of 8 million gallons per day, to improve system reliability and to enhance our ability to deal with unplanned outages or droughts affecting surface-water imports from the State Water Project.

WATER RATE INCREASE PROPOSED

On September 16th, the Zone 7 Board will be presented with a proposed increase in treated water rates for 2010 of at least 9.25 percent, and a proposed decrease in untreated water rates of 10 percent.

We are endeavoring through good management to keep our costs – and therefore the size of the proposed increase – to the absolute minimum necessary to continue our mission effectively.

That being said, significant fiscal pressures are being experienced by all public agencies, and the problems are compounded for water agencies coping with three years of drought conditions and with court-ordered Delta pumping restrictions aimed at protecting endangered fish. Unfortunately, most of our operating costs are fixed, regardless of how much water we actually deliver.

Pressures on Zone 7 treated water rates include the escalating costs of water-treatment chemicals, the cost to operate a new facility to help soften our groundwater supplies, and the costs of moving forward to develop Delta solutions.

The September 16th meeting will begin at 7 p.m. at 100 North Canyons Parkway, Livermore. For detailed information or updates on the proposal, which will go to the Board for final approval October 21st, go to www.zone7water.com.

2010 Proposed Rate Changes
 9.25% Treated Water Increase
 10% Untreated Water Decrease

What does this mean for you?
 A 9.25 percent increase in treated water rates would boost the monthly bill for the typical household by about \$3.08 if fully passed on to customers by retailers.