

WATER WAYS

Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District • Zone 7

Water Quality Policy Adopted

WATER IS THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL compound for life. Life can exist without light and without oxygen, but it cannot exist without water. Zone 7 is committed to providing its customers with water that meets all federal and state drinking water standards. These standards have been set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the California Department of Health Services (DHS) to ensure the public health and safety.

Water quality standards are divided into two categories: Primary standards relate to public health and safety, while secondary standards relate to aesthetics like taste, odor, appearance and mineral content. Primary standards set restrictive guidelines for heavy

metals such as lead and chromium, or organic compounds like benzene, herbicides and pesticides. Primary standards also include compounds that, in large doses over many



years, may be carcinogenic or cause neurological disorders. The water that Zone 7 provides its customers has always met these primary standards.

Two years ago, in order to further define Zone 7's commitment to water quality, the Board of Directors authorized a program to develop a formal water quality policy. After an extensive process that included professional research and discussions with a multitude of stakeholders, the Zone 7 Board adopted a water quality policy in April 2003.

Dr. David Layton, an environmental scientist at the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory and Zone 7 Board President at the time, *continued on next page*

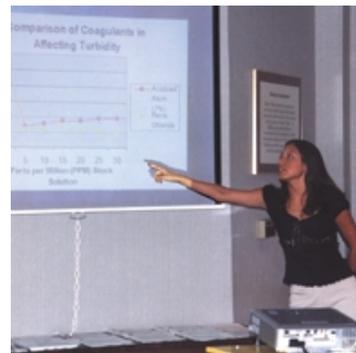
Student Presentations Outstanding

IN WHAT HAS BECOME AN ANNUAL TRADITION during Water Awareness Month, local high school students made special presentations at the regular meeting of the Zone 7 Board of Directors in May. The student groups that prepared presentations are part of the Environmental Science Program of the Tri-Valley Regional Occupational Programs (ROP). This program provides students with real-life water science education, and gives them the opportunity to work alongside staff at Zone 7 facilities.

Since the beginning of the school year, students and staff have been developing science projects and performing experiments. During their presentations to the board, students explained their results from sophisticated experiments that included coagulation and filtration using ferric chloride, and the effects of turbidity on disinfection. Zone 7 congratulates the students on a job well done!



From left: Student presenters Inana Patel and Janice Okazaki represented their respective groups. At right: Janice Okazaki explained results from her group's experiments.



MORE NEWS INSIDE:

Chain of Lakes Becoming a Reality to dramatically increase water supply and flood control capacity in the Tri-Valley

Zone 7 website gets a new look: check out www.zone7water.com for everything from school program info to permit applications!

WATER QUALITY POLICY

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selected two other directors from the Zone 7 Board to serve on the Water Quality Subcommittee. Director John Marchand, a water quality chemist for the Alameda County Water District in Fremont, was designated Chairman of the committee. Fellow Director and high school science teacher Susan Johnston was also tapped. In addition, a consulting firm was selected and a team of experts assembled to assist in drafting the policy. Zone 7 management, engineering, and operations staff were also actively involved and assisted in the research required to accomplish the committee's goals. Angela O'Brien, staff engineer, was the Project Manager.

To establish a baseline, polls were conducted and evaluated to assess consumer opinions and determine levels of consumer satisfaction. At a number of well-attended meetings conducted over the two-year period, input was also solicited from the public and from the Tri-Valley's water retailers, including the City of Livermore, City of Pleasanton, California Water Service and the Dublin San Ramon Services District.

From the beginning, there was no compromise on the need to continue meeting the primary standards set by the USEPA and California DHS to ensure public health and safety. The first goal of the policy states that the water Zone 7 delivers to its customers "shall continue to meet all state and federal primary maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) for potable water." These MCLs are set as close to public health goals (PHGs) and maximum contaminant level goals (MCLGs) as is economically and technologically feasible. PHGs and MCLGs are the levels of a contaminant in drinking water, below which there is no known or expected risk to health.

The policy's second objective is for Zone 7 to continue to meet the secondary standards relating to aesthetic goals. Water retailers expressed concerns over water hardness and seasonal taste and odor problems that can influence consumers' perception of water quality. In order to meet these goals, Zone 7 is embarking on a system wide program to optimize water treatment processes to minimize these events. Some of the proposed water treatment projects may require a small, estimated increase of \$3 per monthly residential bill. One such proposal would involve the use of membrane technology

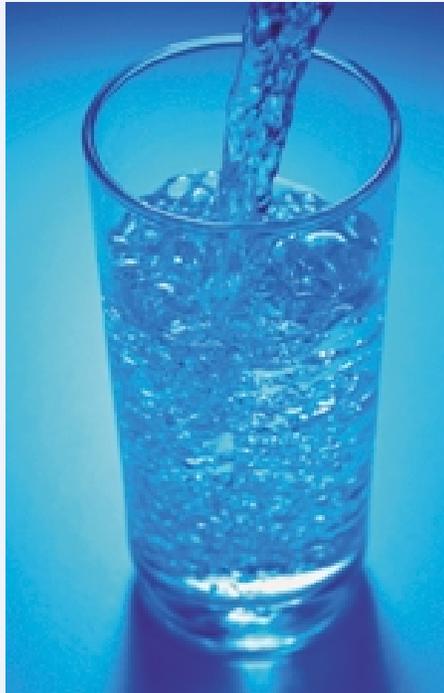
to lower the hardness of the water. Lowering water hardness will reduce the mineral deposits left behind when water dries. However, since these standards are not health-related, Zone 7 has proposed to put the question before local voters before taking action to raise water rates for this purpose.

Zone 7 is also working with local retailers to reduce taste and odor problems that may occur when water from Zone 7's facilities mixes with water from retailers' wells. A consumer's perception of water quality may be affected when their source water changes, for example, from treated surface water to harder well water. The water is no less safe, it is just "different."

A third goal in the policy sets standards for the non-potable water that Zone 7 delivers for agriculture or landscape irrigation. The policy states that the water be of a quality that "meets the irrigation needs of its contractors and does not negatively impact vegetation, crops, or soils."

The fourth and final goal of the policy states that Zone 7 shall "continue to work to improve the quality of its source waters." Most of the water that Zone 7 receives comes from the State Water Project. Most of this water comes from Lake Oroville through the Sacramento-Bay Delta and into the South Bay Aqueduct. Zone 7 is working with CALFED and other agencies to improve our water quality as it moves through the Delta. Through its Salt Management Plan and with help from local retailers, Zone 7 will also be working to improve the quality of well water. The region's wells not only provide water supply during times of high demand in warm weather, but also provide water reliability in times of drought.

For years, Zone 7 has been committed to public health, safety and water quality. This water quality policy, combined with the water reliability policy adopted last year, will provide Zone 7 with a framework to accomplish its mission of providing the Tri-Valley with a high quality and reliable water supply.



The two-year process that resulted in the adoption of the water quality policy has been documented in a CD-rom and is available for your review by contacting Zone 7 Project Manager Angela O'Brien at 925-447-6704, ext 118.

Chain of Lakes Becoming a Reality

THE ZONE 7 WATER AGENCY actively plans years into the future, so naturally it can take years before the fruits of that planning are fully enjoyed. Soon however, the vision of some decades-old planning will begin to come to fruition.

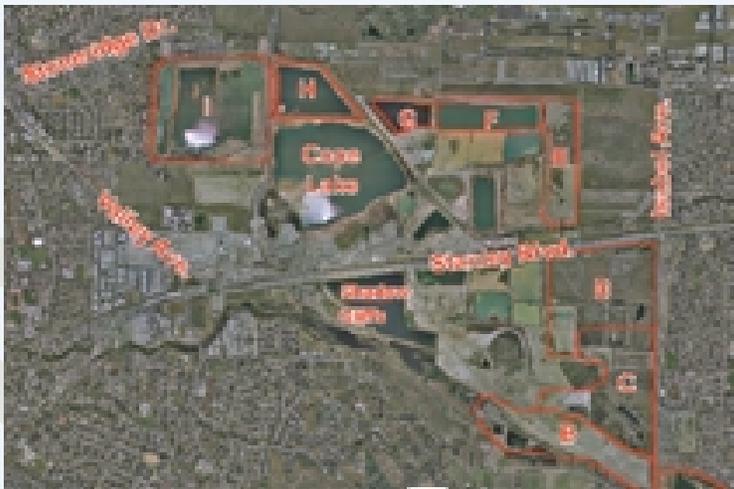
In the 1970's, Zone 7 began exploring the concept of developing a "Chain of Lakes" that would dramatically increase water supply and flood control capacity in the Tri-Valley. These lakes would be developed out of gravel quarries between Livermore and Pleasanton after mining has been completed and the quarries abandoned. In the near future, the first three of at least 10 gravel quarry lakes will be turned over to Zone 7 and incorporated into its water supply and flood control operations.

These first three lakes are designated as Lake H, Lake I, and Cope Lake. Lakes H and I will eventually become part of a series of lakes A through I. This series or chain of connected lakes will provide storage, detention, and conveyance of both local and imported waters. It will also allow the natural flow of groundwater to resume its east-to-west course after being interrupted by the mining operations. At the end of the chain, in Lake I, water levels will be raised to cause the water to percolate through the sides of the lake and into

the groundwater basin, which will augment the current artificial recharge program Zone 7 operates in the arroyos. Cope Lake, which is next to but not technically connected to the rest of the chain, offers the potential for storing floodwaters and/or reclaimed water.

Although Lakes A through G are not scheduled for transfer to Zone 7 for another 10 to 30 years, Zone 7 can take advantage of the first three available lakes now for storage and recharge. Lake I alone has a capacity of 24,000 acre-feet (approximately 1/3 the capacity of Lake Del Valle), and is expected to transmit up to 10,000 acre-feet of water per year into the groundwater basin. A single acre-foot of water is sufficient to meet all the indoor and outdoor water needs of two households for an entire year. Because of foresight and planning, the Chain of Lakes will be a major boost to Zone 7's ability to provide the Tri-Valley with an effective flood control system and reliable water supply.

In the 1970's, Zone 7 began exploring a concept that would dramatically increase water supply and flood control capacity in the Tri-Valley.

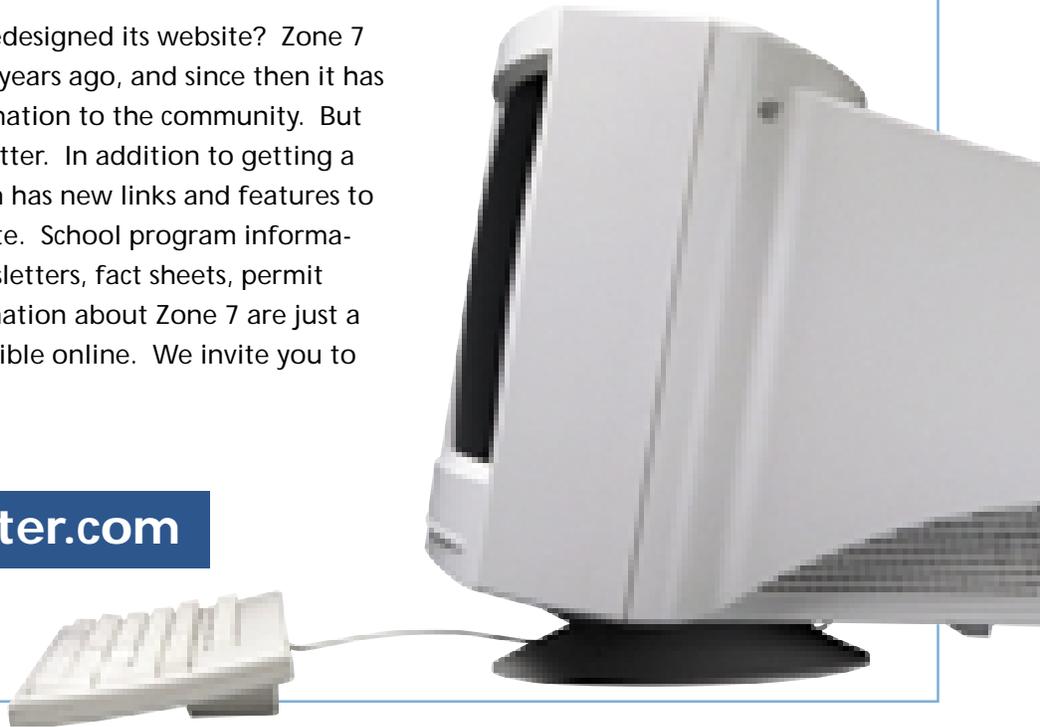


Pictured above: Aerial view of the Chain of Lakes between Livermore and Pleasanton. Future lake sites in the chain, as well as Lake H, Lake I and Cope Lake are outlined. At right: Closeup of Lake H, Lake I and Cope Lake.

Did You Know?

Did you know that Zone 7 has redesigned its website? Zone 7 established a website almost six years ago, and since then it has been a valuable source of information to the community. But now Zone 7 is making it even better. In addition to getting a new look, www.zone7water.com has new links and features to make it easier to navigate the site. School program information, water quality reports, newsletters, fact sheets, permit applications, and general information about Zone 7 are just a few of the things that are accessible online. We invite you to come visit us on the web!

www.zone7water.com



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Regular meetings of the Board of Directors are held the third Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Board Room. Special meetings are held as needed.

Meetings are open to the public.

WATER WAYS is published three times yearly by the Zone 7 Water Agency.

925-484-2600

www.zone7water.com