

CRESCENTA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

**2700 Foothill Boulevard
La Crescenta, California**

Agenda for the Adjourned Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Crescenta Valley Water District

to be held on Tuesday, May 27, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

This meeting will be conducted in person at the address listed above. Members of the public may also participate virtually by using a touchtone phone. You may select any of the following phone numbers (there are more than one for increased reliability during this time of increased phone traffic)

(669) 900-6833

(346) 248-7799

(929) 205-6099

(253) 215-8782

(301) 715-8592

(312) 626-6799

Then, enter Access Code: 851 0230 3602

Those members of the public who are able to and would like to additionally participate through computer may access the Zoom audio & video conferencing tool available at the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6253603648?omn=85102303602>

If there is a disruption of service, this meeting will continue without remote participation. The remote participation option is provided as a convenience to the public and is not required.

Public comment may be made either by emailing comments ahead of the meeting or by speaking over the phone. Emailed comments will be sent to the Board of Directors prior to the meeting and posted on the District's website. Comments may be sent to customer service, at (818) 248-3925 or customerservice@cvwd.com by 3pm on May 27, 2025.

Any person may make a request for a disability-related modification or accommodation needed for that person to be able to participate in the public meeting by contacting the District by phone or in writing at the above email address. Requests must specify the nature of the disability and the type of accommodation requested. A telephone number or other contact information should be included so that District staff may discuss appropriate arrangements. Persons requesting a disability-related accommodation should make the request with adequate time before the meeting for the District to provide the requested accommodation.

Any written materials distributed to the Board in connection with this agenda will be made available at the same time for public inspection at the District office located at the above address and posted on the District's website.

Call to Order and Determination of Quorum

Pledge of Allegiance

Adoption of Agenda

Public Comments

At this time, the public shall have an opportunity to comment on any non-agenda item relevant to the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board. This opportunity is non-transferable, and speakers are limited to one three-minute (3) comment. Under the provisions of the Brown Act, the Board is prohibited from taking action on items not listed on the agenda, except under certain circumstances.

Foothill Municipal Water District Report

1. Report on activities at Foothill Municipal Water District.

Consent Calendar

Action Calendar

The public shall have an opportunity to comment on any action item as each item is considered by the Board. This opportunity is non-transferable, and speakers are limited to one two-minute (2) comment.

1. **Appeal of High Water Bill at 3101 Hermosa** - Consideration and possible action to grant a request for relief from a high-water bill by owner Therese Reignier.
2. **Adoption of FY 2025-26 Pay Schedule for CalPERS Compliance** - Consideration and motion to adopt the current pay schedule.
3. **Employee Handbook** - Discussion, direction, and possible adoption of the District's Employee Handbook.
4. **FY 2025-26 Proposed Budget** - Discussion regarding the District's FY 2025-26 proposed budget and related items.
5. **Metropolitan Water District Coalition Letter Supporting the Governor's Delta Conveyance Legislative Package** - Consideration and possible motion to join a Metropolitan Water District coalition letter supporting the Governor's Delta Conveyance legislative package.
6. **Discussion on Consolidation** - Discussion of the upcoming forum regarding potential consolidation of one of more Foothill Municipal Water District sub-agencies

Information Items

Written Communications to District/Board of Directors

General Manager's Report

Attorney Report

Reports of Committees

- **Community Relations & Emergency Planning Committee**
- **Employee Relations Committee**
- **Engineering, Operations, & Technology Committee**
- **Executive Committee**
- **Finance & Policy Committee**
- **Ad Hoc Committee – PFAS**

Directors' Oral Reports – Reports on issues, meetings, or activities attended by Directors

Board Members' Request for Future Agenda Items

Closed Session

Adjournment

CRESCENTA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS - STAFF REPORT

Action Item No. 1
May 27, 2025

To: Honorable President and Members of the Board of Directors
From: Arturo Montes – Interim Director of Finance and Administration
Subject: Appeal of High Water Bill at 3101 Hermosa

ACTION ITEM:

Consideration and possible action to grant a request for relief from a high-water bill by owner Therese Reignier

BACKGROUND:

Therese Reignier is the resident at 3101 Hermosa. On December 14, 2024, the District’s Meter Reader, Mario Mejia, was dispatched to check the property’s meter as part of the District’s protocol to investigate readings that exceed historical averages. During this visit, staff did not observe a leak registering on the meter. However, staff identified that although the meter had recently been connected to the AMI network, it was not responding due to a defective pigtail connecting the meter to the MXU antenna, which was subsequently replaced. The customer was informed that no constant leak was detected at that time. Ms. Reignier later discovered and repaired the leak herself. On January 15, 2025, Customer Service Lead, Tessa Allmon, confirmed via the Sensus AMI portal that the meter was no longer registering elevated usage, indicating that the issue had been resolved.

The three-year average water usage for the October through November and December through January billing cycles is 11 units, which typically falls within Tier 2. However, the total consumption for the current bill was 64 and 47 units, respectively, placing them in Tier 3. In similar cases in the past, the Board has directed staff to recalculate the bill, offering relief by charging the Tier 2 rate for all consumption billed at the Tier 3 rate. Staff has already applied the District’s one-time \$300 leak adjustment to this bill on January 16, 2025 per staff’s authorization. For this case, applying the Tier 2 rate to the 59 units currently billed at the Tier 3 rate would result in an additional relief of \$267.86. If the Board follows its previous practices, the total relief granted would be \$567.86, including the initial \$300.00.

10/01/2024 to 11/30/2024 Period

	Original Billing	Recalculated Billing
Tier 1 - 10 units @ \$5.96	\$59.60	\$59.60
Tier 2 - 16 units @ \$11.09	\$177.44	\$177.44
Tier 3 - 38 units @ \$15.63	\$593.94	\$421.42
Subtotal	\$830.98	\$658.46
Billing Adjustment		\$172.52
Staff Adjustment		\$300.00
Relief		\$472.52

12/01/2024 to 01/31/2025 Period

	Original Billing	Recalculated Billing
Tier 1 - 10 units @ \$5.96	\$59.60	\$59.60
Tier 2 - 16 units @ \$11.09	\$177.44	\$177.44
Tier 3 - 21 units @ \$15.63	\$328.23	\$232.89
Subtotal	\$565.27	\$469.93
Billing Adjustment		\$95.34
Staff Adjustment		
Relief		\$95.34

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board consider Ms. Reignier's appeal for additional relief.

Prepared by:



Tessa Allmon
Customer Service Lead

Submitted by:



Arturo Montes
Interim Director of Finance and Administration

Attachment(s):

1. Customer bills
2. Customer Leak Adjustment letter

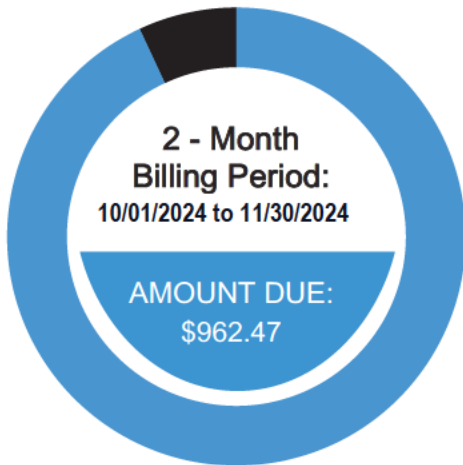
g:\management\board meeting staff reports\2025\05-27-25 - Board Memo - Appeal of High Water Bill at 3101 Hermosa.docx



UTILITY SERVICES STATEMENT - TWO - MONTH BILLING PERIOD

CRESCENTA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT • 2700 FOOTHILL BLVD • LA CRESCENTA CA 91214-3590

Customer Name	Account Number	Service Address	Billing Date	Due Date
Nasser Budraa	[REDACTED]	3101 Hermosa	11/30/2024	UPON RECEIPT



WATER

\$ 899.50



Utility Tax

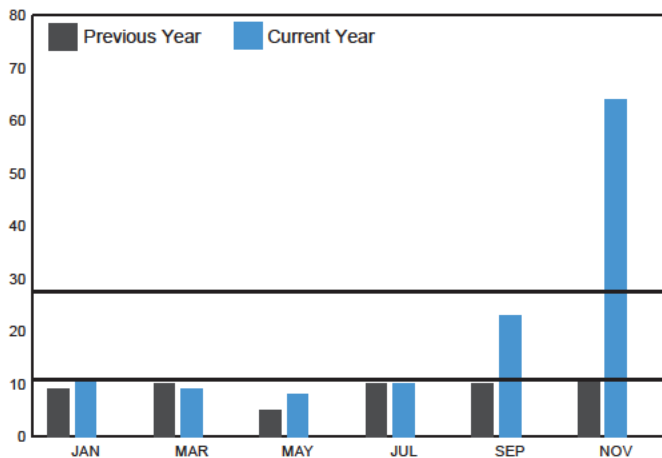
\$ 62.97

MESSAGE CENTER

Join us for ongoing dialogue on CVWD's rate study at the La Crescenta Library. Forums will be hosted at 6 PM on 11/21, 12/19, 01/26, 02/30, and 03/20, ahead of CV Town Council meetings. For questions, please email us at customerservice@cvwd.com

Sign up on our new payment portal at
<https://cvwd.smartcmobile.com/portal>.

USAGE HISTORY



WATER USAGE INFORMATION

METER SIZE: 3/4"		
Days of Service	Previous Read	Current Read
~60	574	638
Prev Year Usage (Units)		
11		
Current Usage (Units)		
64		
1 Unit = 1,000 gallons		

PAY ONLINE AT: www.cvwd.com



**CRESCENTA VALLEY
WATER DISTRICT**
2700 FOOTHILL BLVD
LA CRESCENTA CA 91214-3590

ACCOUNT INFORMATION

ACCOUNT NUMBER: [REDACTED]
SERVICE ADDRESS: 3101 Hermosa

CSQ1215A 1776 1 AV 0.545
7000001850 00.0007.0392 1776/1



NASSER BUDRAA
3101 HERMOSA
LA CRESCENTA CA 91214-3712

Additional Information on Reverse

Please Make Checks Payable and Remit to



CRESCENTA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT
2700 FOOTHILL BLVD
LA CRESCENTA, CA 91214-3590

CURRENT CHARGES	PAST DUE BALANCE	AMOUNT DUE
\$962.47	\$0.00	\$962.47
DUE UPON RECEIPT		AMOUNT PAID

Previous Activity

Last Bill:	\$291.35
Payment:	\$291.35
Adjustments:	\$0.00
Past Due Amount:	\$0.00
Fees and Fines	\$0.00

Billing Detail

	Water Service Charge	68.52
	Water Usage Charges	
	Tier 1 - 10 x \$5.96 (Basic Usage 0-10 Units)	59.60
	Tier 2 - 16 x \$11.09 (Average Usage 11-26 Units)	177.44
	Tier 3 - 38 x \$15.63 (High Usage - 27 + Units)	593.94
	Total Water	\$899.50
	Glendale Tax	62.97

CRESCENTA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

2700 FOOT HILL BOULEVARD
LA CRESCENTA, CALIFORNIA 91214

BILLING INQUIRIES: (818) 248-3925
OFFICE HOURS: MON - FRI 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
24 HR. EMERGENCY #: (818) 248-3925

FOR MORE INFORMATION
VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT
www.cvwd.com

CUSTOMER INFORMATION

METER READINGS

Safe access to the meter helps us provide you with accurate billing. The water meter is the property of Crescenta Valley Water District and within a public easement. Please DO NOT construct anything near, over or around the meter that would interfere with regular access by CVWD employees. All vegetation must be controlled so as not to obstruct or cover the meter box. Hazardous materials (solvent, oil, paint, etc.) may not be placed in the meter box as they may contaminate the water.

WHEN YOU NEED OUR METER TURNED OFF

Please call our office anytime you need our meter turned off. This service is available at no charge 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A Service Representative will be dispatched out to turn the meter off. When you are ready to have the water turned back on, just call our office again. Please DO NOT turn off our meter. Should you attempt to turn off our meter and cause damage, you will be charged any necessary repairs.

CWVD is responsible for the water line in the street and for the water line to our meter. We also maintain the valve, meter box and lid. Any repair past our meter towards the property is the customer's responsibility.

If you have a dispute regarding the billing you may notify the District within 30 days of receipt.

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE:

\$962.47

A Late fee will be assessed 45 days after the billing date if payment has not been received.

IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING HAVE CHANGED PLEASE FILL IN BELOW:

Mailing Address _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Email Address _____

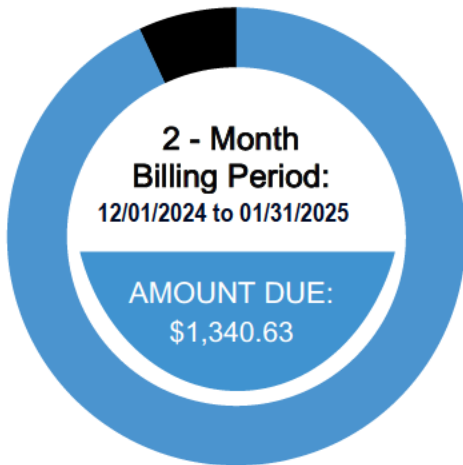




UTILITY SERVICES STATEMENT - TWO - MONTH BILLING PERIOD

CRESCENTA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT • 2700 FOOTHILL BLVD • LA CRESCENTA CA 91214-3590

Customer Name	Account Number	Service Address	Billing Date	Due Date
Nasser Budraa	[REDACTED]	3101 Hermosa	01/31/2025	UPON RECEIPT



WATER

\$ 633.79



Utility Tax

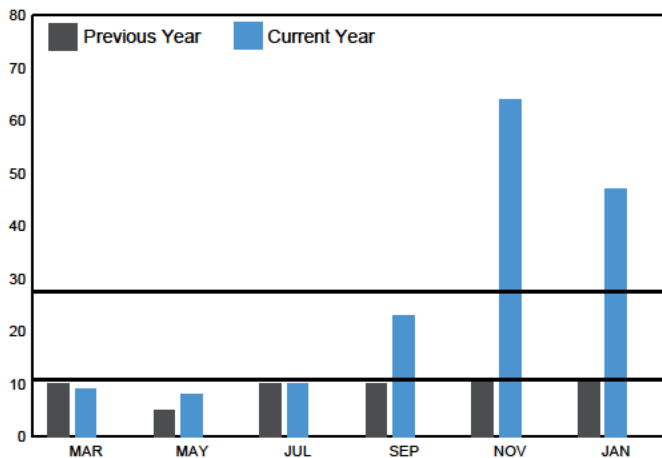
\$ 44.37

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Current Usage (Units)		
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1 Unit = 1,000 gallons		

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**CRESCENTA VALLEY
WATER DISTRICT**
2700 FOOTHILL BLVD
LA CRESCENTA CA 91214-3590

ACCOUNT INFORMATION

ACCOUNT NUMBER: [REDACTED]
SERVICE ADDRESS: 3101 Hermosa

CSQ0212A 1777 1 AV 0.545
7000001852 00.0007.0391 1777/1



NASSER BUDRAA
3101 HERMOSA
LA CRESCENTA CA 91214-3712

Additional Information on Reverse

Please Make Checks Payable and Remit to



CRESCENTA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT
2700 FOOTHILL BLVD
LA CRESCENTA, CA 91214-3590

CURRENT CHARGES	PAST DUE BALANCE	AMOUNT DUE
\$678.16	\$662.47	\$1,340.63
DUE UPON RECEIPT		AMOUNT PAID

Previous Activity

Last Bill:	\$962.47
Payment:	\$0.00
Adjustments:	-\$300.00
Past Due Amount:	\$662.47
Fees and Fines	\$0.00

Billing Detail

	Water Service Charge	68.52
	Water Usage Charges	
	Tier 1 - 10 x \$5.96 (Basic Usage 0-10 Units)	59.60
	Tier 2 - 16 x \$11.09 (Average Usage 11-26 Units)	177.44
	Tier 3 - 21 x \$15.63 (High Usage - 27 + Units)	328.23
	Total Water	\$633.79
	Glendale Tax	44.37

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2700 FOOT HILL BOULEVARD
LA CRESCENTA, CALIFORNIA 91214

BILLING INQUIRIES: (818) 248-3925
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CWVD is responsible for the water line in the street and for the water line to our meter. We also maintain the valve, meter box and lid. Any repair past our meter towards the property is the customer's responsibility.

If you have a dispute regarding the billing you may notify the District within 30 days of receipt.

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE:

\$1,340.63

A Late fee will be assessed 45 days after the billing date if payment has not been received.

IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING HAVE CHANGED PLEASE FILL IN BELOW:

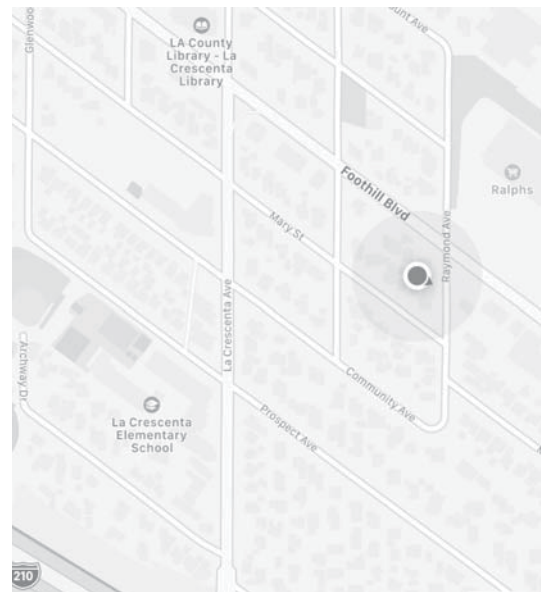
Mailing Address _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Email Address _____



Therese REIGNIER and Nasser BUDRAA

3101 Hermosa Avenue

La Crescenta CA 91214

[REDACTED]

January 9, 2025

Dear General Manager of the C.V. Water District:

I am reaching out to you regarding a water leak at our residence that caused a very high water bill. It took us several days to find the leak in the yard, which was promptly fixed when discovered. The leak was due to a rusted piped (picture 1 below) that broke. The new pipe is shown on picture 2.

The cost of the repair of \$625 done by a local handyman, who provided the supplies (copy of the check duplicate in picture 3).

Our consumption is usually around 11,000 ga., and not 64,000 ga. We would greatly appreciate a reduction in our water bill to match our normal consumption (copy of the bill below).

Thank you for your help in this matter.

Best regards,

Therese Reignier

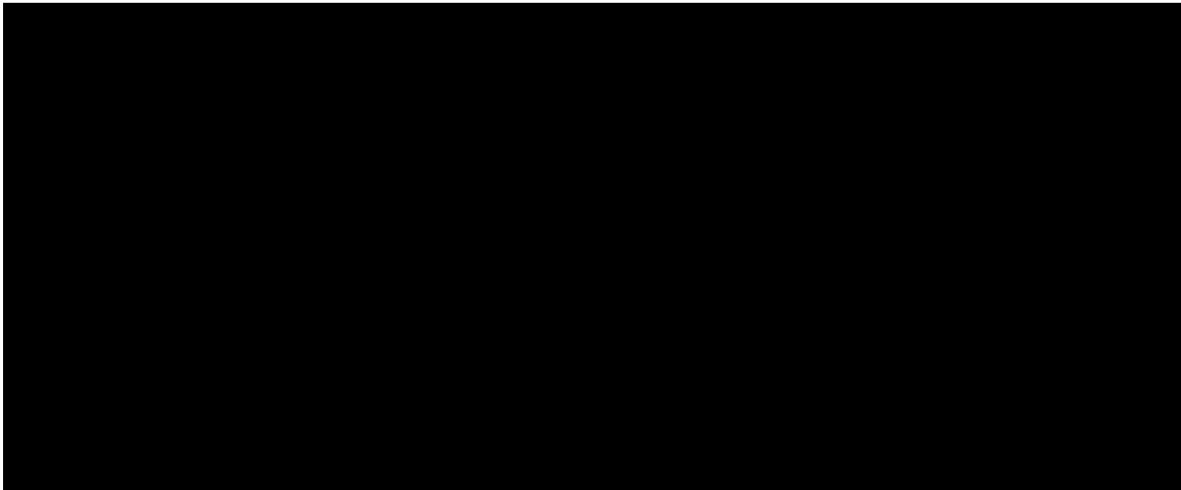
Picture 1: rusted pipe that leaked.





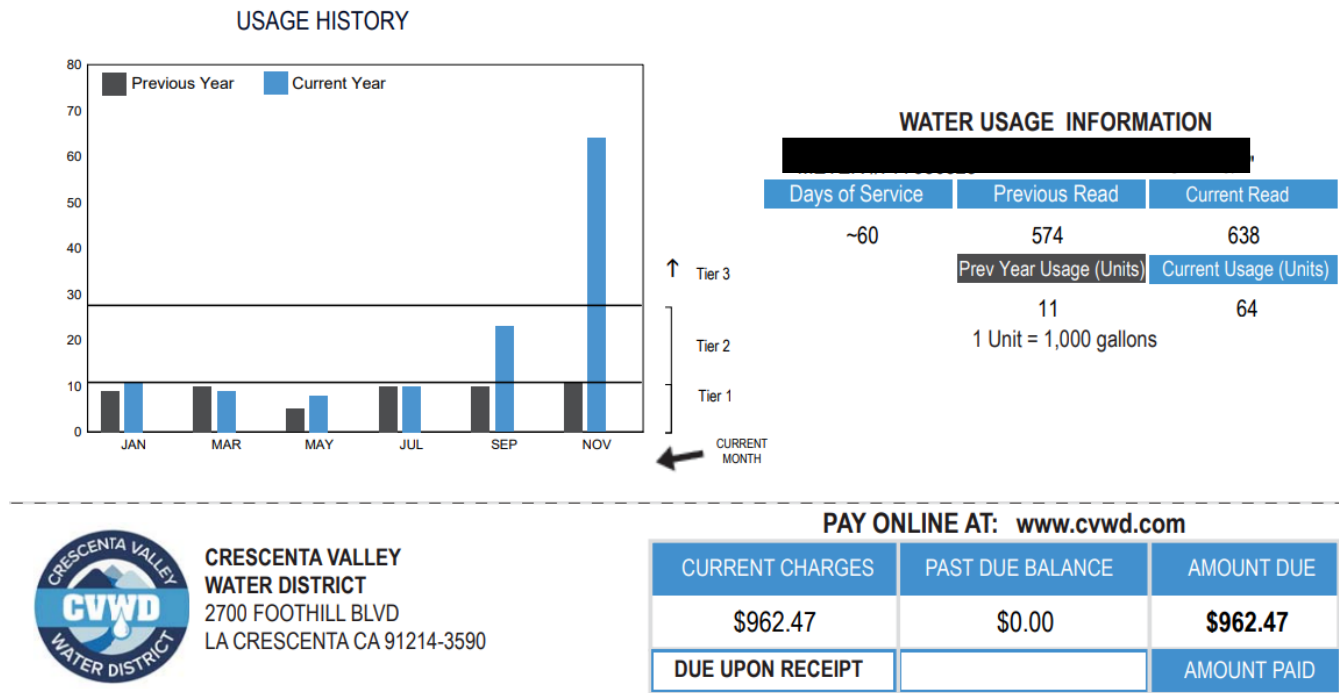
Picture 2: new pipe

Picture 3: check duplicate



X V Plumbing
X V Construction, Inc. License #1122851
1613 S. Almanson St.
Alhambra CA 91801
Tel: (626) 625-3766

Picture 4: water bill



Therese REIGNIER
3101 Hermosa Av,
La Crescenta CA 91214

April 11, 2025

Dear Members of the Board of Directors:

This letter is an appeal regarding high water bills resulting from a leak at 3101 Hermosa Avenue. The leak was due to an old rusted pipe found in the yard. It went undetected for days but was fixed promptly once detected. The leak impacted two water bills for a total of \$1,640. We were offered a \$300 credit which unfortunately is not enough.

We are requesting a much greater relief from this exceptional high bill for the following reasons:

1. We have lived at this address for 20 years, have always paid our bills on time and have never received any assistance for our ever-increasing water bills. We always try to conserve water and our consumption level is low.
2. It takes 2 months to get notice of a high bill, which leaves the homeowner without information for a very long time while the costs mount.
3. The water district should have long ago put in place a system that alerts the homeowner to the projected amount of the next bill. We have been receiving **for years** notices from SoCalGas that inform us that the bill for the past 7 days is X and is projected to be Y for the month. This accurate and prompt communication is done by email. Why wasn't such a system adopted long ago for water consumption?
4. Although a "smart" meter was very recently installed at our address, it does not seem that the alert system is working. I have yet to receive a single notification of a high bill or high consumption. The District has our email addresses and phone numbers. After a phone conversation with Mr Montes, I was assured that I would receive notification when the bill was over \$50. We never received a notice of a high bill. I was told that the system needs to acquire data before sending notices... \$50 is \$50, there should not be any ambiguity about dollar amounts. The new system is clearly lacking.
5. Many cities have a Water Leak Assistance Program to cover situations such as ours, as does Pasadena for example. The credit offered goes up to \$3,000. Why isn't there such a program in place for La Crescenta? Other cities automatically enroll customers in their Water Loss Protection Program for around 50 cents per month. Some programs provide a 100% leak adjustment one time over a 24-month period. There are many options available to protect residents and we hope the District will consider them.

For all the reasons mentioned above, we request substantial relief from these high-water bills.

Regards,

T Reignier

CRESCENTA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS - STAFF REPORT

Action Item No. 2
May 27, 2025

To: Honorable President and Members of the Board of Directors
From: Arturo Montes – Interim Director of Finance & Administration
Subject: Adoption of FY 2025-26 Pay Schedule for CalPERS Compliance

ACTION ITEM:

Consideration and motion to adopt the current pay schedule.

BACKGROUND:

California Code of Regulations Section 570.5 requires pay schedules to be approved and adopted by the Board of Directors on an annual basis. The pay schedules must be publicly available and include position, pay rate, and time basis for the pay rate.

The District's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Terms & Conditions with employees establish the method for determining the annual cost-of-living adjustments (COLA). The District's COLA as of July 1, 2025, is set at 3.0 percent.

The pay schedule is accounted for in the proposed budget for FY 2025-26, and a copy of the schedule is enclosed. Over the past year, the Board approved several job descriptions and reclassifications, all of which are included in the attached schedule.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the District's pay schedule for FY 2025-26 and direct staff to post on the District's website as required by California Code of Regulations Section 570.5.

Prepared and Submitted by:



Arturo Montes
Interim Director of Finance & Administration

Attachment(s):

1. FY 2025-26 Pay Schedule



Crescenta Valley Water District
Pay Schedules (Monthly)

Effective 7/1/2025 to 6/30/2026

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6	Step 7	Step 8	Step 9	Step 10	Step 11	MAX
ACCOUNTING CLERK	\$5,071	\$5,198	\$5,328	\$5,461	\$5,598	\$5,738	\$5,881	\$6,028	\$6,179	\$6,333	\$6,491	\$6,816
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	\$5,140	\$5,269	\$5,401	\$5,536	\$5,674	\$5,816	\$5,961	\$6,110	\$6,263	\$6,420	\$6,581	\$6,910
ASSISTANT ENGINEER	\$6,831	\$7,002	\$7,177	\$7,356	\$7,540	\$7,729	\$7,922	\$8,120	\$8,323	\$8,531	\$8,744	\$9,181
ASSOCIATE ENGINEER	\$8,341	\$8,550	\$8,764	\$8,983	\$9,208	\$9,438	\$9,674	\$9,916	\$10,164	\$10,418	\$10,678	\$11,212
CONSTRUCTION SUPERVISOR	\$7,300	\$7,483	\$7,670	\$7,862	\$8,059	\$8,260	\$8,467	\$8,679	\$8,896	\$9,118	\$9,346	\$9,813
CROSS CONNECTION SPECIALIST	\$6,573	\$6,737	\$6,905	\$7,078	\$7,255	\$7,436	\$7,622	\$7,813	\$8,008	\$8,208	\$8,413	\$8,834
CUST SERVICE FIELD REP	\$5,705	\$5,848	\$5,994	\$6,144	\$6,298	\$6,455	\$6,616	\$6,781	\$6,951	\$7,125	\$7,303	\$7,668
CUSTOMER SERVICE & ADMIN GENERALIST	\$5,543	\$5,682	\$5,824	\$5,970	\$6,119	\$6,272	\$6,429	\$6,590	\$6,755	\$6,924	\$7,097	\$7,452
CUSTOMER SERVICE CLERK	\$4,312	\$4,420	\$4,531	\$4,644	\$4,760	\$4,879	\$5,001	\$5,126	\$5,254	\$5,385	\$5,520	\$5,796
CUSTOMER SERVICE LEAD	\$5,988	\$6,138	\$6,291	\$6,448	\$6,609	\$6,774	\$6,943	\$7,117	\$7,295	\$7,477	\$7,664	\$8,047
CUSTOMER SERVICE SUPERVISOR	\$6,449	\$6,610	\$6,775	\$6,944	\$7,118	\$7,296	\$7,478	\$7,665	\$7,857	\$8,053	\$8,254	\$8,667
OPERATIONS & MAINT. WORKER I	\$5,125	\$5,253	\$5,384	\$5,519	\$5,657	\$5,798	\$5,943	\$6,092	\$6,244	\$6,400	\$6,560	\$6,888
OPERATIONS & MAINT. WORKER II	\$5,705	\$5,848	\$5,994	\$6,144	\$6,298	\$6,455	\$6,616	\$6,781	\$6,951	\$7,125	\$7,303	\$7,668
OPERATIONS & MAINT. WORKER III	\$5,988	\$6,138	\$6,291	\$6,448	\$6,609	\$6,774	\$6,943	\$7,117	\$7,295	\$7,477	\$7,664	\$8,047
OPERATIONS & MAINT. WORKER IV	\$6,587	\$6,752	\$6,921	\$7,094	\$7,271	\$7,453	\$7,639	\$7,830	\$8,026	\$8,227	\$8,433	\$8,855
OPERATIONS & TELEMTRY TECH. I	\$5,484	\$5,621	\$5,762	\$5,906	\$6,054	\$6,205	\$6,360	\$6,519	\$6,682	\$6,849	\$7,020	\$7,371
OPERATIONS COORDINATOR I	\$5,705	\$5,848	\$5,994	\$6,144	\$6,298	\$6,455	\$6,616	\$6,781	\$6,951	\$7,125	\$7,303	\$7,668
OPERATIONS COORDINATOR II	\$6,275	\$6,432	\$6,593	\$6,758	\$6,927	\$7,100	\$7,278	\$7,460	\$7,647	\$7,838	\$8,034	\$8,436
PLANT MAINTENANCE SPEC	\$6,604	\$6,769	\$6,938	\$7,111	\$7,289	\$7,471	\$7,658	\$7,849	\$8,045	\$8,246	\$8,452	\$8,875
PROJECT COORDINATOR	\$6,052	\$6,203	\$6,358	\$6,517	\$6,680	\$6,847	\$7,018	\$7,193	\$7,373	\$7,557	\$7,746	\$8,133
REGULATORY & PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST	\$6,684	\$6,851	\$7,022	\$7,198	\$7,378	\$7,562	\$7,751	\$7,945	\$8,144	\$8,348	\$8,557	\$8,985
SENIOR ENG TECHNICIAN	\$7,357	\$7,541	\$7,730	\$7,923	\$8,121	\$8,324	\$8,532	\$8,745	\$8,964	\$9,188	\$9,418	\$9,889
SR. INSPECTION & DESIGN SPECIALIST	\$8,219	\$8,424	\$8,635	\$8,851	\$9,072	\$9,299	\$9,531	\$9,769	\$10,013	\$10,263	\$10,520	\$11,046
SYSTEM OPERATOR I	\$6,413	\$6,573	\$6,737	\$6,905	\$7,078	\$7,255	\$7,436	\$7,622	\$7,813	\$8,008	\$8,208	\$8,618
SYSTEM OPERATOR II	\$6,733	\$6,901	\$7,074	\$7,251	\$7,432	\$7,618	\$7,808	\$8,003	\$8,203	\$8,408	\$8,618	\$9,049
WATER QUALITY & ASSET MANAGMENT SPECIALIST	\$6,684	\$6,851	\$7,022	\$7,198	\$7,378	\$7,562	\$7,751	\$7,945	\$8,144	\$8,348	\$8,557	\$8,985
SR WATER QUALITY & ASSET MANAGMENT SPECIALIST	\$7,419	\$7,604	\$7,794	\$7,989	\$8,189	\$8,394	\$8,604	\$8,819	\$9,039	\$9,265	\$9,497	\$9,972
WATER RESOURCES & EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SPECIALIST	\$6,684	\$6,851	\$7,022	\$7,198	\$7,378	\$7,562	\$7,751	\$7,945	\$8,144	\$8,348	\$8,557	\$8,985
SR WATER RESOURCES & EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SPECIALIS	\$7,419	\$7,604	\$7,794	\$7,989	\$8,189	\$8,394	\$8,604	\$8,819	\$9,039	\$9,265	\$9,497	\$9,972

	MIN	MAX
ANALYST	\$5,316	\$7,124
ACCOUNTANT	\$6,808	\$9,150
SENIOR ACCOUNTANT	\$7,419	\$9,972
SENIOR MANAGEMENT ANALYST	\$7,419	\$9,972
ASSOCIATE MANAGER	\$7,918	\$10,610
CIP PROJECT MANAGER	\$9,017	\$12,524
SENIOR ENGINEER	\$9,017	\$12,524
MANAGER	\$9,919	\$13,775
DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING & OPERATIONS	\$12,585	\$18,650
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION	\$12,883	\$18,908
GENERAL MANAGER	\$20,799	\$25,917

CRESCENTA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS - STAFF REPORT

Action Item No. 3
May 27, 2025

To: Honorable President and Members of the Board of Directors
From: Arturo Montes – Interim Director of Finance and Administration
Subject: **Employee Handbook**

ACTION ITEM:

Discussion, direction, and possible adoption of the District's Employee Handbook

DISCUSSION:

In the past, the District has adopted various personnel and administrative policies, many of which were distributed through individual memos or standalone documents. Over the years, this decentralized approach has led to challenges such as staff access, understanding, and consistent application of District policies.

In response, staff initiated the development of a consolidated Employee Handbook to serve as a single, comprehensive resource for all District employees. The handbook compiles and organizes existing policies, ensures compliance with current legal standards, and promotes consistent application across departments.

The handbook was developed with the guidance of labor counsel from Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo (AALRR), ensuring that it reflects applicable labor laws and best practices for public sector employment, specifically.

The Employee Handbook was presented at the March 20, 2025, and May 15, 2025, Finance and Policy Committee meetings. Following discussion, the Committee directed staff to present the handbook to the full Board for review and input, with particular attention to the following sections:

1. XXV – Dress and Grooming Standards
2. XXXIII – Outside Employment and Activities

RECOMMENDATION:

Discuss and direct staff as to the next steps regarding the Employee Handbook.

Prepared and Submitted by:



Arturo Montes
Interim Director of Finance and Administration

Attachment: None

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CRESCENTA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS - STAFF REPORT

Action Item No. 4
May 27, 2025

To: Honorable President and Members of the Board of Directors
From: Arturo Montes – Interim Director of Finance and Administration
Subject: FY 2025-26 Proposed Budget

ACTION ITEM:

Discussion regarding the District's FY 2025-26 proposed budget and related items.

DISCUSSION:

The District's proposed budget for FY 2025-26, focuses on the District's mission of providing quality services in a reliable and fiscally responsible manner. The budget supports the District's long-term vision of infrastructure reliability, sustainable water supplies, and public engagement to strengthen community understanding and support. The vision for the next 18 months (through FY 2026–27) reflects the Board's direction, focusing on reducing capital costs, demonstrating value to customers, and strengthening the District's financial resiliency to address regulatory challenges and pursue new water supply opportunities.

Staff's ongoing objective is to present a balanced budget. As the District prepares to address new challenges in the year ahead, adjustments have been made using the best available data and forecasts. The proposed budget was developed using the following key assumptions:

REVENUE

1. Proposed rates are adopted by the Board
2. No change in customer accounts
3. No change in volumetric sales (water usage)

OPERATING EXPENSES

1. Source of Supply can range from 60% - 40% Groundwater, supplemented by imported water
2. Water wholesaler rate increase of 10% (Foothill Municipal Water District)
3. Wastewater processing charge decrease of 10% (City of Los Angeles)
4. Electricity rate increase of 10% (SoCal Edison and Glendale Water & Power)

SALARIES AND BENEFITS

1. COLA increase of 3.0%
2. Merit increases ranging from 0% - 7.5%
3. Total of 5 new positions added and 4 positions eliminated
4. PERS contribution based on CalPERS normal cost plus unfunded actuarial liability (minimum required contribution)

OTHER

1. No OPEB Contribution

CAPITAL

1. Completion of FY25 deferred CIP and continuation of "Pipeline Ramp-up Plan"¹
2. Significant savings anticipated from the continuation of the In-house Pipeline (IHP) program.

This year, staff is presenting a consolidated budget to best align with the District's operations. Below, are higher-level discussion points regarding the budget. It is presented in a level of detail, starting with: 1) a 'Consolidated Summary' which summarizes financial position; 2) a 'Consolidated Budget Comparison' that provides Budgeted-vs-Budgeted and Budgeted-vs-Projected; 3) a detail of Revenue for the District; 4) a detail of Expenses for the District; 5) a summary of Proposed Capital by Category; 6) a detail of Capital Improvement Projects; 7) a detail of Capital Outlay; and 8) a Budget Comparison, a detail of Revenue and a detail of Expenses for each fund.

- a. "FY 25 Budget" – This refers to the current-year budget, which is for Fiscal Year 2024-25 as approved by the Board.
- b. "FY 25 Projected" – This refers to staff's projected budget by year's end based on the first three quarters of financial data and management's estimates/expectations.
- c. "Proposed FY 26" – This refers to the budget proposed for next year, Fiscal Year 2025-26.

Revenue

Revenue projections are based on the recently completed cost of service study. The projected 11% overall revenue increase reflects the blend of a proposed 8% adjustment to water rates and a 15% adjustment to wastewater rates. A conservative approach was taken in forecasting revenue, assuming no growth in customer accounts or volumetric sales compared to the previous budget.

Operating Budget

The consolidated proposed budget reflects the District's use of \$963K in reserve funds, while still maintaining a reserve balance that is \$3.0M above the target level. Individually, the water fund maintains a healthy reserve of \$3.6M above target, while the wastewater fund is budgeted to add to reserves, ending with a projected balance of \$2.4M, \$600K below the reserve target.

The "Variance Analysis" table outlining the primary categories driving changes between the proposed budget and the FY 25 approved budget is included at the end of this report. While many uncontrollable costs have increased, staff have worked diligently to reduce controllable expenses, resulting in a reduction in the proposed budget of over \$260K.

Capital

Proposed capital improvements account for over 40 percent of the District's total expenditures. A summary of these planned investments is provided in the "Total FY 2026 Proposed Capital" table at the end of this report. These proposed projects reflect the District's ongoing commitment to infrastructure reliability delivered in an economically responsible manner. The capital program includes 3.2 miles of pipeline replacement, with 0.9 miles completed through the District's cost-saving, in-house pipeline program. The District will also continue its well rehabilitation schedule, increasing groundwater production and reducing reliance on purchased water. The remaining projects focus on enhancing water quality and improving emergency resiliency.

¹ A component of the "2020 Long-Term Infrastructure Reliability and Funding Roadmap"

Variance Analysis

In Thousands		FY26 Budget vs. FY25 Budget	
Revenue			
	Water	\$	1,812
	Wastewater	\$	585
	Other	\$	(54)
Revenue		\$	2,343
Expenses			
	Salaries		360
	Benefits		272
	Purchased Water		97
	Power Cost		50
	City of LA Sewer Services		(150)
	Other		(261)
Expenses		\$	368
Debt Service		\$	-
Net Before Capital Expenses		\$	1,975
CIP & OPEB			
	Pipeline		6,677
	All Other CIP		2,168
Total CIP & OPEB			8,845

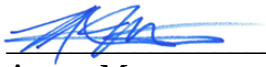
Total FY 2026 Proposed Capital

Description	Budget
CIP	
Pipeline	\$ 10,750,000
Water Supply	\$ 200,000
Water Storage	\$ -
Water Distribution	\$ 975,000
Water Treatment	\$ 350,000
Technology	\$ 125,000
Public Safety/Emergency Response	\$ 1,550,000
Facilities & Planning	\$ -
Wastewater	\$ 209,000
Other	\$ -
All Other CIP	\$ 3,409,000
Total CIP	\$ 14,159,000
Capital Outlays	
IT	\$ 260,000
Equipment	305,000
Other	310,000
Total Capital Outlays	\$ 875,000
Totals	\$ 15,034,000

RECOMMENDATION:

Discuss the proposed budget as presented.

Prepared and Submitted by:



Arturo Montes

Interim Director of Finance and Administration

Attachment: None

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CRESCENTA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS - STAFF REPORT

Action Item No. 5
May 27, 2025

To: Honorable President and Members of the Board of Directors
From: James Lee – General Manager
Subject: **Metropolitan Water District Coalition Letter Supporting the Governor's Delta Conveyance Legislative Package**

ACTION ITEM:

Consideration and possible motion to join a Metropolitan Water District coalition letter supporting the Governor's Delta Conveyance legislative package.

BACKGROUND:

Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) is forming a coalition with Californians for Water Security regarding support for the Governor's Delta Conveyance legislative package and is inviting its members and sub-agencies to join the coalition.

The primary component of the legislative package is a budget trailer bill that streamline's advancement of Delta Conveyance Project (DCP), a project considered by many to be the most reliable and economical source of water for Californians that has also been stalled by bottlenecks such as reviews, lawsuits, interest groups, etc. The letter is enclosed for reference. In addition to the project benefits outlined in the letter, the downstream impacts of DCP may support various of the District's strategic planning objectives such as 'Reliable Water', 'Regional Collaboration', and 'Fiscal Responsibility'.

The deadline for the first round of support has passed, but the coalition will continue to coordinate further support.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board discuss consideration for joining the coalition.

Prepared and Submitted by:



James Lee
General Manager

Attachment(s): Trailer Bill Support Letter

May/June X, 2025

Budget Subcommittee

ZZZZ N Street, Room XYZ

Sacramento, California 95814

RE: Support for Delta Conveyance Project Streamlining Trailer Bill

Dear XYZ and Members of the Budget/Water Subcommittee,

On behalf of a broad coalition of labor, business, infrastructure, social justice and nonprofit organizations, we urge your strong support for the budget trailer bill that is intended to streamline processes for advancing the Delta Conveyance Project (DCP) to a point where informed decisions can be made regarding construction investment.

This budget trailer bill is NOT about circumventing public engagement and review – this budget trailer bill is all about breaking through redundant, archaic processes that result in endless delays, duplicative reviews, and millions upon millions of dollars of additive costs, while impeding the State's ability to complete critical, needed infrastructure projects.

The DCP is a critical component of California's plans to fortify the State Water Project (SWP) in preparation for the impacts of extreme weather and climate change. The SWP delivers water to more than 27 million Californians and 750,000 acres of farmland and is the engine that powers California's economic success. However, this system is vulnerable to extreme weather and unpredictable precipitation patterns and, as a result, we our state's main water supply is at serious risk.

According to the Department of Water Resources' SWP Delivery Capability Report, the SWP is expected [to lose up to 23% of its supply in the next 20 years](#) due to changing flow patterns and extreme weather shifts. It is critical that we act *NOW* to prepare California's water infrastructure to protect the long-term reliability and affordability of water for the millions of Californian homes and businesses that rely upon the SWP.

The [2024 Benefit/Cost Analysis](#) of the Delta Conveyance Project found that water conveyed through the SWP is the most affordable source of water compared to alternatives like desalination or recycling. These alternative sources are necessary, but the volume of water delivered by the SWP cannot be replaced.

For decades, the DCP has been stalled by frivolous lawsuits and duplicative reviews. These are the universal problems facing major infrastructure throughout California, and foundational to why it is so difficult to do big things in our state and bring major infrastructure to completion.

The budget trailer bill proposal restores balance to this process – ensuring legitimate concerns are addressed, while removing tools for obstruction and delay. Every year of delay in construction of the DCP costs California's water ratepayers – including nearly 8 million people living in disadvantaged communities – approximately \$500 million. The budget trailer bill proposal reduces bureaucratic red tape, which translates into real savings for Californians and for the State budget.

The proposed trailer bill smooths administrative processes to help move the Delta Conveyance Project in a way that balances environmental protections while improving the efficiency of the review and approval process.

It needs to be said, that this DCP *“is not your grandparent’s water conveyance project.”* The DCP has been redesigned to be smaller, more environmentally responsive, and less intrusive to Delta communities. At the same time, the DCP will generate thousands of good-paying union construction jobs and stimulate local economies, especially in areas hardest hit by economic downturns and drought-related agricultural cutbacks

For these reasons, **our coalition urges you to support TBL XYZ**. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to working with you to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Hearts and Heroes Luncheon Serves Those Who Serve Community



Photo courtesy of AAPI LCF
Portable power stations were donated by Yoshino Technology to the fire and sheriff departments.

The Asian American and Pacific Islander La Cañada Flintridge (AAPI LCF) Network and the La Cañada Chinese Club jointly hosted a luncheon on Monday, April 21 to honor local first responders. About 100 hometown heroes enjoyed the luncheon, including firefighters from LA County Fire Station 19 and 82, deputies from the Crescenta Valley Sheriff's Station, and officers from the Pasadena Police Air Operations Section – Helicopter Division.

During the Eaton Fire, AAPI LCF Network organized a series of charitable initiatives – Heart of Heroes – ranging from collecting donations for fire victims and assisting with relocation and home rebuilding to expressing the heartfelt appreciation for the heroes in the community via artwork and videos. Local children gathered at the LCF Library to create a 30-foot-long painting celebrating firefighters with the youngest artist being just 3 years

old. As the culminating event of the Heart of Heroes initiative, the luncheon offered a meaningful opportunity for AAPI residents to share food and stories with hometown heroes, fostering stronger community bonds. During the event, the artwork of local children was displayed and portable power stations donated by Yoshino Technology were presented to the fire and sheriff departments.

» TASTY TREATS » CHEF RANDY GRAHAM

Croissant Breakfast Sandwich

I enjoy making this hearty breakfast sandwich for my friends and family, serving it alongside country-style fried potatoes and fresh orange juice. For lunch, I pair it with a side of pasta salad. That's all there is to it.

Makes 4 sandwiches.

Ingredients:

- 8 tablespoons prepared pesto (divided)
- 2 medium tomatoes (sliced)
- Kosher salt and fresh cracked black pepper to taste
- 2 avocados (peeled, pit removed, sliced thin)
- 4 ounces of fresh baby spinach
- 6 large eggs
- 4 large croissants

Directions:

Carefully cut each croissant in half horizontally. Set the tops aside.

Spread 1 tablespoon pesto on the cut side of each bottom. Layer two slices of tomato on top of the pesto. Sprinkle the tomato slices with salt and pepper to taste. Place one-quarter of the avocado slices on top of the tomatoes. Place one-quarter of the spinach on top of the avocados.

Using a large skillet, scramble eggs lightly over medium heat. Layer one-quarter of the eggs on top of the spinach. Repeat until all four sandwiches are ready.

Spread one tablespoon of pesto on the cut side of each croissant top. Place the spinach on the pan and press down lightly to ensure the ingredients settle properly before serving with a side of breakfast potatoes.



SO MUCH FUN! Thank You



The CV Chamber of Commerce thanks the many supporters who made this year's Hometown Country Fair a success!

Burrtec Waste Industries
CVWD

Given Guidance Family Counseling
LA Smile Co. Orthodontics
The Donut Guy Realty Group
USC VHH

Bob Smith Toyota
Friends of Rockhaven
J's Maids
YMCA and
Supervisor Kathryn Barger



By CV Weekly on May 22, 2025 · 0 Comments

Rebuilding Altadena: A Call for Unity, Innovation and Stewardship

Just four months ago our communities were tested by devastating fires and we saw firsthand the power of unity, resilience and mutual aid. First responders risked their lives to protect our homes. The Metropolitan Water District stepped up in remarkable ways – providing equipment, fuel, valves, technical expertise and services when needed most. Their support, and the unwavering dedication of our local fire departments, saved lives and preserved critical infrastructure. We owe them not just our thanks but our resolve to meet the future as one.

As we turn toward rebuilding Altadena, we face a generational challenge. The capital costs are staggering – hundreds of millions of dollars to restore, modernize and strengthen our water systems. But beyond the dollars and cents, we face a moment of profound reckoning about the future of water management in the foothills and across California.

I want to thank Supervisor Kathryn Barger for her leadership and support in her efforts to consolidate water systems – this generational investment is far beyond what any single utility can do alone and it is important that we all work together for the public we serve. Yet too often local water figures fall back into the same old battles – fights that have defined our industry for far too long. I was disappointed to see this dynamic on display in a recently published article in the Pasadena Star-News where defensive posturing and finger-pointing resurfaced just months after the fires reminding us of our shared purpose. Now is not the time to bury ourselves in the past. Now is the time to rise to the future.

It was asserted in the Star-News article that Foothill Municipal Water District had only hours worth of water stored locally before the fire, when in fact they had multiple days of storage in their Altadena reservoirs. Foothill actually has too much storage capacity in the area and most of the time has one reservoir out of service to ensure water quality is preserved. However, both tanks in Altadena were filled just before the Eaton Fire started because of the weather and a fear that a fire could occur.

It was also asserted that Foothill Municipal proposed a consolidation with Las Flores Water Company when in reality Las Flores approached Foothill asking it to consider a short-term agreement to assist Las Flores in the operation and restoration of its system while it rebuilt a customer base. The Foothill board of directors is currently considering such an agreement. In addition, the Foothill board has taken no position on agency consolidation but has agreed to organize a discussion on the topic with the boards of the eight water agencies supplying water across their service area in Altadena, La Cañada and La Crescenta.

I am proud, too, of the work my fellow board members have led in La Crescenta, partnering with the Arroyo and Foothills Conservancy to build the first stormwater recharge project in the community. This nature-based innovation allows water to percolate into the ground, saving water and energy while supporting native plants adapted to Southern California's fire ecology.

Above all, I am deeply encouraged by the incredible spirit of this community. People like Edgar McGregor, whose local climate monitoring earned him a congressional medal of commendation, remind us how individual action and grassroots leadership can ripple outward and save lives. I was personally inspired to hear how Metropolitan Water District staff members showed up far beyond their formal duties ready to help in any way they could. That spirit of service is the example we must follow.

We honor that legacy not by clinging to narrow interests but by coming together in service of the community we all share. Rebuilding Altadena is about more than pipes and pumps – it's about building trust, resilience and a future worthy of the next generation.

Now is the time to put aside the divisions of the past and embrace a shared mission: to protect, sustain and renew the foothills we call home.

*Richard Atwater President
Foothill Municipal Water District Board*



GUEST OP ED <<< RICHARD ATWATER added by **CV Weekly** on May 22, 2025

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2700 Foothill Blvd, La Crescenta, CA 91214

Dear Members of the Board,

The morning after your recent town hall on water rates, I walked through Descanso Gardens with some friends and fellow young parents—a neighbor here in La Crescenta. The rate increases were on their mind, prompted by the Prop 218 notice they had received. They knew I worked in the water industry, and so they shared their concerns and asked thoughtful, sincere questions.

Unfortunately, I found myself unable to offer the clear, simple facts that should have been provided at the town hall. Most fundamentally, there was no straightforward explanation of what the proposed rate increases would mean in percentage terms for a typical customer's monthly bill. These are not mere adjustments. They are increases—and I appreciated that Board President Johnson was clear and candid on that point during the meeting. That kind of honesty matters.

It was also disappointing that the town hall made no mention of the parcel charge or what residents have received in return. How many miles of pipeline have been replaced? How does that compare to what was promised when the charge was approved? That kind of accountability was included in the last annual report. Its absence now raises questions.

That said, I want to be clear: the District has made real progress in recent years. I was proud to be part of those efforts under the Board's and General Manager Lee's leadership. The work accomplished on the Rosemont Preserve—thanks to Director Colcord's guidance and the gumption of Operations and Maintenance Manager Telles—is a genuine achievement. I especially want to congratulate Manager Telles' crew for their bold and pioneering in-house pipeline projects, which have resulted in serious cost savings for the District. The hands-on work done by folks like Johnathan and Siaki—who quietly and reliably get the job done—embodies the kind of grit and commitment that gives the public confidence in local government.

What Finance Director Montes and the team have delivered through AMI implementation is both ambitious and commendable. I'd also like to thank Engineering Director Dillon and Public Affairs' Maven Sargsyan for their tireless work to secure additional stormwater planning resources for the DROPs project and to advance the CV Park stormwater project. These efforts reflect the District's emerging role as a proactive leader in sustainable water and climate infrastructure.

And I'd be remiss if I didn't take a moment to thank the entire team for their intrepid and ongoing work to go above and beyond. In my first week on the job, Kellen told me that it's all about Team, and I deeply believe that this is a truly special group of people. I took the time to document the unique successes of the team's creative and courageous DIY approaches

in the world's leading research institute for the emerging science of protocols. I have provided a copy of that article below.

Still, as I said at the town hall, much more remains to be done.

There are commonsense opportunities for greater efficiency and improved stewardship of public dollars. I shared one such example aloud at the town hall: the \$50 fuse that ended up costing tens of thousands of dollars—not because anyone failed at their job, but because of the administrative complexity and overlapping jurisdictions across our fragmented local water agencies. No one was at fault. But the system failed.

We should view these episodes not as isolated missteps, but as symptoms of a structural problem. They are opportunities—if we choose to take them—to confront systemic inadequacies and reform the management structures so that they better meet the needs of today's La Crescenta.

I remain convinced that thoughtful, community-minded consolidation offers our best hope for long-term cost control, operational resilience, and improved service reliability. These issues are not just about internal governance—they are essential to regional climate resilience. The structural shortcomings of our current water delivery and governance systems will only be amplified by the cascading challenges of cost pressures, extreme weather, and increasing emergency risks. By having the courage to address those issues head-on, we can build a system that is not only more efficient, but more just, more sustainable, and more prepared for the future.

I remember after the parcel charge hearing that crowd say consolidation would be the best thing to come from that sometimes contentious discussion. I also remember the community poll showing approximately 80% of ratepayers in favor of consolidation. These are not easy issues, but I believe Board President Johnson was exactly right last Saturday when he mentioned that the CVWD Board has a terrific group of professionals and it is my sincere hope that the board takes the long view for the benefit of not just the next few years but courageously addresses the generational issues we face today and into the next century.

Kind regards,

Patrick Atwater

La Crescenta Resident, Ratepayer and human really concerned about the future our kids and kid's kid's kids will inherit

Dirt Simple

Innovation in government doesn't fail for lack of good ideas. It fails because too many people are stuck trying to decode an invisible maze of protocols, half-remembered workarounds, and institutional memory trapped in someone's Outlook archive.

That's why we at the California Adaptive Technology (CAT) Initiative are telling the story of a quiet but powerful shift at Crescenta Valley Water District (CVWD). This article contains two case studies of how front-line workers can use protocols – often perceived as top-down, bureaucratic excess – to help a government to do what it's supposed to do: deliver.

This isn't about a moonshot. It's about a ditch, a spreadsheet and an AI-generated memorandum. Let's dive in.

Decade Ditch

Nearly ten years. That's how long it took to build a stormwater recharge ditch in my hometown north of L.A. Not a dam. Not a desalination plant. Just a basic diversion channel – a design older than modern civilization itself. The kind of thing you could (and we did!) dig in a single day.

Why do we need stormwater ditches? They recharge groundwater, save money, and help maintain the environment. Everyone agreed to dig – except the permitting gods, who require you to consult an oracle, get a permit, maybe loop in the Army Corps, and definitely chase down a property rights signoff – that may or may not exist. Kafka would be proud.

So what did we do? We flowed like water.

First of all, we went straight to the site with a shovel in hand. Talked to people on the ground. When the permitting maze got too thick, we looked for workarounds (what we like to call scenic routes). Instead of taking the most direct path of permit acquisition, we partnered with a local NGO that owned the Rosemont Preserve parcel) and used their existing permit as a legal hack. That mutually beneficial workaround was hardened in a memorandum of understanding – drafted by AI. Bureaucratic aikido.

The Obstacle is The Way

As above, so below – we now had to find an underground workaround. CVWD's service area isn't called Rockcrescenta for nothing. Big boulders are just part of the deal.

But here's where taking matters into your own hands makes a difference: when you do projects in-house, you are more adaptable. You can handle surprises – like a refrigerator-sized rock – without triggering a \$200,000 contractor change order. Let's be real: if you give some folks an excuse to nickel-and-dime you, they will.

This was a major learning from the project: keep projects in-house where you can flex. Being able to manage uncertainty and learn on the way is an organizational competency. And on average, it's cheaper, faster, and more resilient.

Look Back to Move Forward

A quick aside before another case study Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) project and future frontiers, let's talk about one of the most underutilized tools in the public sector: project retrospectives.

After a scramble over a grant deadline nearly derailed a big AMI (An AMI streams real time water usage data) project, CVWD didn't just breathe a sigh of relief and move on. The team paused. They asked: What.happened?.What.assumptions.broke?.Where.did.we.trip?

That reflective pattern of behavior is a protocol.We do short, scheduled after-action reviews for every major milestone. No finger-pointing. Just learning. And that learning loop becomes a central feature of an adaptive organization.

AMI: From Turf War to Operational Triumph

CVWD's AMI project is a case study in how bureaucratic stalemates can sabotage good policy – and how dirt-simple protocols can fix it.

Here's what happened:

- The District spent millions of dollars installing AMI meters.
- The meters were physically in the ground.
- But the radios that made them “smart”? Not installed.
- Why? A tangle of turf battles, budget shortfalls, and a byzantine process involving a dozen spreadsheets, mismatched schedules, and unclear ownership.

For over a decade, less than 0.2% of customers could actually access their water data. That's not underperformance. That's institutional irony.Then came the protocol shift:

- One unified list.
- It synced automatically between field and office teams.
- It exposed bottlenecks.
- It replaced email scavenger hunts with shared visibility.
- It turned data chaos into coordinated delivery.

Not a dashboard. Not a portal. Just an all hands email to CVWD's 32 staff people. One place, one update, one operational picture. Suddenly, everyone – from finance to field crews – had visibility. Gaps surfaced and action followed naturally.

Simple. Shared. Sane.

The result of that work? Today 93%+ of customers can access their water data. The project is on track for completion this fiscal year. Same people. Same meters. Just better protocols.

The Discovery Protocol: Meta-Infrastructure for Trust

Bureaucratic systems love to optimize processes. But what they often forget is that trust is a kind of infrastructure in its own right.

One of the lesser-known but most transformative protocols CVWD implemented wasn't digital or operational – it was relational. Internally known as the Discovery Protocol, it wasn't built in Airtable or coded into a permit script. It was built into long lunches, meandering walks, and unhurried conversation.

Here's how it worked:

Staff were encouraged – formally – to take extended 90-minute lunch breaks. Not to “catch up on work” or “power through,” but to go outside, eat together, and walk through Descanso Gardens. Phones stayed in pockets. Formal titles stayed at the office. And what emerged was something rarely achieved in government org charts: real human connection.

These walks became crucibles of change. Engineers talked with planners. Field staff swapped stories with finance folks. Problems that had been stuck for months began to dissolve – not through memos, but through shared meals and real empathy. Instead of “that's not my department,” people began to ask, how can I help?

This wasn't just about feel-good team bonding. The Discovery Protocol functioned as a meta-protocol – a cultural operating system that allowed all the other protocols (AMI reform, field data ops, adaptive ditch-building) to actually work. Because people had built trust, they could move faster. Take risks. Ask questions. Own problems together.

It was part of a broader cultural effort at CVWD to open hearts and minds, recognizing that adaptive infrastructure is not just a technical problem. It's a human one. And no spreadsheet, no dashboard, no AI model can replace what two people can do over lunch when they actually listen to each other.

The lesson? You don't rebuild systems without rebuilding the relationships inside them. The Discovery Protocol did just that.

Frontier Protocols: From Water Meters to Street Data

If adaptive infrastructure is about using what you already have in smarter ways, the next frontier of operational improvement is hiding in plain sight: piggybacking sensor networks onto routine field operations.

Here's one illustrative play:

- Install [low-cost imagery sensors on district vehicles](#) – meter readers, fire flow testers, water quality samplers.
- As they drive their routes, they collect street imagery.
- That imagery feeds into a lightweight pipeline to monitor street quality across the district.
- You've just turned routine workflows into a living map of civic infrastructure.

This isn't sci-fi. It's a simple protocol shift: embed sensing into existing work, then route that data into usable, visual insights. Call it embedded observation. Call it ambient infrastructure intelligence. Whatever you call it, it's efficient, imaginative, and stunningly actionable.

Begin by asking: "Where can we go with what we have?"

The Problem with Protocols We Can't See

There's a persistent challenge with government operations.

The implicit, unspoken protocols for how things are "supposed" to get done? They're not just murky. They're mythological. There's folklore around processes and policies. Everyone "knows" someone you need to talk to. Everyone has their own spreadsheet, contact list and folder of templates. And the real bottleneck? It's usually figuring out who actually has the power to say yes.

This isn't just annoying. It can be operationally paralyzing.

As pointed out by Nadia Asparouhova in her Summer of Protocols research, this is a textbook case of implicit, informal, and inconsistent [Kafka.Protocols](#) – the worst kind. Even when protocols aren't written down, people rely on oral tradition. And government becomes a whisper network of "that's just how we do things."

Some examples:

- Folkloric workflows ("Talk to Janice in Engineering, she knows a guy...")

- Paper files in digital worlds (and vice versa)
- Policies that conflict with practices that conflict with what the law actually says

We're not saying we need 500-page manuals. We're saying we need clarity. We need protocols that are legible and grounded in reality – not vibes or piles of paperwork.

Too often California government operational records are half digital, half scrolls-in-a-filing-cabinet. That hybrid reality creates protocol.drift; You don't know what's binding, because you don't know if it's in a Word doc, a state law, or Barbara's head (Barbara retired in 2018).

Take the stormwater ditch: we didn't even know what permit was truly required. That's not a compliance issue – it's an information architecture failure. And it's why we believe AI can help. Drafting MOUs, summarizing legal frameworks, translating "govspeak" into actionable steps – that's what the next-gen protocol engine looks like.

So What Do We Do?

Recommendations.for.Future_Proofing.Adaptive.Protocols.in.California.and.Beyond

Start with Visibility: You can't fix what you can't see. Make workflows legible. Use tools like shared spreadsheets, dashboards, or even a routine structured email.

Build from the actual Workflow: If your protocol doesn't map to how real people do real work, it's not a protocol – it's a fantasy.

Streamline Ruthlessly: Focus on the flow. Remove the friction. Question the parts that exist just because "that's how we've always done it."

Treat Project Retrospectives as Civic Ritual: Don't move on until you've looked back. Every stumble contains the seeds of future resilience, but they need to be attended to.

Use AI as a Protocol Partner: Don't wait for a moonshot. Start with small wins. Draft documents, summarize email threads, generate checklists. Use the tech to amplify your staff's judgment.

Design for the Street Level: Protocols shouldn't live in binders. They should live in trucks, phones, and calendars. Embed them where the real work happens.

Treat Protocols as Civic Infrastructure: They're not just internal. Good protocols create clarity, transparency, and trust for everyone – from staff to ratepayers.

CRESCENTA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

General Manager Report

To: Honorable President and Members of the Board of Directors
From: James Lee, General Manager
Subject: **General Manager Report**

GM Report
May 27, 2025

General Manager's Report Topics:

- Sampling Certificate Workshop
- In-House Pipeline Project #6 complete – 2300 Block of Teasley Ave
- FEMA recovery of wildfire-related costs

STAFFING

No work anniversaries in May.

Employee Spotlight: Quinn Abbene

As of May 22nd, the District has gone 114 days without a lost time incident.

GENERAL MANAGER ACTIVITIES

Meetings:

Managers Meeting(s)	- May 15 th
Foothill Municipal Water District	- May 13 th
Engineering, Operations, and Technology Committee	- May 14 th
All-Hands Staff Meeting	- May 15 th
East Valley Water District	- May 15 th
MWD Future Supply Actions Grant: "DROPS"	- May 15 th
Finance Committee	- May 15 th
CV Town Council	- May 15 th
Town Hall at the La Crescenta Library	- May 17 th

Agreements/Contracts Executed:

Harper & Assoc. – <i>contract</i>		
Reservoir inspection and cleaning	\$28,050 before contingencies	May 14, 2025
GF Advocacy – <i>professional services agreement</i>		
Develop legislative functionality	\$1,500 retainer for 3 months	May 23, 2025

Submitted by:



James Lee
General Manager