

Communications & Customer Service

COMMITTEE MEETING

February 18, 2025



Agenda

- Approval of Minutes
- General Manager Comments
- Committee Member Comments
- Appointment or Reappointment of Committee Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Strategic Communications Plan

Review & Discuss Draft



Strategic Communications Plan Development Steps



Discovery

Completed

Stakeholder feedback
(survey, committee,
workshops)
Content review
SWOT Analysis
Demographic research
Channel assessment



Development

Completed

Where do we want to be,
and how will we get there
SMART Goal setting
Tactical planning
Resource allocation
(staff, budget)



Documentation

Current State

Formalize plan details and
commitment to success
Draft plan document
Review, get feedback, edit
Approve plan

SWOT Analysis

Communications

Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Newsletter quality• Education campaigns• Outreach events• Designing in-house• Positive response to detachment• Auto-dial notifications• Positive earned media• Frequent project updates	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistency (branding)• Consistent tone/voice• Website navigation• Social media• Low resources• Competing Priorities• Limited crisis prep
Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brand guidelines• Owned stock photos• Internal communications• More positive earned media• Newsletter frequency• Crisis comms training	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social media trolls• Disruptive public comments• Rate pressure• Misinformation spreads fast• Unplanned shutdowns• Emergencies/disasters• Low resources• Competing with online noise

Customer Service

Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friendly phone service• Low hold times• De-escalation skills• Field staff• Multiple channels• Fast response times• Survey• Reverse 911 system	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistency• Translation• Real-time updates• Low flume utilization• Staff needs guidance on some questions
Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update website regularly• FAQs for staff & customers• How-to videos on website• Community surveys• Standardize project outreach with a checklist	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unrealistic customer expectations• Comparing us to larger agencies• Wholesale rate increases• Detachment expectations vs. reality• Historical reputation• Complex regulations

Plan Components

Executive Summary: Why have a plan?

Guiding Principles: Core values applied to communications

Brand Statement and Mission

Target Audiences

District Narrative

Key Messages

Goals & Objectives

Tactical Recommendations

Communication Toolbox

Metrics

- Even when we are silent, we send a message
- Plan balances aspirations with resource realities
- It's a group effort- the Board, committees, and staff all contribute
- Living document: seeks consistent messaging, evolving landscape

Guiding Principles p 4



Mission

Rainbow Water Mission

Rainbow Water's mission is to provide our customers with reliable, high-quality water and water reclamation service in a fiscally sustainable manner.

Communications Mission

Building on Rainbow Water's mission to provide reliable, high-quality services, this Communications Plan fosters understanding, trust, and collaboration by proactively engaging stakeholders, promoting inclusive dialogue, and sharing information transparently to inspire stewardship and empower a resilient, sustainable community.

BRAND STATEMENT p 5

Helping Our Community Grow Since 1953

Since our founding, Rainbow Municipal Water District has helped the communities of Rainbow, Bonsall, and parts of Fallbrook, Oceanside, and Vista grow and adapt to an ever-evolving economic, ecological, and demographic landscape. Building on our agricultural roots, we support farmers, households, and businesses as they embrace efficient, sustainable water-use. Guided by integrity, professionalism, responsibility, teamwork, and innovation, we foster trust through open communication, reliable service, and forward-thinking solutions that strengthen our community now and for future generations.

Target Audiences pp 6-11

Primary

INTERNAL

- Board
- Employees
- Committee Volunteers

EXTERNAL

- Residents (metered & sub-metered)
- Agricultural ratepayers

Secondary

- County of San Diego
- Pala Band of Cupeño and Luiseño tribes
- Local schools
- Local media
- Neighboring agencies
- Local elected officials
- HOAs

Tertiary

- Future applicants
- Community groups
- Developers
- Real estate agents
- Contractors
- Industry groups
- Parents of students

District Narrative p 13

- An integral part of the community since 1953
- Respectful of agricultural roots and farmers' current needs
- Adapting to evolving community and residents' competing needs
- Small, agile agency
- Balancing innovation with resource constraints
- Cost-conscious, service-minded, customer-centric
- Empowering customers to make informed decisions
- Trusted community partner



Key Messages pp 13-16

1. We deliver reliable, high-value service
2. We provide exceptional customer experiences
3. We support local agriculture
4. We operate with transparency and accountability
5. We value our workforce
6. We are about our community
7. We build strong partnerships
8. We adapt and innovate for the future



Goals and Objectives

- Provide reliable, high-quality water and wastewater services in a fiscally sustainable manner
- Strengthen customer relationships and public trust
- Ensure transparency and dialogue on key issues
- Promote preparedness, efficiency & innovation

Goals and Objectives pp17-18

- Provide reliable, high-quality water and wastewater services in a fiscally sustainable manner
- Strengthen customer relationships and public trust
- Ensure transparency and dialogue on key issues
- Promote preparedness, efficiency & innovation

Tactical Recommendations pp19-21

- Measurement and adjustment
 - Surveys, metrics tracking, share findings
- Content & branding
 - Plain speak content, user-friendly infographics, consistency
- District-Managed Media
 - Website, social media, e-newsletters
- Partnerships & Engagement
 - Earned media, community outreach, regional collaborations
- Selective advertising
 - Local or regional spots, seasonal campaigns
- Additional Tools
 - Annual summary, recognition/awards, continuous improvement

Communication Toolbox & Metrics pp 22-23

Engagement Resources

- Online & social media
- Community Events
- Community Feedback

Performance Metrics

- Customer engagement
- Program outputs
- Digital impact
- Educational impact

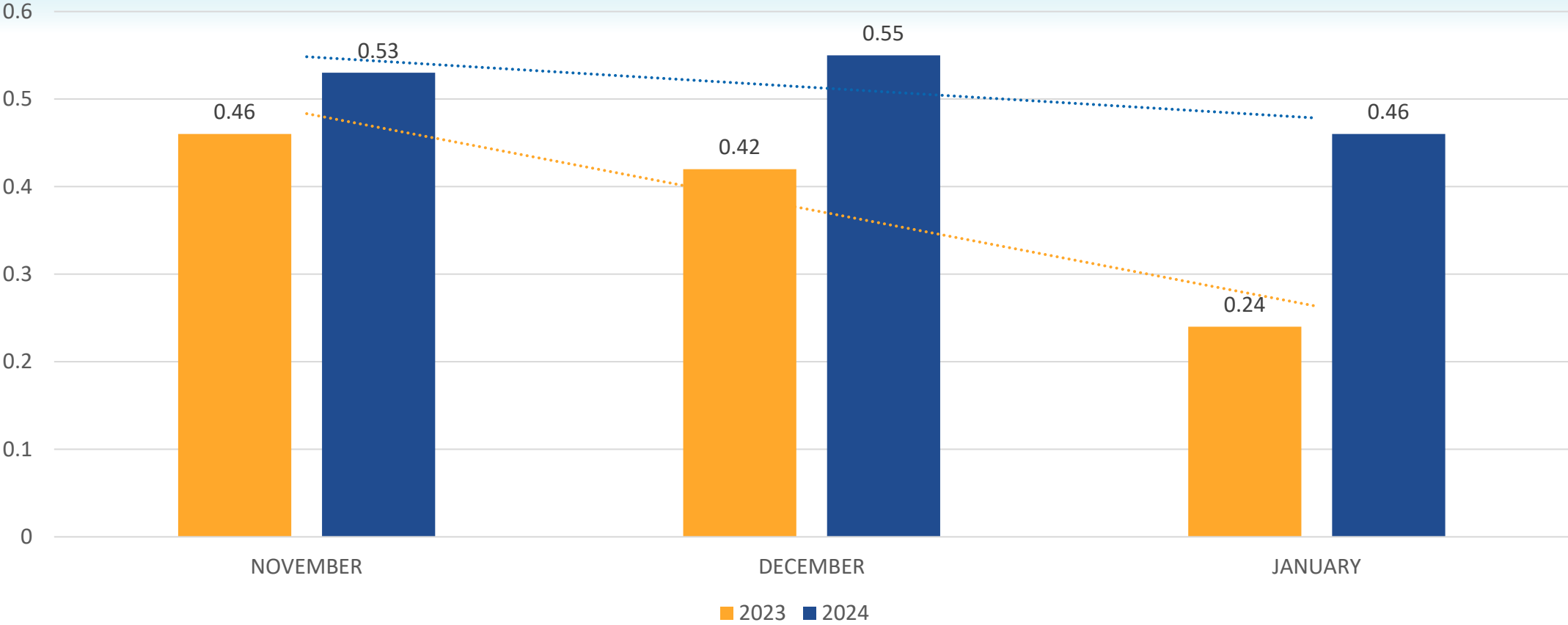


Quarterly Call Metrics

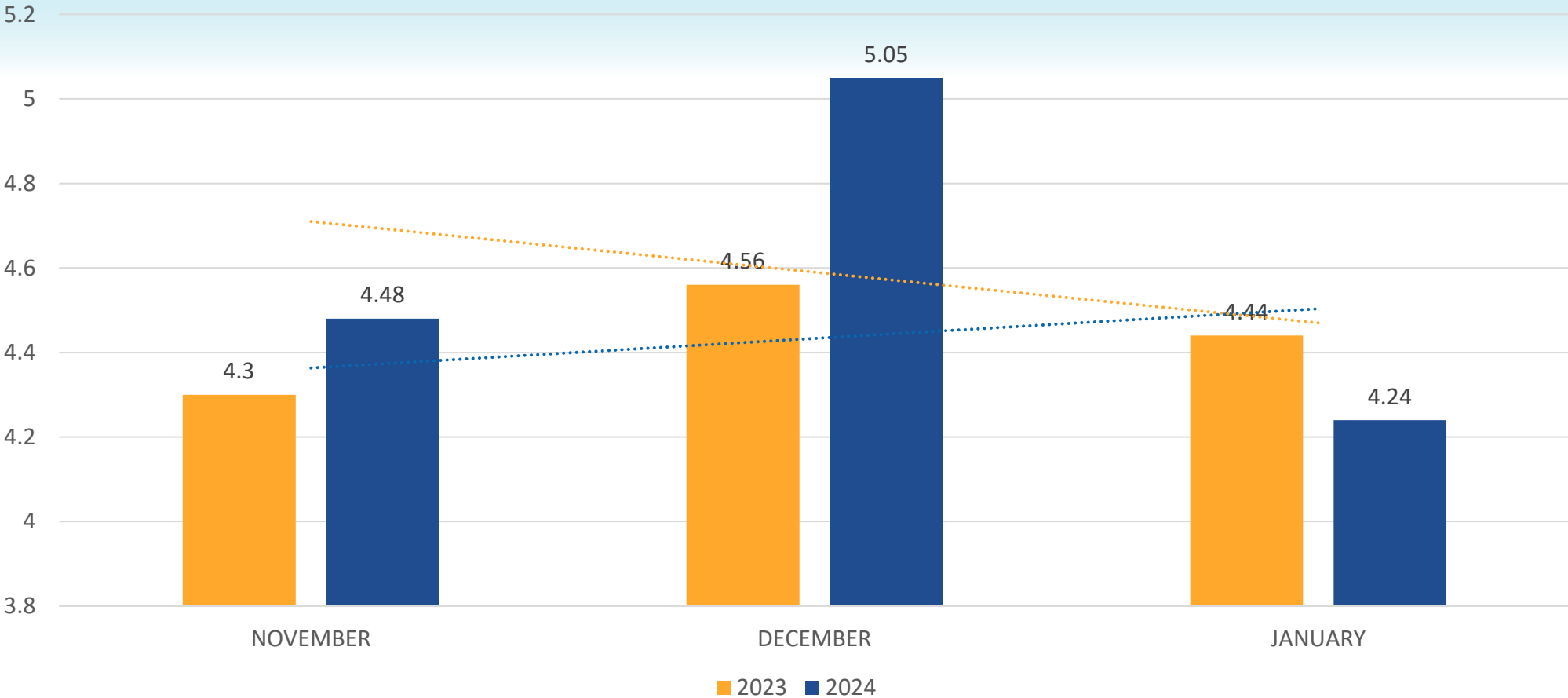
Nov - Jan Update



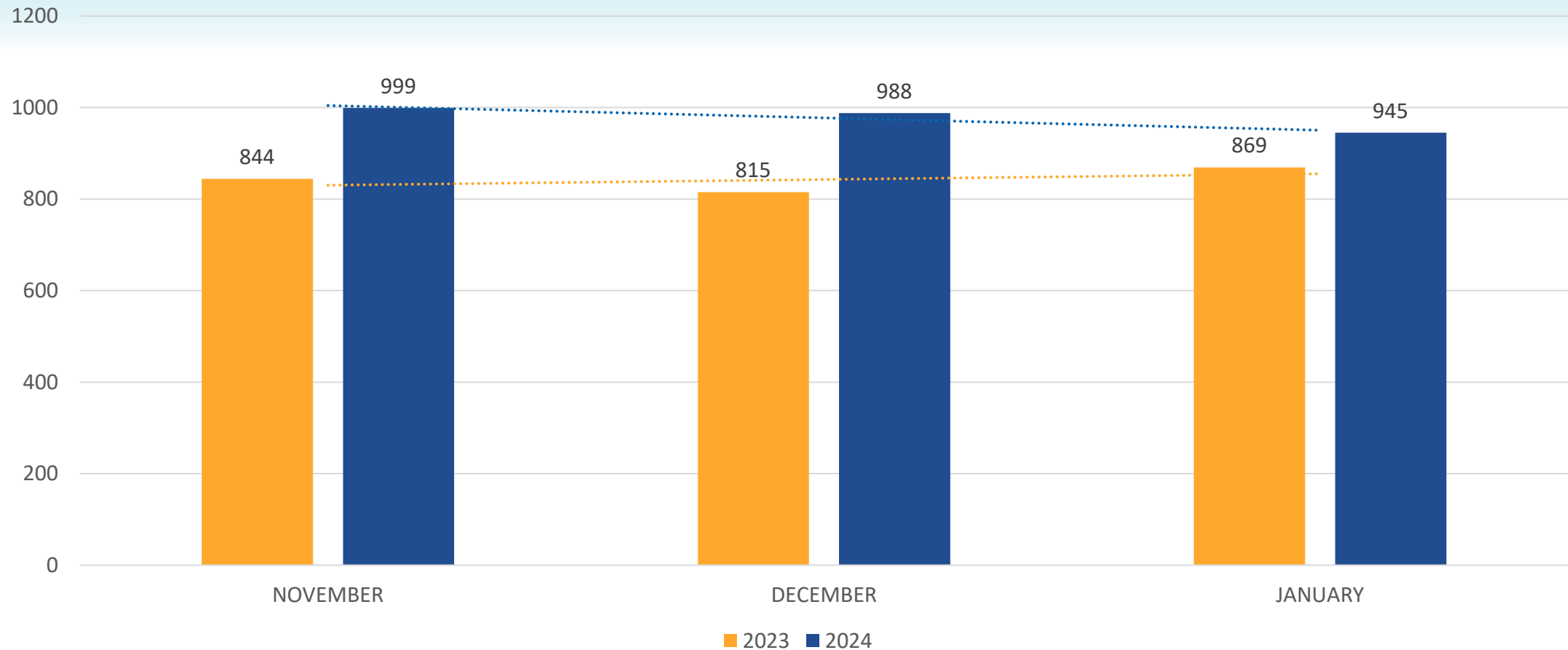
Average Hold Time: 2023 vs 2024



Average Talk: 2023 vs 2024



Monthly Calls: 2023 vs 2024



CropSWAP

Regional Program Update



CropSWAP Program



83 Applications in 2024



58 Projects Approved

14 Pre-Inspection, Wait-list



5 Projects Completed & Paid



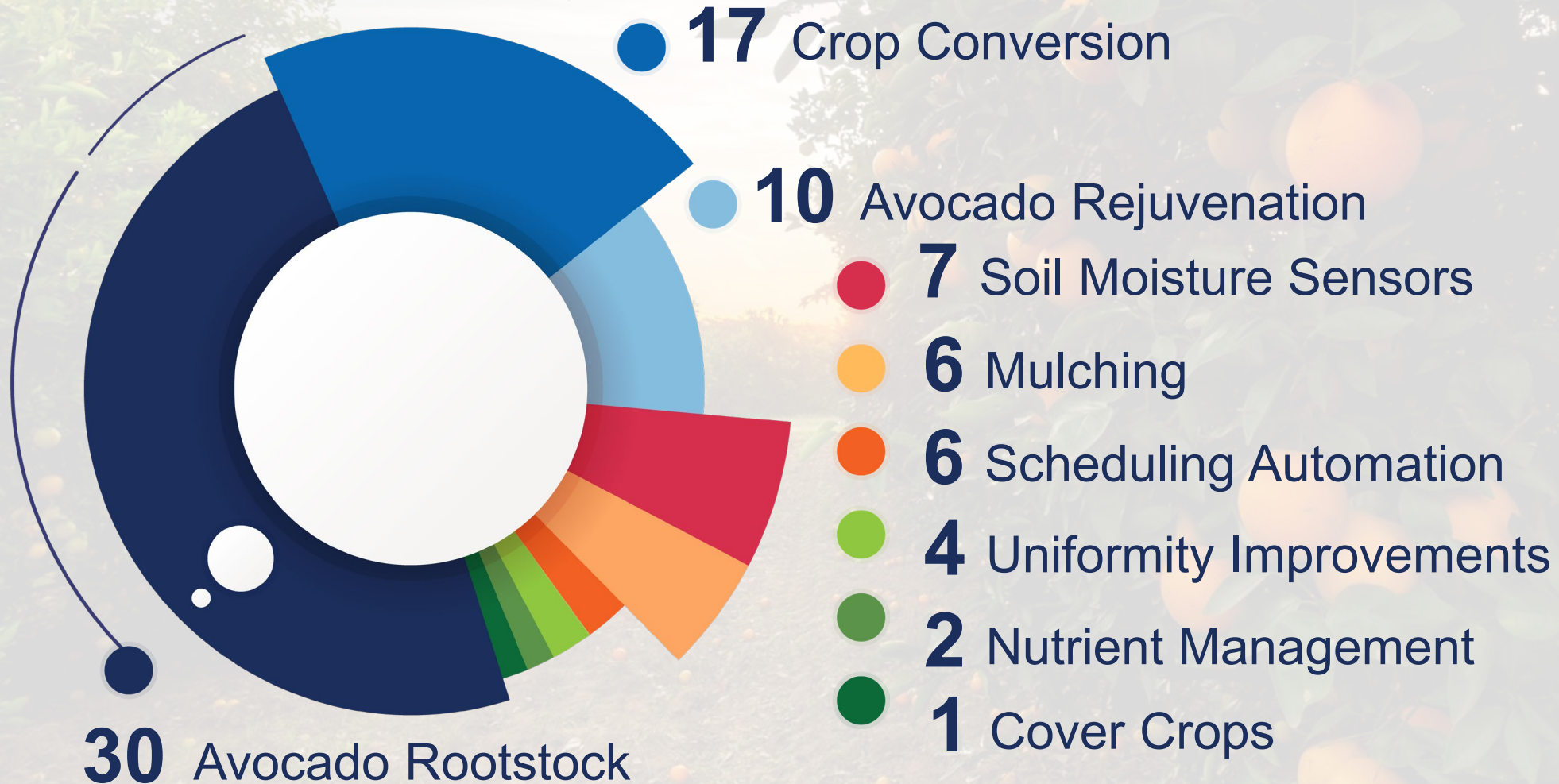
CropSWAP

A Regional Program by Rancho Water

\$1,043,450

**2024 Total
Reserved Grant
Funding for
Approved Projects**

2024 Applications by Project Type



Water Use Efficiency

Program Update



2024 Flume Report



156 Devices Remain

- \$49 with instant rebate, \$249 retail
- Met offers device for \$100 with rebate



236 Devices Connected

- Customer Support
 - Account Install Reminders
 - Sent six days after delivery
- Battery Changes
 - Flume 2 carries AA battery replacements



104

**2024 Total
Devices Ordered**

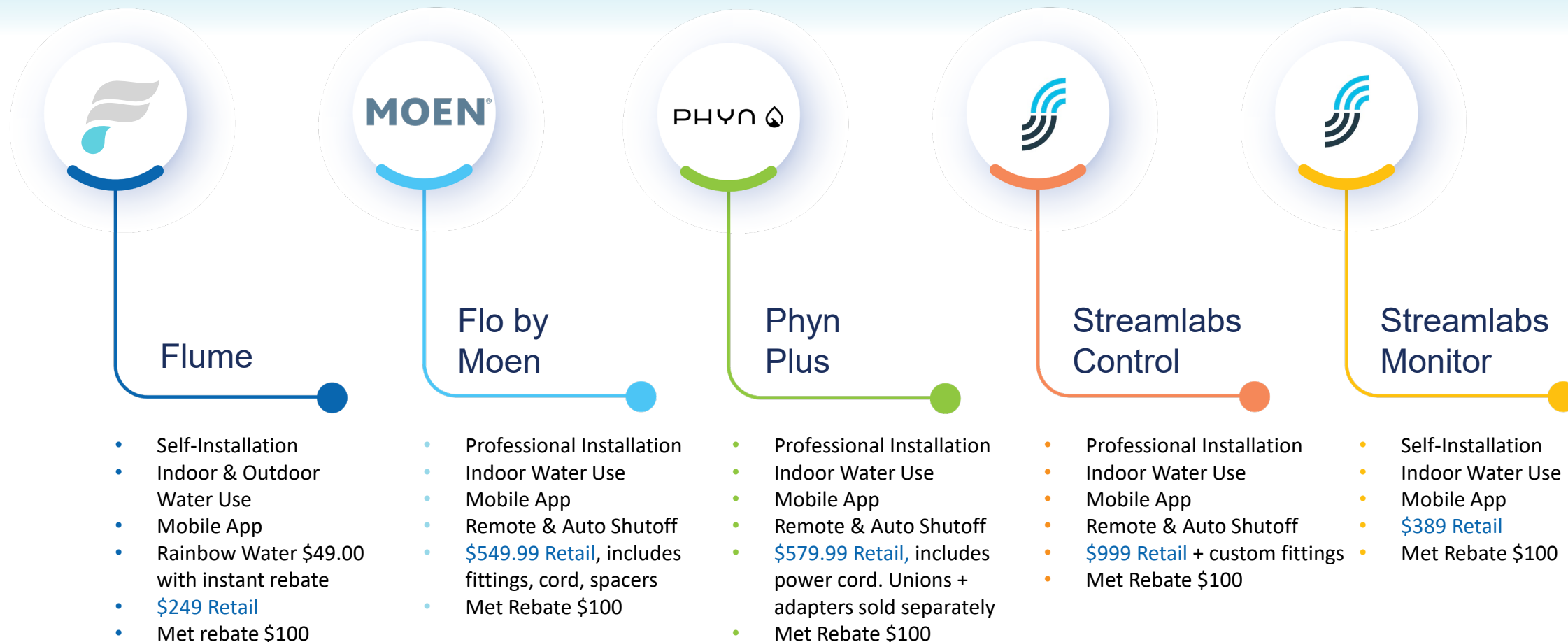
848

**Devices Sold
Since 2019**

77%

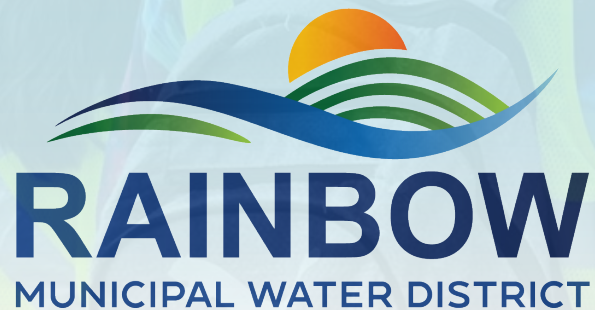
**Devices
Installed in 2024**

Flow Monitor Devices from Metropolitan

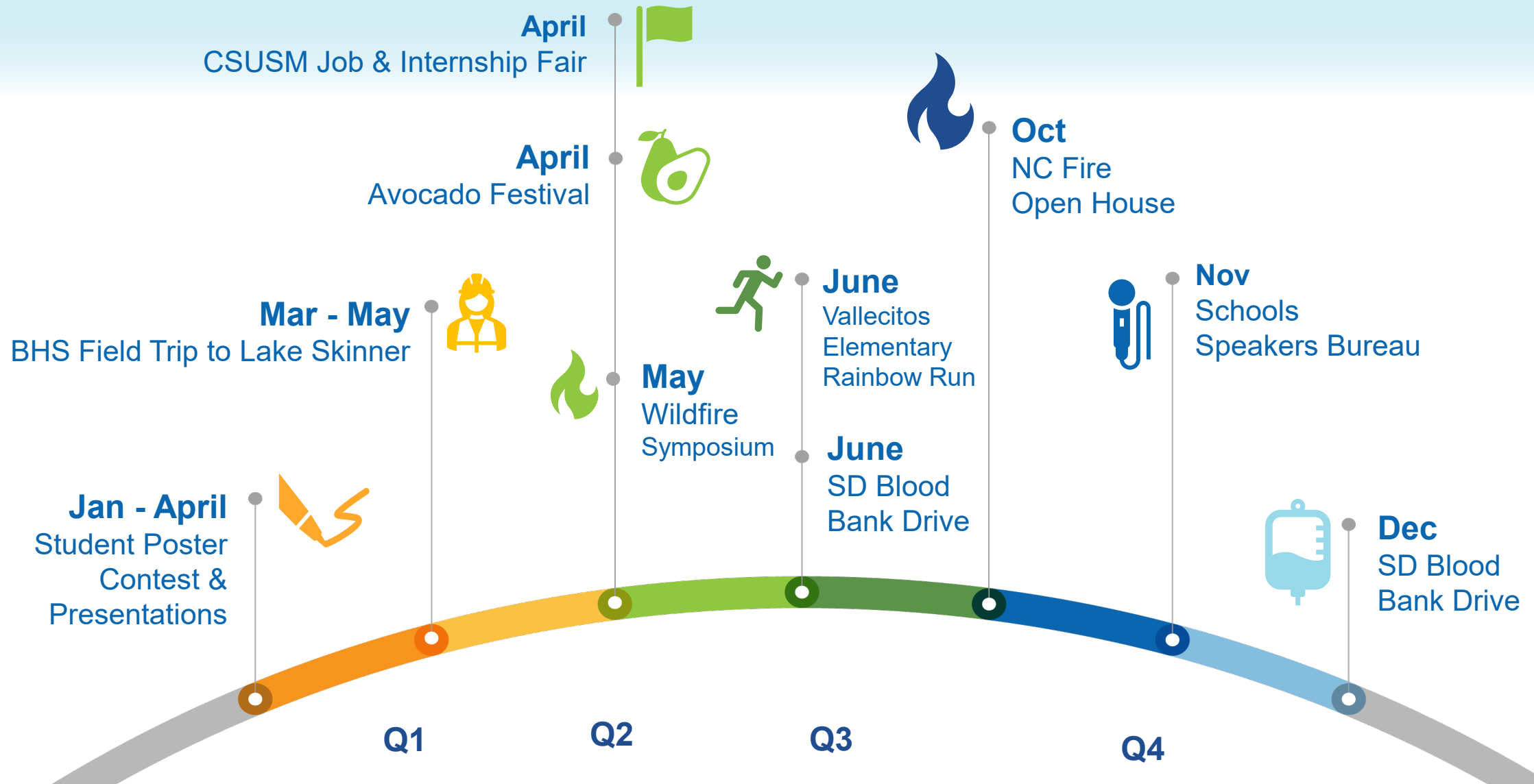


2025 Event Planning

Community Events Update



2025 Event Planning



2025 Prospective Events



April

CSUSM Job & Internship Fair

Tuesday, April 8

11:00 am - 2:00 pm

University Student Union

Ballroom at CSUM

General Job Fair open to all students/alumni and majors seeking paid opportunities.

Booth Space: \$450



April

Avocado Festival

Sunday, April 13

8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Staff set up 5am – 8am

Tear down 5pm – 6:30 pm



April

Graze at the Fields

Farmers Bureau event

Thursday, April 24

5:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Carlsbad Flower Fields

Set up 9 am- 5pm

Tear down 9 pm – 10:30 pm

Booth space: \$0



May

Wildfire Symposium

Saturday, May 3

9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Fallbrook Union High School

Joint community event with NCFPD, Cal Fire, SD County Fire, SD Sheriffs Dept, Fallbrook Regional Health District, FPUD

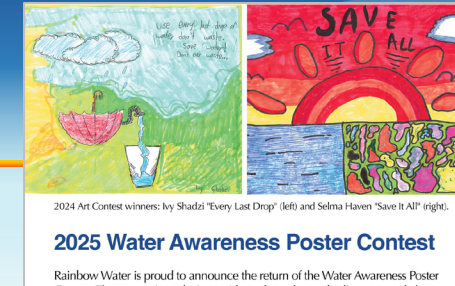
Newsletter Content Planning



Newsletter Review

January 2025

- Where Does Your Water Come From?
 - Imported Water Sources
 - Explain Met, EMWD and SWP
 - State Infographic
- 2025 Water Awareness Poster Contest
 - Program details: submission dates, eligibility and awards
- Public Safety Power Shutoffs
 - How Rainbow Water remains prepared for a PSPS event
 - Prep tips, emergency apps



2024 Art Contest winners: Ivy Shadzi 'Every Last Drop' (left) and Selma Haven 'Save It All!' (right).

2025 Water Awareness Poster Contest

Rainbow Water is proud to announce the return of the Water Awareness Poster Contest.

Public Safety Power Shutoffs in the Region

Southern California is experiencing atmospheric weather changes due to La Niña conditions which equate to less precipitation resulting in dry landscapes that lead to excess plant fuel for wildfires. Extreme weather patterns including the recent red flag windstorms have resulted in power utilities exercising Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) to immediately reduce the risk of wildfires from strong winds and low humidity. Utility companies including San Diego Gas and Electric (SDGE) and Southern California Edison can decide when and where to shut off customer power as a preventative fire measure.



Where Does Your Water Come From?

Imported Water Sources from Across California

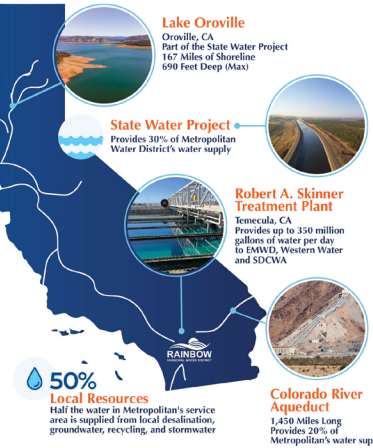
The water delivered to Rainbow Water's customers is imported from hundreds of miles away. Before water reaches your tap, it travels across two thirds of the state through Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's (Metropolitan) extensive distribution system to be treated at Metropolitan's Robert H. Skinner Treatment Plant in Temecula. The Skinner Treatment Plant has served as a portion of Rainbow Water's water supply since 1976, and receives a blend of water from the State Water Project (SWP) and Colorado River Aqueduct. The water finally makes its way to Rainbow Water through direct connections to Metropolitan's pipelines.

Who is Metropolitan Water District?

Established in 1928, Metropolitan is the largest wholesale treated water supplier in the country. Metropolitan purchases and sells water to a cooperative of 26 member agencies in Southern California, including Eastern Municipal Water District. As a water wholesaler, Metropolitan has a vast system of water treatment facilities, pipelines, and tunnels to distribute the water it imports from over 500 miles away.

Who is Eastern Municipal Water District?

The Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD) is California's sixth-largest water agency. As a member agency of Metropolitan, EMWD purchases water from Metropolitan and sells it to retail customers and retail water agencies, including Rainbow Water. The water delivered to Rainbow Water via Metropolitan's pipelines is purchased through EMWD. EMWD charges Rainbow Water the Metropolitan wholesale rate plus a nominal administrative fee of \$12 per acre-foot. An acre-foot is 325,800 gallons or approximately equal to the amount of water it would take to fill a football field one foot deep.



What is the State Water Project?

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) manages the State Water Project, the country's largest state-owned and customer-financed water delivery system. The SWP spans 704 miles and delivers clean water to 30 million Californians through a complex system of canals, pipelines, and reservoirs. Rainbow Water benefits from the SWP, as it is one of the sources of water that is treated at the Skinner Treatment Plant and eventually delivered to Rainbow Water customers through a Metropolitan pipeline connection.

How Water Prepares for Outages

Rainbow Water utilizes power from SDGE to pump, move, and deliver water to all users in the service area. When a PSPS warning is received from SDGE, Rainbow Water crews proactively fill water storage tanks and prepare backup generators at pump stations. Rainbow Water operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to ensure water services and collaborates with North County Fire Protection District, San County Sheriff's Department, and neighboring agencies to reduce the risk of wildfires that impact the water supply.

Stay Informed

For the most recent PSPS events and community resources on the SDGE website: <https://www.sdge.com/pssp-dashboard>

Subscribe to your Rainbow Water emergency alert app used by Rainbow Water and North County Fire Protection District. Read more about the apps and agency alert information on the Rainbow Water website: <https://tinyurl.com/rzcdz3hy>

Download the Genasys and Watch Duty agency alert apps used by Rainbow Water and North County Fire Protection District. Read more about the apps and agency alert information on the Rainbow Water website: <https://tinyurl.com/rzcdz3hy>

For more information on the apps and agency alert information on the Rainbow Water website: <https://tinyurl.com/rzcdz3hy>

Preparation Tips for PSPS Events

Visit the Rainbow Water website for PSPS event notification and preparation tips including who to call for downed power lines and how to conserve water use.

Visit www.mwd.ca.gov/public-safety-power-shutoffs for more information.

10000 Old Highway 395, Fallbrook, CA 92028
Customer Care & After Hours: 760.728.1178
Hours: Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
www.mwd.ca.gov



Take a virtual tour of the incredible journey your water takes to deliver from source to tap. Explore more with Metropolitan Water District's interactive map: [mwdh2o.com](https://www.mwdh2o.com)

Newsletter Review

February 2025

- Rainbow Water Provides Critical Aid to Support the Eaton, Lilac and Pala Fires
 - Emergency Response, Mutual Aid and District Support
- Water Supply Conditions Update
 - Snowpack Report, SWP and Local Reservoirs
- Flow Monitor Device Rebates
- Making Conservation a CA Way of Life
- Student Programs
 - 20250ACWA Scholarships



Water Supply Conditions Update

Southern California has experienced an unusually dry start to 2025 due to the effects of a La Niña weather pattern that held storms to the northern part of the state and decreased precipitation in the South to start the water year, which is tracked by State officials from Oct 1 - Sept 30. Effective water management from two straight above-average precipitation and Sierra snowpacks in the 2023 and 2024 periods kept large storage reservoirs in California well above average to start the 2025 water year. The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) snowpack survey from 130 stations throughout the Sierra Nevada reported snow

Making Conservation a California Way of Life

In an ongoing effort to enhance water storage and supply in California, the State Water Resources Control Board (CA SWRCB) has adopted a new urban water use plan, Making Conservation a California Way of Life. The new state-mandated water-use efficiency standard changed its indoor water-use goal from 55 to 47 gallons per capita per day (GPCD) for every urban water supplier in the state, effective Jan. 1, 2025. The water use efficiency standards apply to urban water suppliers, including Rainbow Water, and are used as a guide to create water budgets. The standard does



Rainbow Water Provides Critical Aid to Support the Eaton, Lilac and Pala Fires

Rainbow Water supported firefighting efforts in January by sending crews to assist local fire agencies with emergency response to the Lilac and Pala Fires, and mutual aid for water agencies impacted by the Eaton Fire in Altadena.

Rainbow Water responded to a mutual aid request on Jan. 16 through the California Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (CalWARN) on behalf of the Rubio Canon Water Association for a team to dewater several reservoir sites destroyed by the Eaton Fire in Los Angeles County. Four of Rainbow Water's operations team members traveled over 100 miles from Fallbrook to Altadena for the three-day mutual aid assignment. Team members worked night and day to remove water quickly from the Meridian Pump Station and Calavera Water Tanks to enable Contractors to remove debris from the reservoir sites to restore water service. Rainbow Water was among several water districts in Southern California to provide critical mutual aid following the Los Angeles Fires.

"We were proud to aid another small water district and work alongside numerous utility agencies who responded to restore the communities devastated by the Eaton Fire," said Robert Gutierrez, Rainbow Water Chief Operations Officer.

After returning from the Eaton Fire, Rainbow Water crews were working on a main break in the early hours of Jan. 21 when the Pala and Lilac Fires started. Rainbow Water emergency response protocols were activated, team members arrived at the command post to assist firefighters with water for fire suppression, emergency alerts were posted to the website with office closures due to Rainbow's headquarters being within the mandatory evacuation area, and text messages were sent to staff with evacuation information. North County Fire and CalFire coordinated with Rainbow Water to relocate the incident command post from the Park and Ride lot at SR 76 to Rainbow Water headquarters' lower yard off Highway 395. Rainbow Water sent additional support through a water truck that stopped the progress of a spot fire behind Sullivan Elementary School in Bonsall.

Preparation was key to Rainbow Water's swift response, as proactive measures were taken during the active SDG&E Public Safety Power Shutoff alert, which preempted the fires, to fill water tanks and fuel backup generators at pump stations. In addition, a \$160,000 grant awarded to Rainbow through CalOES has aided with funding the removal of dry brush around all infrastructure to create defensible space. This move was key to protecting the 4.0 million gallon capacity Hutton Water Storage Tank from the Lilac Fire that burned around and downhill from the tank.

"Fire is a reality in our district, and at Rainbow Water, we are very forward-thinking in our preparation that has come out of our past wildfire experience," said Gutierrez. "We are constantly improving emergency response by regularly checking systems, including fire hydrants, and continue fuel management to mitigate risk around tanks, pump stations, and lift stations."

Water agencies have been at the epicenter of the recent firefighting efforts. The Rainbow Water team does not take any emergency lightly after experiencing the 2017 Lilac Fire, which burned 4,100 acres and 137 structures in Bonsall and Oceanside. Rainbow Water is home to San Diego County's first Rapid Aerial Water Supply (RAWS) site, which allows helicopter pilots access to a quick-fill water station to aid in aerial fire support. The RAWS system was instrumental in rapidly suppressing the recent Garden Fire when it was used for more than 36 aerial water drops, aiding in protecting nearby homes.

"The loss from the recent fires has reinforced the urgent need to fund future RAWS heli-hydrant sites, redundant power and source of supply projects, and ensure adequate reserves are available for emergency response," said Jake Wiley, Rainbow Water General Manager.

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falling water demands
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how the new standard
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ch 1. For a complete
ligibility requirements,
visit
ge at:



95, Fallbrook, CA 92028
er Hours: 760.728.1178
ri 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
GOV



Read more about how Rainbow Water prepares for emergency events by scanning the code or visit: rainbowmwd.ca.gov/emergency-info

Newsletter Planning

March

- **Fix a Leak Week**
 - How to Video Series: Locating your meter
 - Infographic: meter location, turn off water, and identify a leak
- **Water Wise for Life: World Water Day**
 - Irrigation tips for seasonal water usage from EMWD
 - Met rebates: High efficiency toilet install, and clothes washer new requirements
- **Educational Outreach**
 - Calendar Contest
 - ACWA Scholarships for Future Water Leaders
 - High School Volunteers needed for Avocado Festival

April

- **Water Wise for Life: Water Awareness Month**
 - Rebates on Turf Replacement
 - Irrigation Tips: drip irrigation, mulch beds,
 - Rainwater harvesting with rain barrels
 - Flow water monitor devices
- **Water Supply Conditions Update**
 - Snowpack, reservoir levels
- **Wildfire Symposium**
 - May 3 at Fallbrook HS with NCFD & partners
- **Avocado Festival**
 - Sunday, April 13 – Visit the booth
- **Construction/Traffic Notice**
 - SDCWA Shutdown: April 27-May 6, 2025

Public Communications

& Related Media Stories



Village News

December 27

Rainbow Water Celebrates a Historic Year of Accomplishments and Accolades

2024: A Year in Review

Rainbow Water celebrates a historic year of accomplishments and accolades

FALLBROOK – For the past 70 years, Rainbow Water has worked to continuously improve and welcome innovation with a mission to deliver safe and reliable water to the community. In 2024, Rainbow Water made significant progress in its commitment to serve the community through completion of key projects to improve infrastructure, a historic detachment, expansion of community outreach, and numerous accomplishments to position the water agency for future success.

The most pivotal change in the history of Rainbow Water was the finalization of the year's long process of detachment from San Diego Water Authority to Eastern Municipal Water District, which concluded on Nov. 1. The detachment effort involved coordination from staff, local representatives and the community paving the way to bring wholesale water reliability, mitigate future wholesale rate increases, significantly lower the cost of water, and free up financial resources to fund CIP and restore cash reserves.

In addition, the Operations and Engineering teams completed three pump stations in less than 10 months to make the infrastructure improvements required to finalize the detachment.

"The detachment effort was a testament to both our community's resilience and our commitment to doing everything possible to



Rainbow Water celebrates the opening of Thoroughbred Lift Station with community and project partners in September 2024.

Village News/Courtesy photo

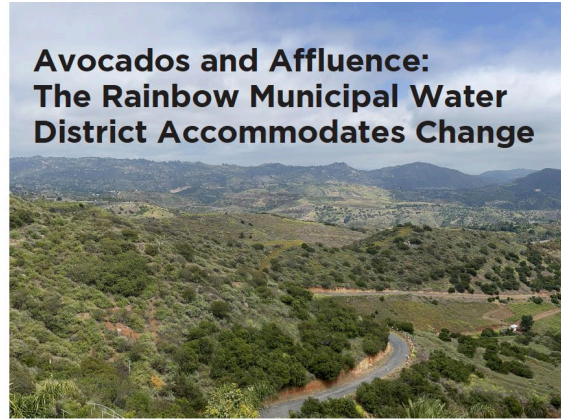
Municipal Water Leader

January 2025

Avocados and Affluence: The Rainbow Municipal Water District Accommodates Change

Municipal Water Leader

Avocados and Affluence: The Rainbow Municipal Water District Accommodates Change



This view of the Rainbow Water service area illustrates its low-density land use.

As farm fields give way to fast-growing bedroom communities, the Rainbow Municipal Water District, located north of San Diego, California, is selling less water to agricultural customers. To respond, the district must boost water use efficiency and secure funding. In this interview, Municipal Water Leader talks with General Manager Jake Wiley about how the district switched to a lower-cost water source and has partnered with other districts on the new, popular CropSWAP program, which in its first year distributed nearly \$900,000 in grant funding to agricultural customers to replace their crops with more drought-tolerant choices. The district has also built a new sewer lift station that can accommodate the area's growth and handle the increased flows triggered by increasing climate change-caused wet weather events.

Municipal Water Leader: Please tell us about your background and how you came to be in your current position.

Jake Wiley: I am the general manager of the Rainbow Municipal Water District. I have been in the water industry for about 25 years. I was in the private sector for a decade as an engineering consultant. Over the last 15 years, I have worked for two public agencies. I worked for around 12 years at Rancho California Water District in Temecula. Then, just over a year ago, I came to Rainbow Water after the former general manager retired.

Municipal Water Leader: Please introduce Rainbow Water.

Jake Wiley: The district was formed in 1953 to import supplemental water to San Diego's North County area from

the Colorado River, which was first region in the 1940s. The groundwater keep up with the local agricultural water, which was inexpensive at the time. Today, our 57 employees provide water services to about 9,000 water accounts in a large service area of about 85 square miles. The system consists of 350 miles of pipe, 3 large reservoirs, and 10 pump stations. We own and operates a sewer collection system of approximately 3,400 accounts and 8 pipelines and 8 lift stations. We contract with the City of Oceanside, for wastewater treatment.

Municipal Water Leader: Would you describe the landscape, hydrology, and land use in your service area?

Jake Wiley: We have beautiful topographic and picturesque rural living. Our service area is above sea level to elevations of more than 5,000 feet. It makes moving and delivering water to our customers requires high operating pressures in our district is mostly rural and arid. We are so we get, on average, about 14 inches of rain per year. Land use in our service area has historical and rural residential. We have many large farms across our expansive service area, which challenge because there are fewer water infrastructure than in more densely populated areas. Although we still primarily serve agricultural customers, we have seen

Municipal Water Leader: Would you tell us about the district's backflow testing program?

Jake Wiley: About 4,000 of our water accounts have a backflow device. Our staff tests each device annually. We have one employee who does much of the testing and follow-up when a device fails or needs repair. We charge a small fee to each customer that has a backflow on their service to cover the cost of that testing.



The Pala Mesa Heli-Drum was built to assist with fighting local wildfires.

Municipal Water Leader: Would you tell us about the water conservation programs you offer to your customers?

Jake Wiley: We participate in various regional residential programs for water conservation, which include rebates for low-flow plumbing fixtures and turf replacement. Those programs have been successful here, as they have been throughout the state. But we get the most bang for our buck by targeting conservation programs to the 25 percent of our customers who are agricultural, since they account for the majority of our water sales. We partner with many organizations, including our local Farm Bureau and other local agricultural groups, to offer grant funding for irrigation upgrades that help our ag customers save water, including weather-based controllers and ground cover.

We recently partnered with six local agencies to launch a new program called CropSWAP. The program was started by Rancho Water, my previous employer, and extended regionally to all agricultural customers in the North County region and southwestern Riverside County. It provides funds to help farmers implement sustainability projects. This includes root stock upgrades for avocados to encourage the use of more drought- and salt-tolerant varieties and incentives to switch from higher-water-use crops, such as avocados and citrus, to a lower-water-use crops, such as wine grapes. Grants from the California Department of Water Resources fund a majority of the CropSWAP program. CropSWAP has been incredibly popular. We have distributed funds to our agricultural customers for about

70 projects, with nearly \$900,000 in grant funding allocated in our service area alone. The program not only brings water savings but helps ensure the long-term sustainability of agriculture in our community. We are heavily invested in that. We continue to promote the program and are looking to potentially secure more funding, as we may exhaust our current funds in the first year.

Municipal Water Leader: Would you tell us about Rainbow Water's educational outreach programs?

Jake Wiley: We have strong partnerships with our local schools, from the elementary to the high school level. We also partner with our local community colleges. One program that we are particularly proud of is a STEM day we host for our local high school students. They visit our facility twice per school year for a 1-day program that shows students what the water and wastewater business is all about. We show them the innovative technology we are using for metering and system operations. We felt that people in general do not have a great understanding of that technology, so educating our students has been a huge focus for us.

I think it's also important that young people coming out of high school and college understand that there are great careers available in water and wastewater. Finding good-quality talent and people who are interested in the industry has been a challenge over my whole career, but especially over the last 4-5 years. We take every opportunity to partner locally to spread the word to students and let them know of the fantastic opportunities available in this sector.

Municipal Water Leader: What is your vision for the future?

Jake Wiley: The future is bright for our district. Securing a lower-cost water supply source has given us the ability to tackle some capital improvements that have been long deferred. We are aiming to continue to provide relief to the agricultural sector so we can maintain that part of our community, which has been in serious decline.

Beyond that, our vision for the future is to continue to find ways to innovate and operate more efficiently. Like many of the water districts around us, we are feeling the pressures of reduced water sales and revenues while having the same amount or even more infrastructure to maintain and replace at a very high cost. As a special district, and as servants of the community, we must meet the challenges we face to ensure the continued success of the region.



Jake Wiley is the general manager of the Rainbow Municipal Water District. For more on Rainbow Water, visit rainbowswd.ca.gov.

Village News

January 2

Rainbow MWD Approves Purchase Order for Odor Control Chemicals

FALLBROOK & BONSAI VILLAGE NEWS

Rainbow MWD approves purchase order for odor control chemicals

Joe Naiman
Village News Reporter

An odor control product called Bioxide will be used in the Rainbow Municipal Water District's wastewater collection system.

Rainbow's board voted 5-0 Dec. 10 to approve a purchase order with Evoqua for the chemical. Rainbow will pay \$3.92 per gallon in minimum 2,400-gallon loads for the Bioxide.

"It's really to sequester odors or eliminate odors in our wastewater collection system," said Rainbow General Manager Jake Wiley.

The benefits will be to more than just residents within smelling distance of the sewer system. "It also protects our pipelines," Wiley said. "It also protects our infrastructure from corrosion."

Rainbow has not had an active odor control program for the district's wastewater system. The construction of the Horse Creek Ridge and Citro developments and the new Thoroughbred Lift Station has increased wastewater flows in the system, so some members of the public have contacted Rainbow staff about odors. Rainbow staff conducted three odor control studies which evaluated different chemicals and their effectiveness in eliminating odors.

The products of the three companies were evaluated for their

effectiveness in eliminating odors along the Highway 76 corridor to the last lift station at Old River Road and Little Gopher Canyon, and the evaluation also involved the cost per gallon of each company's chemicals.

USP, Suez, and Evoqua participated in the trial of their products. The chemicals were injected at the Rancho Viejo and Horse Creek lift stations. Monitoring stations were established at Highway 76 and Old Highway 395, the Thoroughbred Lift Station, and the Golf Club Lift Station. The odors had to be mitigated below 25 parts per million, which is the level detectable by humans.

The first study was for the USP product SuFeLox, which was effective in eliminating odors. However, the chemical negatively impacted the sensor on a flow meter at Horse Creek Lift Station; an excessive amount of iron build-up caused the flow meter to malfunction. Use of SuFeLox would require Rainbow staff to disassemble the flow meter and clean the inside with vinegar regularly to resolve the issue.

The second study utilized the Suez product ProSweat. The odor treatment took longer than expected to be effective in reducing odors. The reduction was most noticeable near the injection area but less effective downstream.

Bioxide is the Evoqua chemical

used for odor control. That trial lasted 60 days. Evoqua delivered a 2,000-gallon tank, installed injection lines to the wet well at Horse Creek, and provided a cloud-based platform to monitor and adjust chemical flows.

The City of Oceanside also uses Bioxide to control odors in its downstream system. The Rainbow test indicated that Bioxide was the most effective product at reducing odors within the system and had little impact on existing infrastructure.

Rainbow staff will be in full control of monitoring the dosing information and will work with Evoqua on appropriate dosing solutions.

Based on an average daily flow of 290,000 million gallons per day from the Horse Creek Lift Station, an estimated 60 to 100 gallons per day of Bioxide (the variance is due to higher discharges on weekends than on weekdays) will be required at the feed site to remove all existing hydrogen sulfide and prevent the generation of hydrogen sulfide along the force main, although the actual dose rates will depend on the system's flow rates and Rainbow's specific treatment goals.

The Evoqua product is also the most cost-effective solution. The \$3.92 per gallon including applicable taxes was less than half of the SuFeLox or ProSweat cost.

Village News

January 25

FPUD, Rainbow Water and North County Fire District Remain Ready for Wildfire Emergencies

Everything Fallbrook
January 16

Proactive Emergency Planning

FALLBROOK & BONSTALL VILLAGE NEWS

January 23, 2025

www.VillageNews.com

Volume 29, Issue 4

FPUD, Rainbow Water, and North County Fire remain ready for wildfire emergencies

FALLBROOK – With another round of Santa Ana winds whipping through the region, local water and fire districts continue to work closely together in case of an emergency.

Fallbrook Public Utility District, Rainbow Municipal Water District, and North County Fire Protection District service areas remain at elevated risk for wildfires. In response, they are taking proactive measures to ensure the safety of the North San Diego County communities they serve.

Together, these agencies have developed comprehensive emergency preventive measures to ensure swift response to wildfire emergencies. This includes sharing staff, increasing crews, and sharing all available information, vehicles, and resources to support each agency.

"During red flag warnings, NC Fire has deployed additional crews and our command team is ready to act swiftly," said Keith McReynolds, NC fire chief. "Prepositioned firefighting resources continue to be staged in the region, prepared to aggressively engage."

Lilac fire burns 80 acres and is 30% contained

Pala fire forward rate of spread stopped at 17 acres

Village News staff

As of 11 a.m., Tuesday, Jan. 21, the Lilac fire was 30% contained, according to CalFire. And as of 12:20 p.m., the sheriff's department was allowing residents of Rancho Monserate Country Club to return home.

Two separate fires were reported after midnight the morning of Jan 21. The first one was between the I-15 southbound and Old 395 near Stewart Canyon. Several units were dispatched immediately.

Another fire cropped up south of the Lilac Bridge, also between the I-15 southbound freeway lanes and Old Hwy 395. Pala Mesa appears to be threatened, according to Village News photographer Brian Briggs. The Lilac Road area fire is also threatening homes and there are evacuations being ordered immediately.

An 8 a.m. update from CalFire said that the Lilac fire had been held to 80 acres with 10% containment. The area burned is located near Old Highway 395 and Lilac Road. Fire activity had decreased significantly. Bonsall schools are out for the day because of the fire. Fallbrook schools are open and operating as usual.

see *FIRE*, page A-7



The Lilac fire in Rancho Viejo.

Everything Fallbrook .org

News and events in Fallbrook, California

FPUD is being proactive about emergencies — making sure that we have enough water if there's a fire and/or power outage

JANUARY 16, 2025

From FPUD:

With another round of Santa Ana winds whipping through the region, your local water and fire districts are working closely together in case of emergency.

Fallbrook Public Utility District, Rainbow Municipal Water District, and North County Fire Protection District service areas remain at elevated risk for wildfires, and in response, they're taking proactive measures to ensure the safety of the communities.

Together, they have developed comprehensive emergency preventive measures to ensure swift response to wildfire emergencies. This includes sharing staff, increasing crews, and sharing all available information, vehicles, and resources to support each agency.

When a Public Safety Power Shutoff event warning is received from San Diego Gas and Electric, water crews proactively fill water tanks to increase storage and prepare backup generators at pump stations. Both Fallbrook and Rainbow work tirelessly 24 hours a day to provide water services. They also collaborate with NC Fire, San Diego County Sheriff's Department, and other neighboring water agencies to reduce the risk of emergencies that impact the water supply.

This includes participation in SDG&E daily briefings leading up to and during a PPS event to ensure full understanding of the start and end of areas impacted by a power shutoff.

Fallbrook has a command center in its boardroom—a central hub for coordinating and carrying out orders, assessing roads, risks, and conditions, and supervising tasks. The centralized headquarters was created with NC Fire to develop the centralized command location in case of a fire or natural disaster.

Village News

January 30

Collaborative Effort Puts Out Fires

February 6

Rainbow Water Supports Local Agencies in Eaton, Lilac and Pala Fires

Collaborative effort puts out fires

Lucette Moramarco
Editor

Three fires started burning in the Fallbrook/Bonsall area in the early morning hours of Jan. 21 but were kept from growing out of control by the joint efforts of more than 40 fire departments.

No cause has been revealed yet for any of the three as investigations continue, but arson is one possibility.

The smallest of the three, the Riverview fire in the north part of Fallbrook was contained to one acre within three hours with only one outbuilding destroyed. The Pala fire burned 17 acres but no structures were damaged and the fire was at 100% containment before noon.

The biggest one, the Lilac fire consumed 85 acres, damaging three residential structures and destroying one outbuilding. Containment was listed at 100% the next day, Wednesday, Jan. 22 at 7:51 p.m.

There were no injuries reported

see **FIRES**, page A-6



North County Fire Protection District and CAL FIRE/San Diego County Fire remain in Unified Command on the Lilac fire as Chief zMcReynolds leads a briefing at 0700 hours, Jan. 22 on Rainbow Municipal Water District's site, to discuss the Incident Commands' action plan with incoming crews for the next operational period.

FALLBROOK & BONSTALL VILLAGE NEWS

Rainbow Water supports local agencies in Eaton, Lilac and Pala fires

FALLBROOK – Rainbow Municipal Water District supported firefighting efforts in January by sending crews to assist local fire agencies with emergency response to the Lilac and Pala fires, and fire recovery for water agencies impacted by the Eaton Fire in Altadena.

Rainbow Water responded to a mutual aid request on Jan. 16 from California Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (CalWARN) on behalf of the Rubio Canon Water Association, for a team to dewater several reservoir sites destroyed by the Eaton Fire.

Four of Rainbow Water's operations team members traveled over 100 miles from Fallbrook to the Rubio Canon Land and Water

Association in Altadena for the three-day mutual aid assignment. Team members worked night and day to remove water quickly from the Meridian Pump Station and Calavera Water Tanks to then allow additional mutual aid crews to remove debris from the reservoir sites.

Rubio Canon Land and Water Association was founded in 1886 and provides water to approximately 9,600 people on more than 3,140 service connections in Altadena. Approximately 35% of Rubio Canon Land and Water Association's service connections and three reservoirs were destroyed by the Eaton Fire, including wood-covered reservoirs in operation since 1934.

Rainbow Water was among



Rainbow Water General Manager Jake Wiley assesses the Lilac fire damage around Hutton Tank in Bonsall.



Members of Rainbow Water's Operations Department, Bernie Nunez, Brandon Hebron, Chris Hand, and COO Robert Gutierrez, assist an Altadena water district with the cleanup of sites destroyed by the Eaton Fire.

several water districts in Southern California to provide critical mutual aid for the Eaton and Palisades fires.

"We were proud to aid another small water district and work alongside numerous utility agencies who responded to restore the communities devastated by the Eaton fire," said Robert Gutierrez, Rainbow Water Chief Operations Officer.

After returning from the Eaton fire, Rainbow Water crews were working on a main break in the early hours of Jan. 21 when the Pala and Lilac fires started. Rainbow Water emergency response protocols were activated; team members arrived onsite to assist firefighters with water to aid in fire suppression, emergency alerts were posted to the website with office closures, and text messages were sent to staff with evacuation information.

North County Fire and Cal Fire coordinated with Rainbow Water to relocate the incident command post from the Park and Ride lot at SR 76 to Rainbow Water headquarters lower yard parking lot near Highway 395. Rainbow Water sent additional support by way of a water truck that stopped the progress of a spot fire behind Sullivan Elementary School.

Preparation was key to Rainbow Water's swift response, as proactive measures were taken during the active SDG&E Public Safety Power Shutoff alert to fill water tanks and place backup generators at pump stations. A \$160,000 grant has aided with funding the removal of dry brush around all infrastructure to create defensible space, a move that was key to saving Hutton Tank from the Lilac fire that burned around and downhill from the tank.

"Fire is a reality in our district,

and at Rainbow Water, we are very forward-thinking in our preparation that has come out of our past wildfire experience," said Gutierrez. "We are constantly improving emergency response by regularly checking systems, including fire hydrants, and continue fuel management to mitigate risk around tanks, pump stations, and lift stations."

Water agencies have been at the epicenter of the recent firefighting efforts. The Rainbow Water team does not take any emergency lightly after experiencing the 2017 Lilac fire, which burned 4,100 acres and 157 structures in Bonsall and Oceanside.

Rainbow Water is among the most proactive water agencies in the region and is home to San Diego County's first Rapid Aerial Water Supply (RAWS) site, which allows helicopter pilots access to a quick-fill water station to aid in

AP

February 18

How better water systems can help a city survive the next firestorm

In November, a 5,000-gallon heli-hydrant in San Diego County was tapped nearly 30 times by aircraft fighting the 48-acre Garden Fire. The Rainbow Municipal Water District, a small utility that serves several unincorporated communities, paid around \$200,000 to install its heli-hydrant in 2021 after the 2017 Lilac Fire burned more than 100 buildings nearby.

AP ASSOCIATED PRESS

How better water systems can help a city survive the next firestorm

February 18, 2025
Brittany Peterson

Santa Rosa. Paradise. Boulder County. Lahaina. Los Angeles.

All are places that have shown that American cities and their water systems weren't built to withstand wildfire, experts say.

Hydrants trickled. Pumps and treatment plants lost power. Chemical contaminants were sucked into pipes, requiring extensive and costly work. In Paradise alone, where the 2018 Camp Fire killed at least 85 people and destroyed more than 18,000 structures, rebuilding the drinking water system is expected to cost \$125 million and take three-and-a-half more years.

As wildfires grow more frequent and intense with climate change, and become a greater threat to cities, water utilities are reckoning with the reality that they must build back better.

"People are starting to ask some of these same questions that people asked decades ago for hurricanes and earthquakes," said Greg Hentschel, vice president of engineering at CST Industries, which makes water storage tanks. He noted the adoption of building regulations and new engineering standards to toughen the urban environment against those risks.

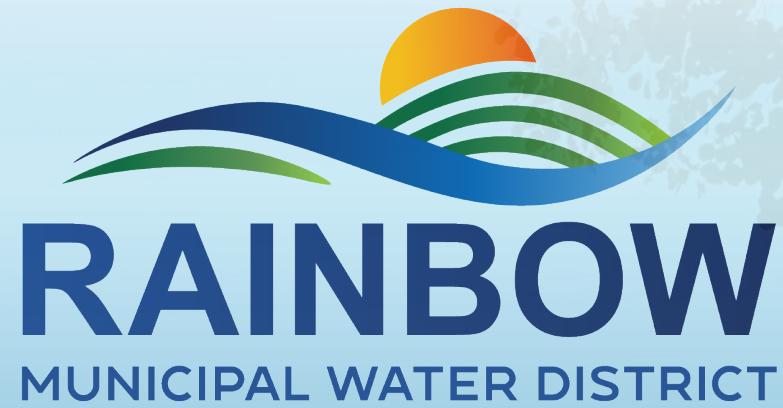


Firefighter Joshua Cari sprays water while battling the Lilac Fire near the Bonsall community of San Diego County, Calif., Jan 21, 2025 (AP Photo/Noah Berger)

A standard meter costs around \$400, while one with remote shutoff capabilities is about twice that. They require cell signal to operate, making them a possible vulnerability if telecommunications are lost where fire is burning, but Kowar says swift action can reduce that risk.

yahoo!news

The Washington Post
Democracy Dies in Darkness



Agenda Items for the Next Meeting