

Communications & Customer Service

COMMITTEE REPORT

February 25, 2025



Strategic Communications Plan Development



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

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**

Water Use Efficiency



156 Flume Devices Remain

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



5 Additional Flow Devices

- Available from Metropolitan \$100 rebate
 - Three have auto and remote shut off capability



104

2024 Total Flume Devices Ordered

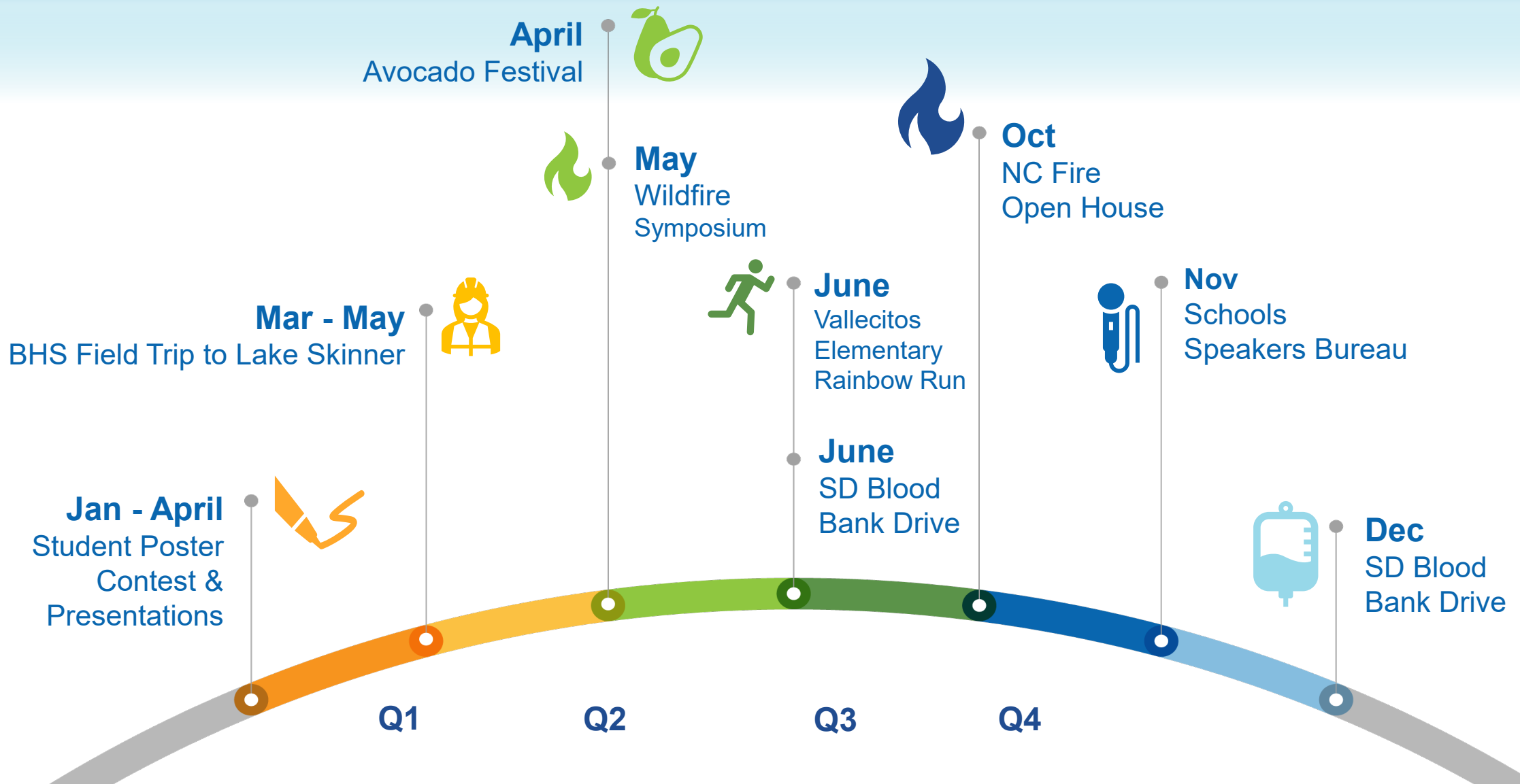
848

Devices Sold
Since 2019

77%

Devices
Installed in 2024

2025 Event Planning



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
 - 2025 ACWA 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

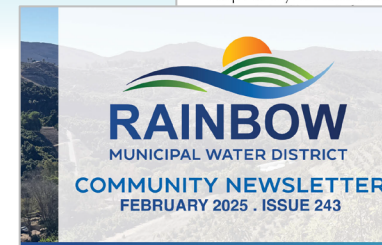
ter customers, as it icers, not individual ver's usage is well a standard due to many d falling water demands standard also excludes ds, a key reason the t Rainbow Water n requires Rainbow bly on its measures to ion practices. f is long-term communities for ce the need for ions. Read more about how the new standard developing customer

Conservation Programs for Future

Association of California, Rainbow Water is CWA scholarship Heiving graduate or majoring in a water ive scholarship 0,000 are available for ainbow Water service lications must be ch 1. For a complete ibility requirements, visit ge at:



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



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.



Rainbow Water General Manager, Jake Wiley assesses the Lilac Fire damage around Hutton Tank 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.



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



Village News

January 25
FPUD, Rainbow Water and North County Fire District Remain Ready for Wildfire Emergencies

January 30
Collaborative Effort Puts Out Fires

February 6
Rainbow Water Supports Local Agencies in Eaton, Lilac and Pala Fires

January 23, 2025

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.

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

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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

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 Reynolds leads a briefing at 0700 hours, Jan. 22 on Rainbow Municipal Water District's site, to discuss the Incident Command's action plan with incoming crews for the next operational period.



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.



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

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

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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.

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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