



El Toro Water District · December 2023/January 2024

WATER VIEWS

SERVING THE PUBLIC, RESPECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

ETWD customers are adopting water-efficient technology and practices to create a more sustainable community. An impressive example is Village Management Services (VMS) of Laguna Woods Village (LWV). The organization completed major projects to enhance water use efficiency in their over-55 community, which covers 3.6 square miles and includes 18,500 residents and three mutual homeowners associations (HOAs).

VMS committed to a 15% reduction in irrigation use across 640 acres of maintained landscape. To conserve water and reduce costs, VMS analyzed landscape and irrigation systems and considered factors including irrigation needs, tree health and landscape modernization.

They initiated a village-wide smart irrigation controller replacement project, opting for the HydroPoint WeatherTRAK Irrigation Central Control System to replace 407 controllers, including 11,592 stations. The new irrigation control system uses daily weather reports from NOAA and adjusts irrigation run times based on local microclimates and landscape types.

Project Results

- 32% approximate annual water savings, equivalent to 232,447,064 gallons of water
- \$314,900 estimated annual savings for 2023
- \$405,720 in regional rebates secured with help from ETWD. The total project costs are estimated at \$2.6 million, plus an annual cellular subscription cost of \$76,516.

Urban Forest Management Offers Environmental Benefits

In addition, an Urban Forest Management Plan was developed for LWV both Third Laguna Hills Mutual and United Laguna Woods Mutual that features 33,000 trees. The plan includes a tree inventory, protection, maintenance, health and replacement strategies. The plan identified 15,446 trees, including 243 species. Environmental benefits include sequestering 213.4 tons of carbon and diverting 1,475,906 gallons of water from stormwater systems.

Modern Landscaping Increases Efficiency

VMS, United Mutual and Third Laguna Hills Mutual HOAs also launched landscape modernization projects to replace high-water-use turf areas with water-efficient landscapes, reducing water consumption by up to 50%.

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- United Mutual HOA replaced turf with water-efficient landscaping, decomposed granite walkways and benches.
- Third Laguna Hills Mutual HOA's landscape modernization project will begin soon. The upgrades are expected to save millions of gallons per year through water-efficient landscaping and drought-tolerant plant replacements.

"The District is proud of the comprehensive efforts of LWV and its residents and appreciates their commitment to sustainable water use, incorporating technological advancements and landscape modernization for a more water-efficient community," said ETWD General Manager, Dennis Cafferty.



WATER USE EFFICIENCY SPOTLIGHT: LAGUNA WOODS VILLAGE LANDSCAPE TRANSFORMATION

Pictured from left to right: ETWD Water Use Efficiency Analyst Vu Chu, Third Mutual Landscape Committee Chair Ira Lewis, Former Third Mutual HOA Treasurer Donna Rane-Szostak and VMS Director of Field Operations Kurt Weimann



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IN THE COMMUNITY



Lake Forest Leadership Academy

On Oct. 18, ETWD General Manager Dennis Cafferty presented at the City of Lake Forest Leadership Academy utilities night with IRWD and SCE. Dennis discussed water supply and the current challenges we face as a water district.

South County Disaster Preparedness Expo

ETWD staff hosted a booth and provided water to participants in the South County Disaster Preparedness Expo at the Norman P. Murray Community and Senior Center on Oct 21.



H2O for HOAs

ETWD partnered with surrounding water districts and cities to hold this year's H2O for HOA event on Oct. 26 at the Norman P. Murray Community Center in Mission Viejo. The event brings together the HOA community of board members, property managers and landscapers to provide a free education

and networking event that inspires conversation and collaboration on water management topics. ETWD customer and Laguna Woods Village Third Mutual resident, Donna-Rane-Szostak, participated as a panelist on the "How to Push Through a Successful Project" from an HOA perspective.



Girl Scout Tour

ETWD and the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC) hosted a MWDOC Water Resources and Conservation Patch Clinic for the Orange County Girl Scouts on Nov. 4. The Scouts toured ETWD's Water Recycling

Plant and Water Quality Lab and participated in hands-on activities about where their water comes from and what they can do to protect it.



Teen Wellness Fair

ETWD staff participated in the Teen Wellness Fair in Mission Viejo on Nov. 12. This event brought local teens to attend rotating stations on the environment, identity and self-care. ETWD provided attendees with information on water conservation and careers in water.



Elf Yourself 5K

ETWD staff hosted a booth and provided water to attendees at the City of Lake Forest/Lake Forest Chamber of Commerce Elf Yourself 5K on Nov. 18 at the Lake Forest Sports Park.



KEEP FOG OUT OF THE DRAIN FOR A STRESS-FREE HOLIDAY



Don't let a messy, expensive sewer backup ruin your holidays. Keep fats, oils and grease (FOG) out of the drain.

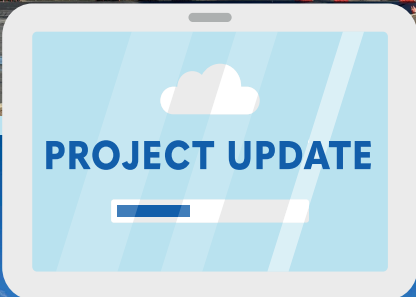
To avoid FOG issues this season, follow these tips, let cool and place in the organics recycling bin or trash based on your city requirements:

- ✓ Scrape leftover food, sauces and cooking oils
- ✓ Use a sink strainer to collect solids
- ✓ Wipe cooking pan residue with a paper towel
- ✓ Collect small amounts of fats, oils and grease in a container (like a coffee can or milk jug)





INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT UPDATE



- ✓ **THE EL TORO RESERVOIR LINER AND REPLACEMENT PROJECT IS COMPLETE.**
- ✓ **THE RESERVOIR IS FILLED AND BACK IN SERVICE.**

For more information on this project call (949) 837-0660, or visit etwd.com/eltororeservoir.

Reservoir Perimeter Road Repair

The asphalt road around the perimeter of the reservoir is now complete. The District is appreciative of the residents surrounding the reservoir during the project.



BEHIND THE SCENES AT ETWD

NEW FACES AT ETWD

Vishav Sharma
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Top Priorities
Financial strategy, risk management, budgeting, financial reporting and ensuring the overall financial health and stability of the District.

Experience
Working on Orange County Water District's Ground Water Replenishment system inspired Vishav to pursue a career in the water industry. He has worked in public service for 23 years.



Michael Snow
CHIEF PLANT OPERATOR

Top Priorities
Overall operation of ETWD's Water Recycling Plant, including compliance with discharge requirements, development, review and use of standard operating procedures for all operators to ensure reasonable care and judgment covering operations, maintenance and compliance.

Experience
While attending California State University, Chico, Michael took a summer job at a wastewater facility, which launched his 14-year career in the water industry/public service sector.



'TIS THE SEASON FOR SAVING WITH REBATES

Give yourself the gift of water savings and put some extra money in your pocket with available indoor and outdoor rebates.

Residential Outdoor Rebates

PROGRAM/DEVICE	REBATE LEVEL
Weather Based Smart Sprinkler Timer	Up to \$250
Soil Moisture Sensor Controller	Up to \$150
Rotating Sprinkler Nozzles	Up to \$2 per nozzle
Drip Irrigation	\$0.75 sq. ft. up to 5,000 sq. ft.
Rain Barrels and Cisterns	Up to \$50 per rain barrel and \$250 – \$350 per cistern
Turf Removal	\$4 sq. ft. up to 5,000 sq. ft. (annual maximum)*

**Turf rebates do not apply to designated recycled water sites. If you have already removed your turf, your project is not eligible for this program. Additionally, projects must not be started prior to the receipt and acknowledgement of this Program's Letter to Proceed.*

Residential Indoor Rebates

PROGRAM/DEVICE	REBATE LEVEL
High Efficiency Clothes Washers	Up to \$200
Premium High Efficiency Toilets (4-Liter) Replace existing 1.6 gpf toilets with a 1.1 gpf or less toilet.	Up to \$100

Get started at ETWD.com/conservation/rebates. For specific landscape questions, please contact ETWD's Water Use Efficiency Analyst, Vu Chu at (949) 837-7050, ext. 253.



New Billing System COMING SOON

In the coming months, ETWD will introduce a new billing system that will include enhancements to your water bill. The new system will continue to allow customers to view and pay their utility bill balance online conveniently and securely, as well as view their account and bill payment history. For online access, customers will receive updated account numbers and account registration will be required. Stay tuned for more information.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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GENERAL MANAGER

Dennis P. Cafferty

The Board of Directors meeting takes place on the fourth Thursday of the month, and the Engineering and Finance Committees meet on the Monday before the Board of Directors meeting at 7:30 a.m.

We encourage you to join us either in person or via Zoom teleconference. Meeting agendas are posted on our website and include teleconference access and instructions.

Learn more: etwd.com/governance/meetings-agendas-minutes

ETWD delivers drinking water, recycled water and wastewater services to customers in the City of Laguna Woods and portions of the cities of Lake Forest, Mission Viejo, Laguna Hills and Aliso Viejo.

Have questions? Call us at (949) 837-7050 or email us at district@etwd.com.