Vallecitos Board Declares Drought Over

On February 15, 2017, the Vallecitos Water District’s Board of Directors voted to rescind the voluntary drought restrictions under its “Level 1 – Drought Watch.” Vallecitos customers may irrigate any day of the week with no limit on the number of watering days, and may irrigate their landscapes for as many minutes as needed. However, the Board continued to express their desire to sustain water conservation as a permanent way of life. Vallecitos’ ordinance permanently prohibits the following wasteful practices:

- A customer shall not allow water to leave the customer’s property by drainage onto adjacent properties or public or private roadways or streets or gutters due to excessive irrigation and/or uncorrected leaks.
- The application of potable water to outdoor landscaping during and after 48 hours of a measurable rain event.
- Washing any paved area (sidewalks, driveways, parking areas, tennis courts, etc.) is only allowed to alleviate immediate safety or sanitation hazards. To relieve hazards, only a power washer or a hose with a shutoff nozzle may be used.
- Most irrigation must occur before 10:00 a.m. or after 6:00 p.m.
- A customer shall not use non-recirculating ornamental or cascading fountains.
- Vehicle washing shall only be done in a commercial car wash or by using a hose with an automatic shutoff nozzle or hand-held container.
- A customer shall not continuously fill swimming pools and spas that are draining due to uncorrected leaks.
- Customers shall repair or stop all water leaks upon discovery or within 48 hours of notification by Vallecitos Water District.
- The use of potable water for irrigation of ornamental turf within the public street rights of ways, including adjacent landscape strips.
- Restaurants and other food establishments shall only serve and refill water upon request.
- Guests in hotels, motels, and other commercial lodging establishments shall be provided the option of not laundering towels and linens daily.

Vallecitos’ resolution was approved in response to the San Diego County Water Authority’s action on January 26, 2017, declaring the drought over in San Diego County.

For more detailed information on the permanent prohibitions, go to www.vwd.org/drought.

Frank Gehrke, Chief of the California Cooperative Snow Surveys for the Department of Water Resources, addresses the media in February 2017. Snow survey in the Sierra Nevada was measured at 130% of normal.
The Vallecitos Water District’s newsletter has a new look. We’ve replaced “Splash!” with a new name: “Between the Pipes.” Our new name more accurately reflects the work that we do to provide water, wastewater and recycled water services.

Rate study underway

Living in a semi-arid desert, much of our water comes by way of the Bay Delta in Northern California and the Colorado River through two of the most complex delivery systems in the world. Recently, Vallecitos began receiving a new drought-resilient, local water supply from the desalination plant in Carlsbad. Although these sources have done much to improve our quality of life, transporting water from these origins does come at a premium price.

Regardless of the source, it costs money to treat the water, test the quality, keep it safe, store it for later use, and pump it through miles of canals, tunnels, or pipelines. Our region’s water supplies have become increasingly more expensive for three main reasons:

- The increasing cost of new water supplies.
- Rate increases by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, our region’s largest water supplier.
- Construction, financing and debt costs for major local and regional water projects that enhance water supply reliability for our area.

Rate increases will soon be necessary to cover these escalating costs so we can continue to do what we do best...providing safe, reliable and sustainable water and wastewater services to our customers. In the coming months, Vallecitos’ Board will consider rate increases. Even with the upcoming proposed rate increases, it’s important to remember that:

- Vallecitos is a public agency and does not operate for profit, therefore we can only charge the actual cost for any services we provide.
- As 100% of our water is imported, when our wholesalers raise the water rates, this can significantly affect our customers’ water bills.
- Vallecitos’ rates and charges are structured to reduce rate volatility that results from fluctuations in sales.
- Vallecitos works very hard to keep rates as low as possible. As an example, 96 percent of what our average customer pays for water is what we pay our wholesaler for the same water.
- Vallecitos still has some of the lowest water rates in San Diego County.
Glenn Pruim appointed as Vallecitos’ new General Manager

The Vallecitos Water District is pleased to announce that after a nationwide search with over 50 applicants, the Board of Directors appointed Glenn Pruim as its new General Manager. Mr. Pruim replaced Dennis O. Lamb, who retired last June.

Glenn Pruim received both his Bachelors and Masters of Civil Engineering from the University of Illinois. A registered engineer in Civil and Mechanical Engineering, Glenn Pruim has an extensive background in public works, engineering, and water and wastewater operations. During his ten years at the City of Carlsbad, he served as City Engineer, Public Works Director and General Manager/Utilities Director of the City’s subsidiary, Carlsbad Municipal Water District.

Further, he functioned as lead negotiator with Poseidon Resources and the San Diego County Water Authority for the Carlsbad Desalination Project. More recently, Mr. Pruim worked for the City of Encinitas and San Dieguito Water District as Public Works Director/General Manager, where he concurrently held titles of: City Engineer, Public Works Director, San Dieguito Water District General Manager, Encinitas Sanitary District General Manager and Cardiff Sanitation District General Manager.

We are excited to have Glenn join us,” said Vallecitos Board President, Craig Elitharp. “After a nationwide search we selected the ideal candidate: a General Manager with skills in drinking water, desalinated water, recycled water and wastewater collection — and also one who knows and understands California’s water woes as well as the local North County community.”

“I’m very excited to join Vallecitos as the General Manager. In my previous positions with Carlsbad and Encinitas, I have worked side by side with Vallecitos on water and wastewater issues and have always been impressed by their leadership and professionalism. I’ve also been a Vallecitos customer for the past 14 years and have received excellent service.”

Glenn Pruim and his wife Jeanne live in San Marcos. They are parents to five sons. Mr. Pruim started his new duties in November of 2016.
Craig Elitharp named 2017 Board President

At a regular meeting held on December 7, 2016, the Vallecitos Board voted to move forward with their annual reorganization. Craig Elitharp was elected unanimously to serve as president and Jim Hernandez to serve as vice president for 2017.

Vice President Jim Hernandez, Division 2 representative, was elected to the Board in 2010. Jim is an architect and small business owner and has lived in San Marcos for more than 40 years.

Elitharp and Hernandez are joined by three Directors who were all recently re-elected to the Vallecitos Board: Directors Betty Evans, Division 1; Mike Sannella, Division 4; and Hal Martin, Division 5.

The Board meets regularly the first and third Wednesday of each month at 5:00 p.m. in Vallecitos’ Administration Building, located at 201 Vallecitos de Oro, in San Marcos. The meetings are open to the public.