

50 Years of Dedicated Public Service: 1957 - 2007

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PCWA UPDATE

Placer County Water Agency

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This Water is Good !

Advanced Treatment Plant Now Serving the Auburn Area

The water coming out of PCWA's brand new Auburn Water Treatment Plant is so good that customers probably won't even notice it. That's the way it seems to be with water.

"Our goal is no taste, no odor - water that's pleasing to the consumer," said Director of Technical Services Brian Martin. "I think the water we're producing here is as good as you will find anywhere."

Water from the new Auburn Water Treatment Plant began flowing into the system on Apr. 30 as construction crews put the finishing touches on a two-year, \$35 million water project.

The new plant is located off Ferguson Road adjacent to the PCWA Business Center. It replaces an old water plant that PCWA purchased from PG&E in the late 1960s.

State-of-the-art micro sand filtering technology is provided
(Please see Auburn, page 2)



An Inside Look

Water Plant Operator Deren Ross is pictured amid the modular water treatment units at the Auburn Water Treatment Plant. The plant uses state-of-the-art filtration technology.

The PCWA Water Web

Agency Operates Seven Water Treatment Plants

The new Auburn Water Treatment Plant is one of seven water treatment plants operated by PCWA.

The agency's plants are operated by a team of 12 licensed operators, including three Grade 5 operators. Grade 5 is the highest level certification offered by the State of California.

The water agency's plants are Alta, Monte Vista, Colfax, Applegate, Auburn/Bowman, Foothill/Sunset and Bianchi.

Conservation Encouraged

Water Year is Driest Since 1988

State water officials are reporting that the 2006-07 rainfall year has been the driest since 1988. Snow surveys conducted in the Northern Sierra on May 1 showed the water content in the snowpack to be just 27 percent of average.

Despite dry conditions, PCWA is expecting to make near normal water deliveries to customers this year. The agency is encouraging customers to eliminate waste and use water wisely.

Cutbacks Seen in Zone 5

An exception to the normal delivery plan comes in the Zone 5 commercial agriculture area west of Highway 65 where reductions of up to 50 percent could be needed. It is hydraulically difficult for the agency to supply Zone 5 without receiving additional surplus water from other agencies, which is not available this year.

Director of Field Services Mike Nichol said deliveries to Zone 5 will depend on the time of year and other factors, including how much water the agency is able to supply through the temporary pumps on the American River.

Water flows through the system to Zones 1 and 3 are expected to be within about 10 percent of normal this summer and early fall. Nichol said an average daily flow of about 430 cubic feet per second (cfs) is anticipated in the Bear River system. In the average year, flows are about 470 cfs.

April Rains Helped

The early May projections for water deliveries are somewhat improved over what had been expected a month earlier. Wet weather during April helped curtail demand and allowed more water to be kept in storage.

Nichol said if customers are able to cut water use this year, more water can be saved in carryover water storage in case of a second dry year.

Students Write Letters

Dear PCWA....

(Ed. Note: Kayla and Billy wrote these letters in April as part of their science studies in Gail Burch's 6th grade class at Alta Vista School in Auburn.)

To Placer County Water Agency,

My name is Kayla and I am in 6th grade at Alta Vista. During our Friday science class, we had an experiment to find out if our taste buds could tell the difference between water flavors. We tested four flavors and yours was one of them. In the end, all the averages ended up the same, but I liked yours the best! Thanks for the great water! Keep making more, I love its clean, pure taste.

Sincerely, Kayla

To Placer County Water Agency,

My name is Billy Jackson. So your water was the best. Keep up your great work. Your water rocks. Because we were doing an experiment. The opponents were Crystal Geyser, Baxter Natural Springs and Arrowhead Natural Springs. The best water was yours.

Sincerely, Billy Jackson

Good Progress on AR Pump Project

American River water diversion and restoration work, May, 2007



Work is ahead of schedule on the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation project to construct a permanent pump station on the American River near Auburn.

The pump station is nearly complete and ready for testing. The river diversion structure, restoration of the river to its natural channel, addition of a whitewater channel and public access improvements are in progress.

The pump station is expected to begin operation this fall and the entire \$70 million project is slated for completion by spring, 2008. The pump station will supply up to 35,500 acre-feet of water per year to PCWA customers.

Auburn

Continued from Page 1

through four pre-engineered and prefabricated Actifloc® water treatment modules manufactured by Kruger USA. The new plant has a capacity of 8 million gallons per day (mgd) and with three more modules can be expanded to a total 14 mgd.

The units have been installed within a large new building at the western end of the PCWA property. Beneath the building is a 500,000-gallon underground storage tank. The building also includes large pumps and piping, control rooms, a water laboratory, offices and loading docks.

Extensive landscaping, including visual and sound screening, has been included as part of the water system improvement project.

As water treatment operations began, work crews were finishing up some interior and exterior features before moving to the south side of the property where removal of the old treatment plant should be complete by fall. A new warehouse will occupy this site.

Solar Power on the PCWA Canal System

When open canals run through steep, wooded areas, they tend to collect leaves, pine needles, branches and many other forms of debris. The problem is most apparent during the fall season and heavy storms.

Over the years, PCWA has added “trash racks” along canals. Debris collects on the racks and is manually removed by canal operators using rakes.

Now, in an innovative new installation, solar power is being used to operate a screening process on the Boardman Canal above the Auburn Water Treatment Plant.

“We wanted to do a better job of removing the debris from the canal so we installed a rack with much smaller openings,” said project engineer Ken Powers. “If we had to clean it by hand, we would be there around the clock in the fall.”

The agency installed a Duperon Flex Rack, which, according to the manufacturer, is seeing its first solar application. After five months, the \$125,000 rack is working very well, Powers said.



Project engineer Ken Powers is pictured behind the solar panel at the new debris rack on the Boardman Canal.

The location of the rack, just below the CHP helicopter landing pad near Bowman Road and I-80, has no electricity and lent itself to the solar application.

An 8x8-foot array of solar panels provides energy to a slowly moving (two feet per minute) belt that skims debris from the canal and moves it up the structure where the debris falls over the top into a dumpster parked below.

Pressure sensors and an automatic mode operate the rack only when debris is present. Fully self-contained and self-charging, the rack is expected to operate in all weather conditions.

The station will communicate via radio into PCWA's Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition system to provide early warning on water turbidity in storms and water treatment operations.

Water Efficiency Corner

New Radio Meters Being Installed

With a new round of funding under the federal Water Resources Development Act, PCWA is planning to install 3800 new radio-read water meters this year.

The installations are planned to continue through October in parts of Auburn, Newcastle, Loomis and Granite Bay. Customers are notified in advance when meter installations are planned in their neighborhoods.

The new state-of-the-art water meters use radio frequency technology that allows meters to be read from the street, saving time for the agency's meter readers and limiting the need for entry onto private property.

The replacement program is intended to increase water efficiency and is being conducted in association with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The federal funding provides for new meters without meter replacement charges for PCWA customers.

Rebates, House Calls Can Save \$\$

PCWA is continuing to offer rebates to water users who install new water efficient toilets and washing machines.

The rebates range from \$50 to \$100, depending on the new fixture or appliance, and are given as credits on the customer's water bill.

Agency officials estimate that rebate programs have helped to save more than 40 million gallons of water over the past four years.

Rebate information and applications may be obtained by calling the PCWA Customer Service Center or visiting the PCWA website.

PCWA continues to offer Water Wise House and Business Calls. A trained water efficiency specialist will visit your home or place of business to check your irrigation, devise a custom watering schedule, check indoor plumbing and provide free water saving devices and literature. To schedule an appointment, call the PCWA Customer Service Center.

East Loomis Basin Study Winding Down; Plan Next

A comprehensive study of the East Loomis Basin canal system should be complete this year. Its results are expected to form the basis for future operations of the canal system.

The study began in 2004 and is being coordinated by PCWA with assistance from MWH Environmental Consultants as well as a Citizens Task Force made up of local water users, environmental interests and other governmental agencies.

"The Task Force has been very helpful in identifying issues surrounding water use in the area," said PCWA Director of Technical Services Brian Martin.

Bob Hansen, a lifelong Loomis Basin farmer, said his participation on the Task Force has been a positive experience. "I feel I have been able to represent the points of view of the farmers in the area," he said.

The study has included flow monitoring during each season of the year, resource inventory, habitat surveys, public outreach and other activities in the 20-square-mile East Loomis Basin. The area includes 17



Strawberry Fields Forever
Canal Operator Mitchell Gregg, right, admires the crop at Bob Hanson's strawberry field off Horseshoe Bar Road.

miles of canals serving approximately 1000 raw water customers.

Study results will help PCWA to prepare a natural resources management plan for the canal system that will increase efficiency while allowing adequate water for habitat and environmental benefit. Federal funding is covering 75 percent of the study costs.

IN BRIEF

WATER FOR BLACK OAK. PCWA directors on May 3 approved an agreement with local property owners that will bring a treated water supply to the area around the Black Oak Golf Course north of Auburn. Twenty-five properties are expected to share in the costs of the water project. Some property owners in the area have reported problems with marginal water wells.

WATER FOR TIMILICK. The PCWA board on Apr. 5 approved a water service agreement to supply 108 parcels in the Timilick development in eastern Placer County. PCWA uses groundwater to supply its Zone 4 service area in the Martis Valley.

WATER QUALITY REPORTS. PCWA's annual Consumer Confidence Reports for 2006 (Published in April, 2007) have been distributed to treated water customers in each treated water service area. The eight reports are also posted on the agency's website. Customers who have not received a report and wish to receive a printed copy are invited to contact the Customer Service Center at (530) 823-4850.

How to Contact Your Elected Directors

PCWA is an independent public agency governed by an elected Board of Directors.

Your directors are:

DISTRICT 1, Gray Allen
DISTRICT 2, Alex Ferreira
DISTRICT 3 and Board Chair
Lowell Jarvis
DISTRICT 4, Mike Lee
DISTRICT 5, Otis Wollan

If you would like to contact a member of the board, please call the PCWA Customer Service Center at (530) 823-4850 or (800) 464-0030. We will be pleased to put you in touch with the elected representative from your area.

Public Meetings

**The Placer County Water Agency
Board of Directors meets regularly the first
and third Thursdays of each month at 2 p.m.
at the Placer County Water Agency Business
Center, 144 Ferguson Road, in Auburn.**
The public is welcome.

www.pcwa.net

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