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## Responding to The Drought

### PCWA, Customers Are Saving Water

By late July, PCWA customers were conserving water at a good rate and PCWA was on track to meet its reduced delivery targets for this drought year.

The agency reported that urban water use is down about 15 percent, thanks to conservation efforts by PCWA water users and the agency's tight operation of its canal delivery system.

All customers are being urged to reduce water use by at least 10 percent with an overall goal of 20 percent until the drought is over. Gov. Brown has declared a statewide water shortage emergency and has asked for 20 percent use reductions.

PCWA water managers are hopeful that the 2014/15 rainfall season will bring at least average levels of precipitation to replenish local reservoirs that have been dropping during recent drought conditions.

In mid-July, the State Water Board instituted emergency drought regulations that authorize local agencies to levy fines on urban water wasters. PCWA leaders said voluntary conservation programs have been effective in the agency's service areas and that they anticipated little need for any new mandatory measures.



**PCWA's Audra Van Fossen and landscape contractor Tyler Dance show a smart controller at Springfield at Whitney Oaks.**

## Rocklin HOA Gets 'Smart' About Water Use

**S**pringfield at Whitney Oaks is an active-adult community of 858 homes in Rocklin. With mature trees, manicured yards, neighborhood parks and common areas, the community is nothing less than "bucolic," as one resident describes it.

But the beautiful scenery isn't the only quality that makes this community unique - it's also "smart" about water use.

The Springfield Homeowners Association, the largest HOA in PCWA's service area, is charged with maintaining the community's landscaping. Several years ago, the HOA Landscape Committee decided to get serious about outdoor water efficiency.

"We wanted to maintain our idyllic landscape while using water as efficiently as possible," said John Cara, committee chairman.

Working with landscape contractor GP Landscape of Sacramento, which maintains and manages irrigation for the community's front yards and common areas, the HOA embarked on a pilot project to see if installing weather-based smart irrigation controllers would be a good investment.

In a region where more than 65 percent of a typical household's water use goes toward landscape irrigation and about 30 percent of that is wasted due to overwatering



**Smart controllers use weather data to automatically set irrigation cycles.**

(Please See Smart Watering, Page 2)



About 60 people gathered June 26 in the small community of Ophir as PCWA dedicated a stone monument that commemorates the historical significance of the Lincoln Highway (old U.S. 40).

PCWA built the monument and hosted the dedication as part of a major pipeline project along the highway route, which is now more commonly known as Ophir Road. The new pipelines carry more water to wide areas of western Placer County.

#### Part of Pipeline Project



The pipeline work disturbed sections of the historic highway and pieces of the original roadway were incorporated into the monument design.

The roadside monument is located on a parcel of land where PCWA plans a future water treatment plant. The monument was dedicated to the California Chapter of the Lincoln Highway Association.



#### Preserving Placer History

## PCWA Dedicates Lincoln Hwy. Historic Monument

"We are here to serve the water supply needs of the people of Placer County," said PCWA General Manager David A. Breninger. "We are proud to be good stewards of Placer County's historical resources as well as its water resources."

Classic cars added a historic touch to the monument dedication, above. PCWA Director of Technical Services Brent Smith, left, was among the speakers. PCWA General Manager David Breninger, County Supervisor Jim Holmes and Donner Summit community leader Norm Saylor are pictured at the new monument.



## Smart Watering - Continued From P. 1

and evaporation, the committee saw room for improvement.

Smart controllers reduce landscape water waste by applying only as much water as plants need to be healthy. Using a few key specifics such as zip code, allowed watering days and plant/soil type, the controller automatically adjusts watering as weather conditions change.

"With proper installation and programming, these controllers can reduce water use by 20 to 30 percent when compared to conventional controllers," said GP Landscape's Tyler Dance. Dance noted that individual homeowners can install smart controllers for about \$350 to \$500.

Springfield first installed Rain Bird® ESP-SMTe Smart Controllers on eight homes. "During a two-year test, we found the controllers saved water, especially in the spring and fall months when temperatures really tend to fluctuate," Dance said.

The controllers were a huge time-saver, too, Dance said. "We could spend all day manually adjusting controllers according to the weather. Instead, these adjust automatically."

Now, about 140 homes have the new controllers installed, and Springfield HOA is well on its way to outfitting the entire community with this water-saving technology. This year, the program received an added boost from PCWA's Irrigation Efficiency Rebate Program.

"Springfield at Whitney Oaks is a great case study for other communities that want to be smart about water use while also improving their landscaping and lifestyle," said PCWA Deputy Director of Customer Services Linda Yager. "Their long-term investment will pay dividends well beyond the current drought."

Learn more about weather-based smart irrigation controllers by visiting the Water Sense website at:

[www.epa.gov/watersense/products/controltech.html](http://www.epa.gov/watersense/products/controltech.html)

#### IN BRIEF...

### PCWA's Mobile App



PCWA has a new application for mobile devices. Search your apps for "PCWA" and download for free. The helpful app includes drought information, a bill payment feature, and a variety of water information including a stopwatch to time your showers.

#### Repair Leaks, Save Water

The best way to eliminate water waste is to eliminate any leaks in your home plumbing system.

Check pipes, faucets, fixtures and appliances for any signs of leaks. Repair all leaks within 48 hours. Fixing a leaking toilet can save 30-50 gallons of water per day. Fixing a leaking faucet can save another 10-15 gallons per day.



PCWA water treatment plants come in all shapes and sizes. Though they differ widely in size and appearance, each plant produces high quality drinking water that meets and exceeds state and federal public health standards.

The agency's water treatment network includes eight plants ranging in size from the tiny Monte Vista plant serving a population of 56 in the middle foothills to the large Foothill Water Treatment Plant on the rim of the Sacramento Valley. PCWA's Foothill-Sunset system serves more than 75,000 people.

With an overall capacity of 83 million gallons per day, PCWA's treatment plants supply a total 38,500 accounts and population of nearly 200,000.

Treated Water Supt. Heidi Vaughn oversees a team of 12 water treatment operators who staff the treatment plants on a daily basis. The plants are upgraded and modernized on a continual basis.

### Upgrade at Alta

One of PCWA's oldest and smallest water treatment plants is located 15 miles northeast of Auburn, serving the small community of Alta. The PCWA Alta Water Treatment Plant is situated on the shore of PG&E's Alta Reservoir. The plant was acquired from PG&E in 1984 when PCWA assumed ownership of the Zone 3 water service area.

## Water Treatment

### PCWA Plants Big and Small Produce Quality Water



**OLD MEETS NEW at the Alta Water Treatment Plant where an old redwood tank, left, is still in operation. In a recent site visit, Water Plant Operator Ron Sutrov explained this year's upgrades to the plant.**

The historic Alta plant includes an old redwood water storage tank that is still in use. Additional storage and other improvements have been added over the years. The plant produces up to a half-million gallons of water per day and serves a population of 868.

In a \$570,000 project completed this year, PCWA added three new water filtration units and modified the backwash system at the Alta plant.

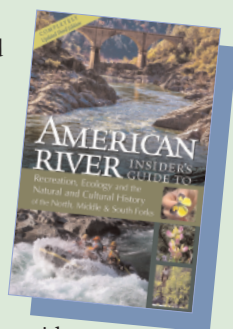
Vaughn said producing high quality water is PCWA's goal, no matter what the size or location of the plant. "All of our customers deserve the best water possible," she said. "That's what we are working to do every day."

### Book Invites Exploration of the American River

"An Insider's Guide to the American River" is a new resource and guidebook to all three forks of the American River, published by Auburn-based Protect American River Canyons (PARC). "This is an all-new third edition of a guidebook that first came out 25 years ago," said editor and contributor Eric Peach of Auburn. "It's a real team effort; many people have been involved."

Peach said proceeds from the book will help support PARC's many activities including outreach, education, river cleanups, hikes, paddles and trail maintenance.

The thoroughly researched guide provides a wealth of knowledge for exploring and appreciating the American River canyon. Filled with inside secrets on where to go, how to get there, when to visit, and what treasures to look for, the guide invites readers of all ages and interests to explore the river. The book covers recreation, ecology and cultural history of the river and is filled with trail guides and maps, whitewater guides, plant and animal guides, and more. It retails for \$24.95 and is available at leading bookstores in Placer, El Dorado and Sacramento counties. Copies may be purchased online at the PARC website (\$30 including shipping and handling). See [www.parc-auburn.org](http://www.parc-auburn.org).



### Water and Art

### PlacerArts Wins Grant for 'Watershed Reflections'

**T**he Arts Council of Placer County has been awarded a \$30,000 grant for a "Watershed Reflections" project that promotes awareness, stewardship and conservation.

The California Arts Council (CAC) Creative Communities Program grant is one of 24 approved by the CAC, which considered 157 applications from around the state.

"PlacerArts will create Watershed Reflections to help the public conserve and value water through free, artist-led public activities including storytelling, painting, trash inspired music-making and art-making, the creation of public art trail markers and a series of articles and messages for print and electronic media," said Angela Tahti, executive director of the arts council.

Tahti said community involvement through partnerships with PCWA, Protect American River Canyons (PARC), the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and Placer County Visitors Bureau led to the successful grant application.

**Follow PCWA on Twitter: @placerwater**

## Your Elected Board of Directors

PCWA is an independent public agency governed by an elected Board of Directors. Directors represent each of five districts in Placer County and are elected by voters to four-year terms.

### Your PCWA Board of Directors:

DISTRICT 1: Gray Allen  
DISTRICT 2: Primo Santini  
(2014 Vice Chairman)  
DISTRICT 3: Mike Lee  
DISTRICT 4: Robert Dugan  
DISTRICT 5: Joshua Alpine  
(2014 Chairman of the Board)

## 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](http://www.pcwa.net)

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## PLACER COUNTY WATER AGENCY

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## Water Efficiency



### No Gutter Flooders Here

Placer County high school students brought home awards in the Regional Water Authority's 2014 video production contest which was themed "Don't Be a Gutter Flooder." Student winners, pictured with PCWA Deputy Director of Customer Services Linda Yager, center, are, from left, Michael Abshear and Noah Spahn, Whitney HS; Connor Cook, Rocklin HS; and Madison Preston and Justin Conti, Whitney HS.

### Can We Find Your Meter Box?

Customers are asked to keep meter boxes clear of overgrowth and debris. Please trim shrubs, bushes and trees and remove any dirt, bark or rock. Accessible meters are easier to read and maintain, plus they provide safer working conditions for PCWA employees.



Overgrown



Trimmed

### Personnel

#### Veteran Employees Retiring

Three longtime PCWA employees, representing more than 100 years of service to the agency and its customers, are retiring this summer. Best wishes to:

Associate Engineer Rick Lund, of Auburn, who retires Sept. 6 from a 30-year career with the water agency.



Lund



Reilly



Nakashima

Canal Operator Tom Reilly, of Dutch Flat, who retires Aug. 22 from a PCWA career that has spanned 35 years.

Canal Operator Dirk Nakashima, of Meadow Vista, who retires Sept. 23 from a 40-year PCWA career.

#### Exemplary Service Awards

Four PCWA employees have received 2014 Exemplary Performance Awards, the agency's highest employee award. This year's recipients are **Jill Howes** of the Customer Services Department, **Josh Lelko** of Technical Services, **Dave Raastad** of the PCWA Power System, and **Carrie Parks** of the Finance Department.

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