

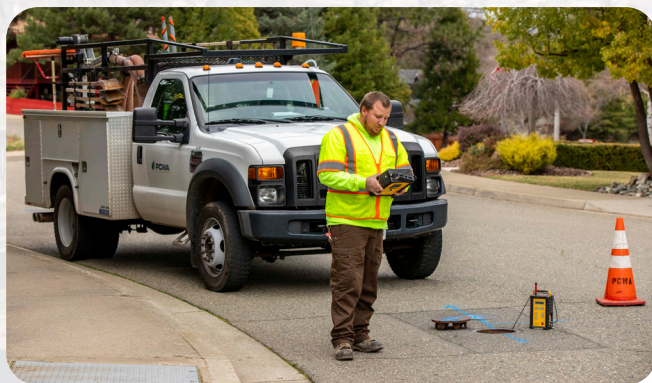
Leak Busters Unveiled: A Q&A with PCWA on Tackling Water Leaks

Just like it's vital to find and fix leaks in your home or at work, PCWA is constantly working to repair leaks in our water system. Now, given that PCWA's water system spans 1,500 square miles and is made up of over 646 miles of pipes and 170 miles of canals, this takes a lot of planning and focus. Fortunately, PCWA has a skilled team of employees dedicated to this effort.

PCWA Director of Field Services Daryl Hensler describes how the job gets done.

How does PCWA find leaks in the water system?

PCWA is grateful for homeowners and community members who proactively report the leaks they see in their communities where PCWA provides services. Our leak detection team utilizes handheld devices to precisely pinpoint and confirm leaks. This advanced equipment enables them to detect leaks that might otherwise go unnoticed and accurately determine their location. Annually, the team detects leaks along approximately 4-5 miles of pipe.



How does PCWA prioritize what should be fixed first?

We prioritize leak repairs based on their size and potential damage to roadways, properties, and the water system.

What's the most common type of leak you find?

The most common type of leak found is typically on the service laterals, which are the connections from the water main to the meter box.

What does the repair work usually involve?

Every repair is unique and requires a lot of skill, knowledge, and coordination. For a water main leak, the repair typically involves excavation and then repairing the leak either with clamps or by replacing the damaged section of pipe. For service leaks, the damaged lateral is cut and widened, and a new lateral is pulled into place to avoid extensive paving costs. Finally, the roadway is restored after the repair.



What are the main causes of leaks?

There are a variety of factors that can cause a leak or break, such as aging infrastructure, corrosion, damage from new construction, and environmental factors, such as tree roots.

How does PCWA's Renewal and Replacement program help make a difference?

PCWA's Renewal and Replacement program helps us stay ahead of problems before they turn into emergencies. By replacing large sections of aging water mains in an efficient manner, we can reduce disruptions and higher costs associated with repairing individual leaks.

Just like it's important to do regular maintenance on your car and home to stay ahead of costly repairs, PCWA's Renewal and Replacement program is an important tool in keeping the water system operating at its best.

How often are crews working to improve the water system and fix leaks?

Crews work daily to improve and maintain the system with roughly 250-300 leak repairs per year. We also complete 3-5 capital improvement projects per year that upgrade our system and increase reliability, water quality, and firefighting capabilities.

What can customers do if they think they find a leak?

If customers notice a leak from PCWA's water system, they can report it by calling PCWA's office at (530) 823-4850. We have personnel available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to respond to calls.

Is your toilet leaking?

**FLIP YOUR
FLAPPER**



Get your paws on a new **toilet flapper** and replace it in just **six steps**:

1. Turn off the water to your toilet
2. Remove tank cover and flush
3. Remove old flapper
4. Attach new flapper to pegs
5. Reattach/adjust chain for a tight seal
6. Turn water on and flush

www.epa.gov/watersense/fixaleak





General Manager's Report

By Andrew Fecko

During winters like this, which started out dry, California water agencies often face a tricky balancing act to ensure enough water for homes, businesses, wildlife, recreation, and hydropower generation. So, I want to briefly highlight what our experts at PCWA

do to meet these needs while the rest of us keep a hopeful eye on the sky.

For starters, PCWA water supplies are currently in a good place to meet all our needs for the year ahead, thanks in part to the bountiful winter last year. Our two largest reservoirs — French Meadows and Hell Hole — were at about 85 percent of average capacity in early February.

However, we are not generating as much hydropower with the water from those two reservoirs as we would in a year with high or even average precipitation. This is to ensure we save enough water in those reservoirs for the hot months to come, in case winter remains drier than average.



Manual snow survey, measuring the depth and weight of snow.

produce hydropower to help the Western grid remain stable. You see, the entire Western U.S. is connected electrically which benefits all of us by diversifying our electric supply. At the moment, we are being very judicious in our use of water for hydropower production.

All this work is informed by data on our mountain snowpack.

We watch the snowpack closely because it works a lot like a battery, storing both water and energy for the summer. We track the snowpack in a variety of ways:

• Mechanical sensors measure depth and weight of snow, which we watch remotely via the internet.

• Aircraft surveys that measure snowpack on a larger scale using laser imaging (LIDAR)

• Satellite data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which measures snowpack coverage.

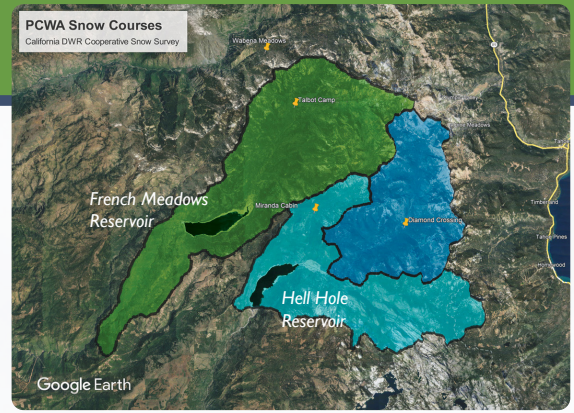
• Field surveys, in which we visit defined locations to measure the water content of the snowpack in person.

All this data is fed into a computer model to help us assess how much water is held in that snowpack battery. But that last method — the field survey — remains one of our most important tools even though it's only performed monthly.

Our experts visit the same four high-elevation sites ("snow courses") every month in winter to sample the full depth of the snowpack with a long tube. Then they weigh this sample, which gives a precise value for the water content of the snowpack. This helps us estimate how much water will eventually melt into our reservoirs downstream.

We have been sampling these same four stations continuously for 50 years, so we have a robust data set that correlates snowpack to future runoff and gives us the confidence to operate our reservoirs for water supply and hydropower.

As you can see, winter is a busy time for the Agency's water resource planning team. PCWA's investments in technology over the past two decades have made our job a bit easier. And it definitely improves our ability to operate our water system in a way that ensures our customers have enough water.



Four yellow pins indicate snow course locations, and shaded areas depict the river basins surrounding each snow course.

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 (2024 Vice Chair)
- DISTRICT 2: Primo Santini
- DISTRICT 3: Mike Lee
- DISTRICT 4: Robert Dugan (2024 Chair)
- DISTRICT 5: Joshua Alpine

Public Meetings

The Placer County Water Agency Board of Directors meets regularly the first and third Thursdays of each month at 2:00 p.m. at the Placer County Water Agency Business Center at 144 Ferguson Road in Auburn.



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WEBSITE: PCWA.net

MAILING: P.O. Box 6570
Auburn, CA 95604

PHYSICAL: 144 Ferguson Road
Auburn, CA 95603

PHONE: (530) 823-4850
(800) 464-0030

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MULCH MAYHEM

Saturday, May 4th, at 8:00 a.m.
Sierra College Overflow Parking
First-come, first-served.
While supplies last.

May the Mulch Be With You.

City of Lincoln SAN JUAN WATER SINCE 1857

PCWA water • energy • stewardship