

DWA News

Let's make every drop count!

DESERT WATER • SUMMER 2017

New water rates in effect July 1, 2017

On June 20, Desert Water Agency's Board of Directors, made up of local community representatives, will vote on a proposed rate increase slated to go into effect on July 1, 2017. The Board approved a multi-year rate increase plan in December of 2016 and committed to reassessing the need for increases given financial need at each phase through July 2020. If approved, the rate for water consumed would increase by 15 cents per unit (748 gallons) to \$1.72 and the effect on the monthly meter charge would be a \$3.71 increase for almost all residential customers.

Much of the region's water system was built before DWA was created in 1961, and age has led to an increasing number of pipeline leaks requiring emergency repair. Proactive infrastructure maintenance and aggressive pipeline replacement will minimize water loss, ensure supply reliability and reduce the need for costly emergency repairs down the road.

DWA is also grappling with new local, state and federal requirements that are driving up costs, including the cost of imported water. Like local families and businesses, DWA is also facing rising energy costs and inflation.

DWA sent [notices](#) informing its customers of the multi-year rate plan and held a series of public meetings to inform the community and gather feedback. Before considering a potential rate adjustment, DWA took measurable steps to cut costs including significant cuts to employee retirement contributions and soliciting grant funding. DWA is a government agency and does not operate with a profit, but charges the cost of service to its customers.

For more information on the new water rates, visit www.dwa.org/rates.



DWA has established a program for customers who may need help paying their water bill. The Agency worked with United Way of the Desert to establish the Help2Others customer assistance program. Employees and vendors contribute money to fund the program, and United Way of the Desert and its partners manage it. Eligible customers will get a \$50 credit on their water bill once every 12 months.

For more information, visit www.dwa.org/h2o or contact United Way of the Desert at 760-323-2731.



Water Quality Report

Providing high-quality, safe drinking water for our customers is our top priority.

California has some of the most stringent standards for drinking water in the world – stricter than standards for bottled water, which is regulated by the FDA.

DWA's report includes information about the minerals and other elements found in drinking water here, along with answers to common questions on water quality.

We encourage our customers to read the report online at www.dwa.org/2016WQR. Customers can also contact our office for a hard copy.



DWA will now charge late fees to customers who are well past their due date. If a bill is not paid in full before the next water bill is issued, a \$25 late fee will be added to the bill. Signing up for e-billing and autopay are good measures to help avoid late fees. Visit www.dwa.org/billpay to sign up, if you haven't already.

The new late fee policy aims to minimize shutoff notices and the resources spent on delinquent accounts by encouraging more customers to pay their bills by the due date listed on the bill. Although a small percentage of accounts receive shutoff notices on a regular basis, a significant amount of time is dedicated to coordinating with those customers. Please be mindful of the due date on your bill and send payment promptly.

Governor ends drought emergency

In consideration of record-breaking precipitation this last winter, Governor Brown ended the drought state of emergency.

After it was rescinded, DWA removed its drought watering schedule (Monday-Wednesday-Friday, before 7AM after 7PM). Customers can now water when they want, though they still must be efficient. DWA will continue to enforce water waste, issuing penalties if necessary.

Some water restrictions remain permanently prohibited by the State and DWA:

- Water running off landscape
- Washing of hardscape
- Watering during and 48 hours after rain fall

For more information on restrictions visit www.dwa.org/restrictions.

The Agency is committed to conservation, and offers various water-saving programs. From rebates to replace turf with desertscape to free efficient sprinkler nozzles, DWA is eager to work with customers to use water wisely. Learn more at: www.dwa.org/rebates.

Find us on Instagram!



Whitewater River safety

As the heat settles in, the cool Whitewater River area may seem inviting, but it is *very dangerous*. Thanks to the wet winter boosting local imported water deliveries, water will be flowing steadily for months to come. While this is good news for the Coachella Valley's groundwater basin, the river is dangerous and has caused serious injuries and even death for those who test its waters.

Imported water and snowmelt from Mt. San Geronio feeds the Whitewater River. Much of the water flows to the Coachella Valley Water District and Desert Water Agency groundwater replenishment ponds. The area along the river and at the ponds are marked with "No Trespassing" signs. Trespassers caught in this area can be prosecuted, resulting in fines and possible jail time.



The Whitewater Preserve, located about five miles north of the I-10, is an area open to the public to safely enjoy the water for free. It provides some beautiful hiking and picnic areas, as well as a wading pond and a section of slower moving water for swimming. Arrive early as parking is limited. Contact the preserve at (760) 325-7222.

Dog Days of Summer



Desert Water Agency and the Palm Springs Animal Shelter partnered to promote dog adoptions and pet safety during the summer months. You may notice our banner outside the shelter's play area or a poster of a pup for adoption in our lobby.

DWA is providing travel dog bowls and bandanas to send home with every dog that is adopted through August. The Agency will also post photos of the dogs on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Summer can be challenging for our four-legged friends, so DWA and the shelter will be providing tips to keep pets safe and hydrated.

The summer also challenges the shelter since many of their volunteers are out of town and the adoptions slow. Some DWA employees aim to fill the gap by volunteering on their lunch breaks. If you're interested in joining, contact the shelter.

Palm Springs Animal Shelter is the only no-kill public shelter in the Coachella Valley. They continue to find homes even through the long, hot summer. For more information on adopting a pet from the Palm Springs Animal Shelter, please visit www.psanimalshelter.org, or call (760) 416-5719.

Want to know more about what we're doing?

The public is always welcome at our board meetings on the first and third Tuesday of every month, beginning at 8 a.m., at DWA Operations Center, 1200 S. Gene Autry Trail, Palm Springs. To see an up-to-date schedule of all our meetings, please visit our website: www.dwa.org/calendar.

Board of Directors

- James Cioffi: President
- Joseph K. Stuart: Vice President
- Kristin Bloomer: Secretary/Treasurer
- Patricia G. Oygar: Director
- Craig Ewing: Director

Contact information

For more information, please contact: DWA Outreach & Conservation Manager Ashley Metzger at 760-323-4971 ext. 184, or Ashley@dwa.org. For more information on DWA's conservation programs, please visit: www.dwa.org/conservation.