



# CURRENT NEWS

January–February 2013

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**PASADENA WILL EXPERIENCE A WATER SHORTAGE EMERGENCY** February 21 through February 28, while a major regional water pipeline is shut down. During that eight-day period, the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) is cutting all water deliveries to foothill cities as it performs vital system repairs and upgrades at its Weymouth Treatment Plant in La Verne. **To avoid running out of water, Pasadena must reduce its consumption by at least 30 percent.**

During the shutdown, Pasadena's water supply will be limited to groundwater and reserves. "We'll be cutting it extremely close," said PWP Engineering Manager Brad Boman. "There will only be enough water for health and hygiene, which means non-essential outdoor water use will have to be restricted."

The Pasadena City Council will hold a public hearing to determine appropriate action, on Monday, January 28, 7:00 p.m., at City Hall Council Chambers, 100 N. Garfield Ave. PWP will recommend that City Council declares a Level 4 Water Supply Shortage during the shutdown, whereby these **mandatory restrictions on water use would be enforced (PMC 13.10):**

- No outdoor landscape watering (sprinklers, smart controllers, hose, drip, watering can, etc. Check PMC 13.10 for exemptions)
- Fix leaks within 24 hours
- No filling of lakes, ponds, pools or spas
- No new water service

If a Level 4 Water Supply Shortage is declared, customers will be notified. Fines for water use violations would start at \$200 for small businesses and \$400 for larger businesses. *Continued on next page*

# LIVE WIRE DIALOGUE

**WHILE WE HOPE** that February brings its usual rain this season, Mother Nature makes no guarantees. Similar to Pasadena's 10-day imported water shutdown of spring 2011, PWP is asking customers to shut off sprinkler systems completely and cut back on daily water use February 21 through February 28, to help us avoid running out of water.

"During the 2011 shutdown, our customers really heeded the call and we were able to cut our water use by more than 30 percent with absolutely no problems," said PWP Water Conservation Manager Nancy Long. "I'm sure we can do it again."

In addition to turning off all outdoor irrigation, Long provides these conservation tips to help Pasadena businesses prepare for the shutdown:

- Plan ahead: reschedule or postpone landscaping and construction projects until March.

- Tell landscape workers and facilities managers to turn off sprinklers on February 20 and keep them off until the shutdown ends.
- If you have a large landscape to maintain, try mulching your lawn or flowerbed to help your landscape retain moisture during the shutdown.
- Check for and repair indoor and/or outdoor leaks.

During the shutdown, PWP is asking City Council to ban all outdoor watering. "It is once again crucial that everyone preserve our limited supply for essential indoor uses in February, regardless of whether we get rain or shine." Long said.





# ASK PWP

**I heard PWP is trying to capture more water from mountain runoff. True?**

Yes. At the base of the San Gabriel Mountains, the Arroyo Seco stream is a significant source of water. In partnership with governmental agencies and the Arroyo Seco Foundation, PWP is working to maximize the city's water rights while protecting and enriching the canyon. With \$3.2 million in CA Prop. 84 funding, PWP will be upgrading its stream intake structure and spreading basins in the Upper Arroyo to enhance the city's groundwater supply. At the same time, funds will be used to restore native plants, improve the fish habitat, remove invasive species and improve the space for hikers, bikers and nature lovers. For its efforts, and in celebration of 100 years of water service, PWP



recently received the Foundation's 2012 Arroyo Verde Award for "Greening the Arroyo." Watch for progress starting this year.

– *Natalie Ouwersloot, Engineer*

**Did I miss my chance to comment on the new electric rates?**

No. PWP conducts a comprehensive rate study every five to 10 years to make sure our power rates remain competitive while providing adequate funds to invest in our systems and maintain the highest level of reliable, quality service to our customers. Hired in May, Burns & McDonnell Engineering Company, Inc. has provided professional, independent service to help us analyze our future costs of service and revenue requirements. We are now taking input from

our largest customers to learn about their changing power needs. We are planning more public information opportunities when the recommended rate design has been prepared.



Customers will have the opportunity to comment when we present the study findings to the Pasadena City Council this spring. Watch for updates.

– *Shari Thomas, Assistant General Manager*

**How can there be a water shortage emergency in February, the middle of our rainy season?**

Water shortages are caused by many factors. In the case of our water shortage emergency in February, it's a delivery issue. The Metropolitan Water District (MWD) has enough imported water for us, but it can't treat the water or deliver it to us or the other foothill cities while the MWD Weymouth Treatment Plant, Upper Feeder Pipeline and Eagle Rock Tower are shut down for system repairs and upgrades. Even though we have received a decent amount of rain so far this year, Pasadena still relies on imported water to meet about 60 percent of its total demand. This



is why it is critical that customers eliminate all outdoor watering and conserve water indoors wherever possible from Feb. 21 – Feb. 28.

– *Gary Takara, Principal Engineer*

*Current News, continued*

The shutdown could continue longer due to construction delays. Check for City Council action and daily updates during the shutdown at [pwpweb.com/shutdown](http://pwpweb.com/shutdown) or call (626) 744-8888 for recorded updates.

## THE AGENDA

### Regularly Scheduled Public Meetings:

MUNICIPAL SERVICES COMMITTEE – Every 2nd & 4th Tuesday @ 4:15 pm, City Hall, Rm. S245

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – Every Monday @ 6:30 pm, City Hall, Rm. S249

(For agendas and cancellations, please check [www.cityofpasadena.net](http://www.cityofpasadena.net))

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

**Rebates & Conservation**  
626.744.6970

**Billing & Service**  
626.744.4005

**Water Emergencies**  
626.744.4138

**Power Emergencies**  
626.744.4673



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# CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT

A PATCH OF TIRED TURF that once soaked up gallons of water has been transformed into a money-making farm that's soaking up plenty of praise for John Muir High School.



*John Muir High School turned a patch of tired turf into a community gem with the help of grants, donations and rebate funding.*

Muir Ranch is the creation of retired teacher/Muir alumnus Doss Jones and Pasadena Unified School District Facilities Supervisor Shirly Barrett, who saw potential in the two-acre plot nearly three years ago. The duo envisioned a working farm that provided fresh, affordable, organic produce to the community, while giving Muir students vital job skills. The idea quickly earned the school numerous grants, donations and community partnerships.

Empty portable classrooms were cleared, and with help from certified master gardener Mud Baron, Muir students created fifty 50-foot beds of vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers. PWP offered a \$5,000 turf removal rebate and hired five Muir student interns to install an automated, low-volume point-source irrigation system.

Now flourishing, the ranch provides hands-on learning for students in Muir's Engineering & Environmental Science, Business & Entrepreneurship and Arts, Entertainment & Media academies. Student workers gain internship credits, and select students are paid stipends each summer.

"To watch these kids plant the seeds, water, weed, harvest and make up recipes – it's amazing," Jones said, noting that many are trying vegetables for the first time. "Some even became vegetarians!"

The booming ranch now nets about \$2,000 per month from local farmer's markets and nearly 120 Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) subscribers. Many of the farm's vegetables and fruits are served in the Muir cafeteria, the students are now working with Caltech to devise a solar-powered cooler, and the team just won a \$50,000 grant from the Pasadena Child Health Foundation to combat childhood obesity by delivering produce to low-income families.

A fixture on Facebook and Twitter, the ranch team has also been invited to share their success with the Inland Empire Utilities Agency and the California Urban Water Conservation Council.

"Muir Ranch is a one-of-a-kind use of our turf replacement rebate and we're completely impressed," said PWP Account Manager Jane Raftis. "They're using water in the very best way, growing beautiful, healthful produce for the community."

For details or to subscribe for produce pick-ups, visit [www.facebook.com/MuirRanch](http://www.facebook.com/MuirRanch) or email [johnmuircsa@gmail.com](mailto:johnmuircsa@gmail.com).



*Muir Ranch is a site to behold: the two-acre farm now produces organic fruit, vegetables and hands-on learning for students.*



# TIPS FOR BOTTOM-LINE SAVINGS

**PLANTS AND LAWNS GUZZLE WATER** during the thirsty seasons of spring and summer. Prepare now during the cool winter months to maximize your water savings, and be better prepared for the MWD pipeline shutdown and proposed outdoor watering ban February 21-28.

First, make the switch to a weather-based "smart" irrigation controller. Equipped with sensors, these marvels automatically run your sprinklers based on changing weather conditions, shutting the system off entirely when it rains. Cut your water bills while your landscaping thrives! PWP is now offering a rebate of \$35 per station to commercial customers, available at [www.pwpweb.com/rebates](http://www.pwpweb.com/rebates).

Next, tune up your sprinkler system by checking carefully

for leaks. Adjust sprinkler heads to eliminate overspray and runoff, and consider shutting off heads that water on slopes or dry, compacted soil – it probably runs straight to the street. Change out sprinkler heads with water-saving nozzles, or install an in-stem flow restrictor. Visit [www.pwpweb.com/rebates](http://www.pwpweb.com/rebates) for cost-saving rebates.

Take advantage of winter rain by redirecting your downspouts to nearby lawns or garden beds, instead of the gutter. Or let your downspouts flow into a rain barrel. For each 1,000 square feet of roof surface, you can collect 420 gallons of water per inch of rainfall. As a finishing touch, cover beds with mulch to reduce evaporation and keep the soil moist. See [www.bewaterwise.com](http://www.bewaterwise.com) for even more water-saving landscaping tips.

# THE CONDUIT

January–February 2013

**PREPARE NOW FOR  
THE WATER SHORTAGE  
EMERGENCY FEB. 21-28.**



Inside this issue:

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