MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT OF ORANGE COUNTY
Jointly with the
PLANNING & OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
18700 Ward Street, Conference Room 101, Fountain Valley, CA 92708
October 5, 2026, 8:30 a.m.

Teleconference Sites:
17420 Walnut Street, Fountain Valley, CA 92708
1961 Aliso Avenue, Costa Mesa, CA 92627
25652 Paseo De La Paz, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675

This meeting will be held in person at 18700 Ward Street, Fountain Valley, California, 92708 (Conference Room 101). As a convenience for the public, the meeting may also be accessed by Zoom Webinar and will be available by either computer or telephone audio as indicated below. Because this is an in-person meeting and the Zoom component is not required, but rather is being offered as a convenience, if there are any technical issues during the meeting, this meeting will continue and will not be suspended.

Computer Audio: You can join the Zoom meeting by clicking on the following link:
https://zoom.us/j/8828665300

Telephone Audio: **(669) 900 9128**
Webinar ID: **882 866 5300#**

P&O Committee:
Director Seckel, Chair
Director McVicker
Director Yoo Schneider

Staff: H. De La Torre, M. Baum-Haley, A. Crespi, C. Busslinger, V. Osborn, K. Pham

Ex Officio Member: President Dick

MWDOC Committee meetings are noticed and held as joint meetings of the Committee and the entire Board of Directors, and all members of the Board of Directors may attend and participate in the discussion. Each Committee has designated Committee members, and other members of the Board are designated alternate committee members. If less than a quorum of the full Board is in attendance, the Board meeting will be adjourned for lack of a quorum and the meeting will proceed as a meeting of the Committee with those Committee members and alternate members in attendance acting as the Committee.

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENTS
Public comments on agenda items and items under the jurisdiction of the Committee should be made at this time.

ITEMS RECEIVED TOO LATE TO BE AGENDIZED
Determine need and take action to agendize item(s), which arose subsequent to the posting of the Agenda. (Requires a unanimous vote of the Committee).

ITEMS DISTRIBUTED TO THE BOARD LESS THAN 72 HOURS PRIOR TO THE MEETING
Pursuant to Government Code section 54957.5, non-exempt public records that relate to open session agenda items and are distributed to a majority of the Board less than 72 hours prior to the meeting will be available for public inspection in the lobby of the District's business office located at 18700 Ward Street, Fountain Valley, California 92708, during regular business hours. When practical, these public records will also be made available on the District's Internet Website, accessible at http://www.mwdoc.com.

PRESENTATION ITEM

1. SUMMARY OF ORANGE COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2025-26 USAGE AND MWDOC ANNUAL SALES

ACTION ITEMS

2. AMENDMENT TO AN AGREEMENT WITH GARDENSOFT CORPORATION FOR THE ORANGE COUNTY WATER SMART GARDENS WEBSITE

3. CALIFORNIA WATER EFFICIENCY PARTNERSHIP (CALWEP) DIRECT DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

INFORMATION ITEMS

4. ORANGE COUNTY WATER SUMMIT RECAP

5. QUARTERLY K-12 CHOICE SCHOOL PROGRAMS UPDATE

6. PUBLIC AFFAIRS HIGHLIGHTS

7. DEPARTMENT ACTIVITIES REPORTS
   a. Ongoing MWDOC Reliability and Engineering/Planning Projects
   b. WEROC
   c. Water Use Efficiency
   d. Water Loss Control
   e. Public and Government Affairs

8. REVIEW OF ISSUES RELATED TO PLANNING OR ENGINEERING PROJECTS, WEROC, WATER USE EFFICIENCY, FACILITY AND EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE, WATER STORAGE, WATER QUALITY, CONJUNCTIVE USE PROGRAMS, EDUCATION, PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAMS AND EVENTS, PUBLIC INFORMATION PROJECTS, PUBLIC INFORMATION CONSULTANTS, DISTRICT FACILITIES, AND MEMBER AGENCY RELATIONS

ADJOURNMENT

NOTE: At the discretion of the Committee, all items appearing on this agenda, whether or not expressly listed for action, may be deliberated, and may be subject to action by the Committee. On those items designated for Board action, the Committee reviews the items and makes a recommendation for final action to the full Board of Directors; final action will be taken by the Board of Directors. Agendas for Committee and Board meetings may be obtained from the District Secretary. Members of the public are advised that the Board consideration process includes consideration of each agenda item by one or more Committees indicated on the Board Action Sheet. Attendance at Committee meetings and the Board meeting considering an item consequently is advised.

Accommodations for the Disabled. Any person may make a request for a disability-related modification or accommodation needed for that person to be able to participate in the public meeting by telephoning Angela Crespi, District Secretary, at (714) 963-3058, or writing to Municipal Water District of Orange County at 18700 Ward Street, Unit B, Fountain Valley, CA 92708. Requests must specify the nature of the disability and the type of accommodation requested. A telephone number or other contact information should be included so that District staff may discuss appropriate arrangements. Persons requesting a disability-related accommodation should make the request with adequate time before the meeting for the District to provide the requested accommodation.

Item No. 1

PRESENTATION ITEM
October 5, 2026

TO: **Planning & Operations Committee**

FROM: **Harvey De La Torre, General Manager**

Staff Contact: Kevin Hostert, Senior Water Resources Analyst

SUBJECT: **SUMMARY OF ORANGE COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2025-26 USAGE AND MWDOC ANNUAL SALES**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning & Operations Committee receive the presentation.

REPORT

Purpose

This presentation item provides the Planning & Operations Committee with a summary of Orange County Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 usage and Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC or District) annual sales.

Discussion

Fiscal Year 2025-26 was a slightly wetter and notably warmer year for Orange County, compared to normal. Average high temperatures in Santa Ana were well above the 25-year average. Rainfall totaled 13.82 inches, about an inch above normal, and Orange County experienced 36 days of measurable precipitation. Most of the rainfall fell early in the rainy season, leaving water demand from October to December well below the six-year average.

Municipal and Industrial (M&I) water usage for Orange County totaled approximately 508,500 acre-feet (AF) for FY 2025-2026. This annual usage is slightly below the six-year average of 511,500 AF, despite March 2026 being the warmest March on record and driving higher-than-average spring water demands.

Orange County's overall water usage has steadily declined since the mid-2000s and has remained near early 1980s levels for several years, even though the county has added

1,165,000 residents and incorporated seven new municipalities since the early 1980s. Exhibit 1 below shows Orange County population and M&I water usage since FY 1969-1970, and Exhibit 2 shows monthly M&I usage for FY 2025-26.

Exhibit 1

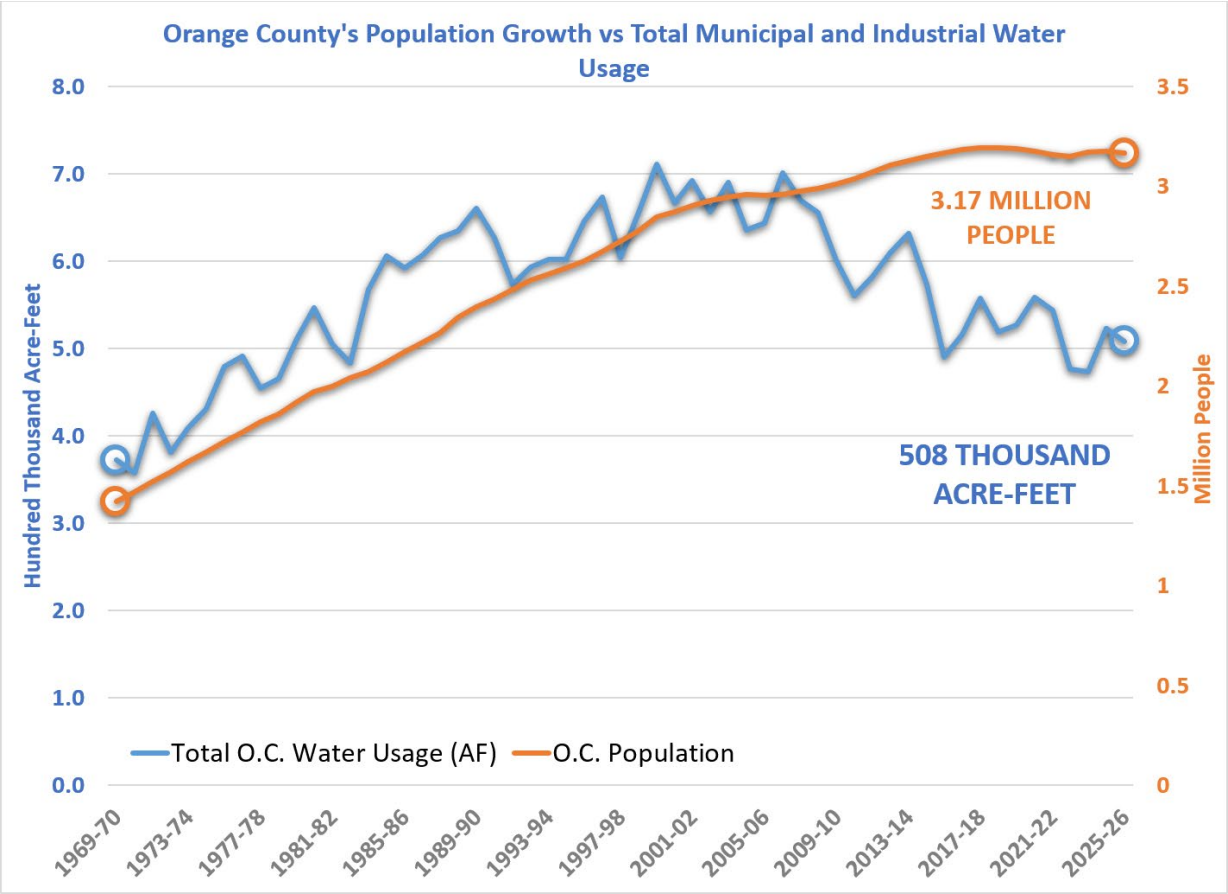
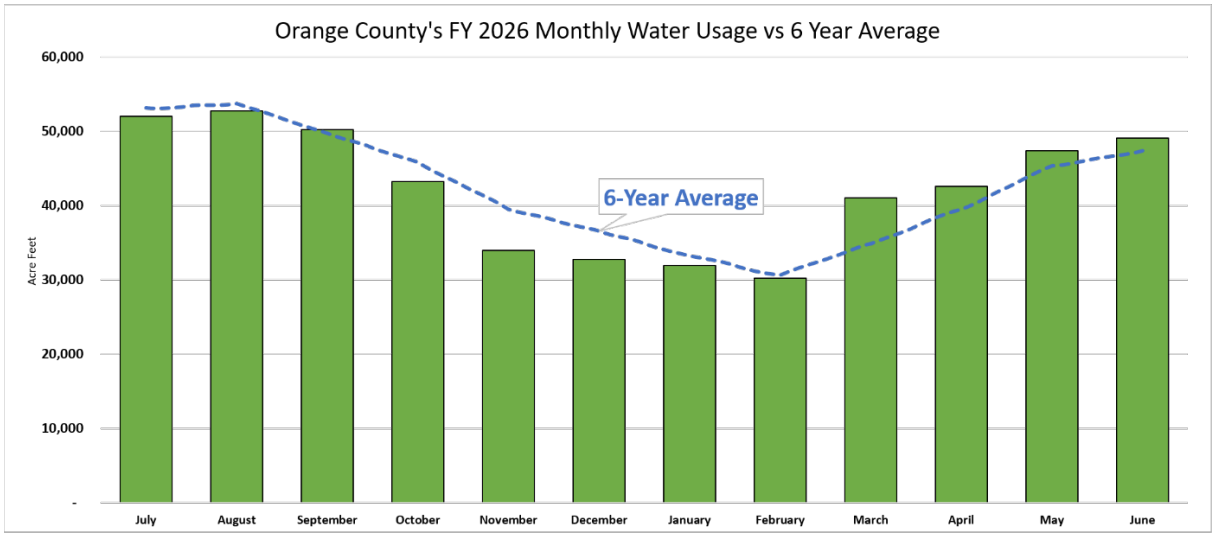


Exhibit 2

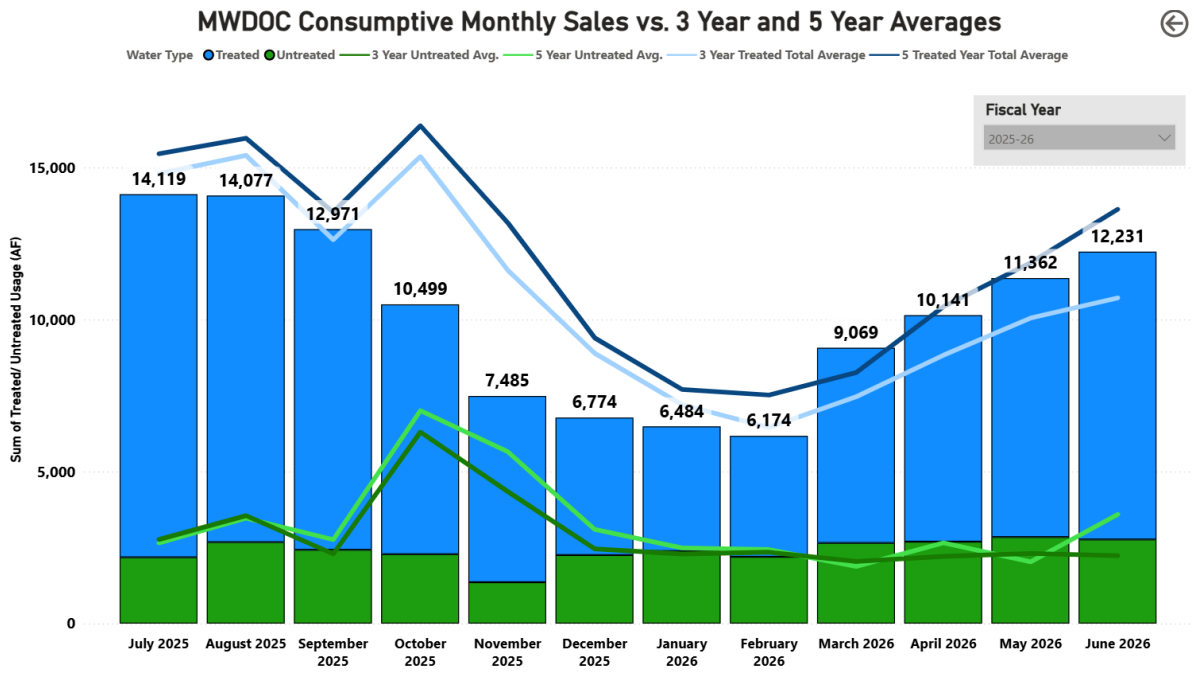


MWDOC's Consumptive Imported Water Sales were slightly below the three-year and five-year historical averages. Unlike M&I water demand, sales are not solely driven by retail customer water usage. Instead, sales are affected by retail water demand, local supply available to retail agencies, groundwater and Irvine Lake replenishment demands, and Cyclic Storage/In Lieu availability.

Consumptive Imported Water Sales for FY 2025-2026 were approximately 121,000 AF; this includes approximately 9,750 AF of Reverse Cyclic Program (RCP) water purchased in December 2024 and delivered between February and June 2026. The RCP deliveries resulted in a volumetric savings of $2.66 million to MWDOC's Member Agencies.

Contamination from per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances in the Orange County Groundwater Basin and the large amount of storm and natural runoff Orange County Water District recharges into the ground keep untreated water sales significantly below historical levels. Sales of replenishment water for Irvine Lake remain low due to a major rehabilitation planned for the dam. Exhibit 3 below compares MWDOC's monthly treated and untreated sales with the three-year and five-year averages.

Exhibit 3



ALIGNMENT WITH BOARD STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

☒ *Clarifying MWDOC's mission and role; defining functions and actions.*
☐ *Balance support for Metropolitan's regional mission and OC values and interests.*
☐ *Strengthen communication and coordination of messaging.*
☒ *Work with Member Agencies to develop water supply and demand objectives.*
☐ *Solicit input and feedback from member agencies.*
☐ *Invest in workforce development and succession planning.*

Attachments/Links:
Attachment 1: MWDOC Water Sales and Orange County Water Usage Presentation Link 1: MWDOC Consumptive Water Sales https://app.powerbigov.us/view?r=eyJrIjoiNzNmZjE2NDUtOGYwMi00ZTMxLThmZDMtZWJiOTJhOTdhM2Y1IiwidCI6ImZlZGJiNTRiLTNmMTYtNGIzZi05YTlkLTc4MDc2M2FkMjE1NyJ9&pageName=20432ced726e9725a298



Summary of Orange County Fiscal Year 2025-26 Usage and MWDOC Annual Sales

Planning & Operations Committee

October 5, 2026

MWDOC Water Demand Drivers

Retail Water Demand Drivers

Precipitation (Wet Year = 35% Dry Year = 65%)

Temperature (i.e. April can be hot or cold and wet/dry)

Economic (i.e. 2007-09 Great Recession)

Public Awareness (i.e. 2015 Governor's Drought Declaration)

Water Use Efficiency

Increase in Water Cost

Decrease/Increase in Population

Wholesale Water Demand Drivers

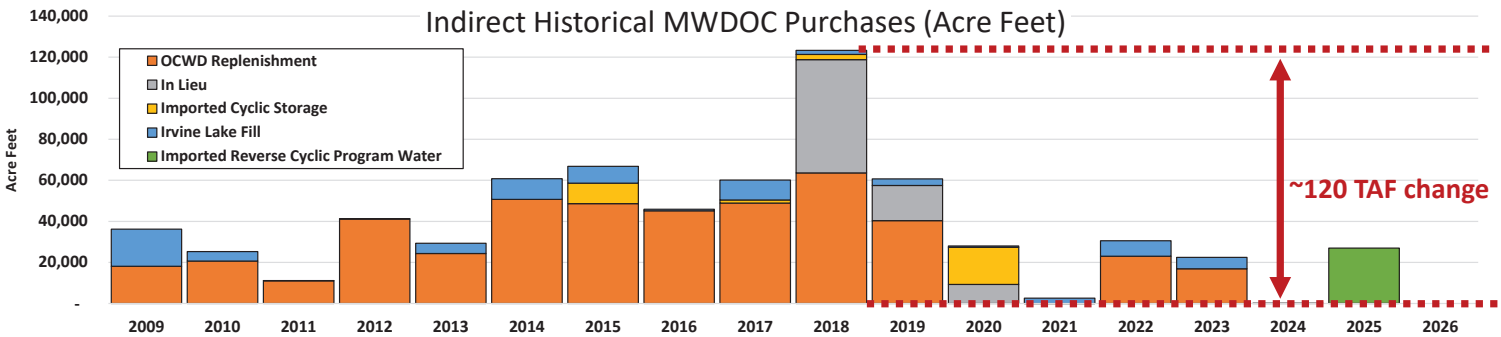
Retail Water Demand

Availability of Local Supply (i.e. PFAS)

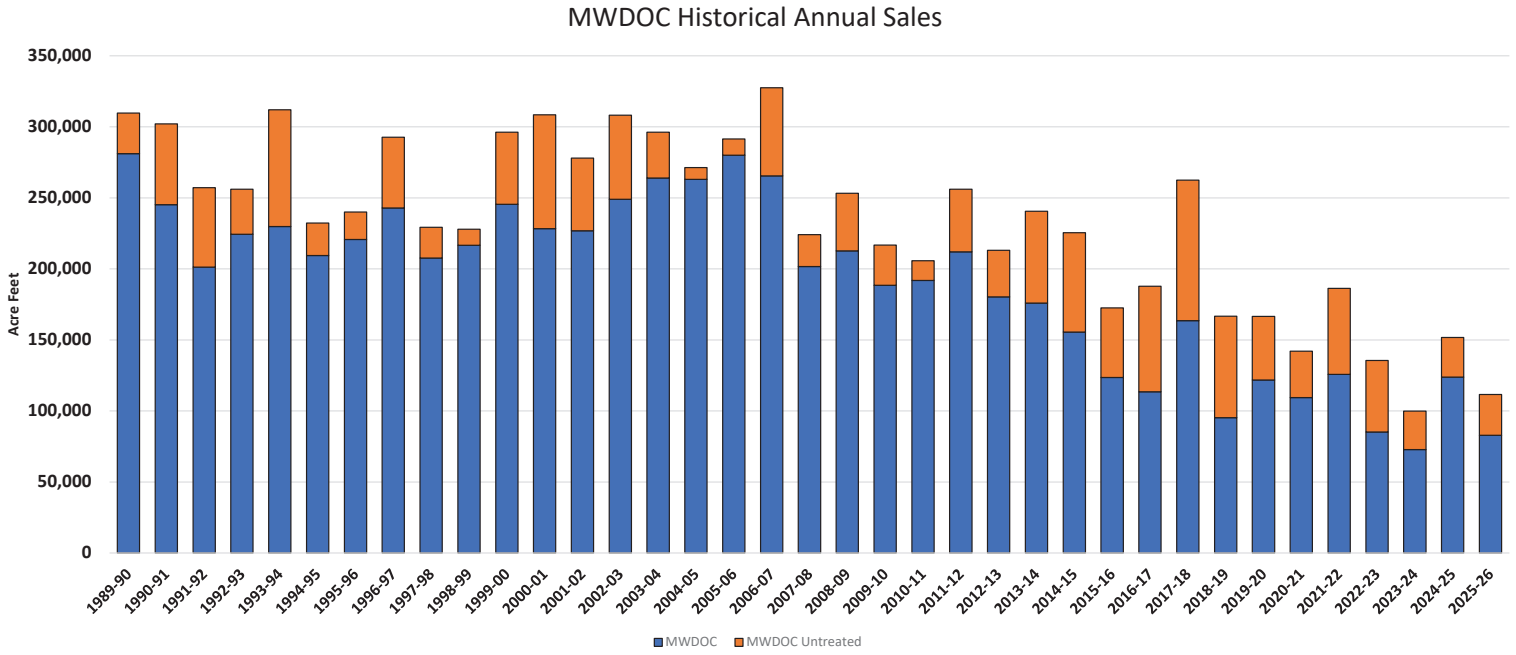
Groundwater Replenishment demands

Irvine Lake Replenishment demands

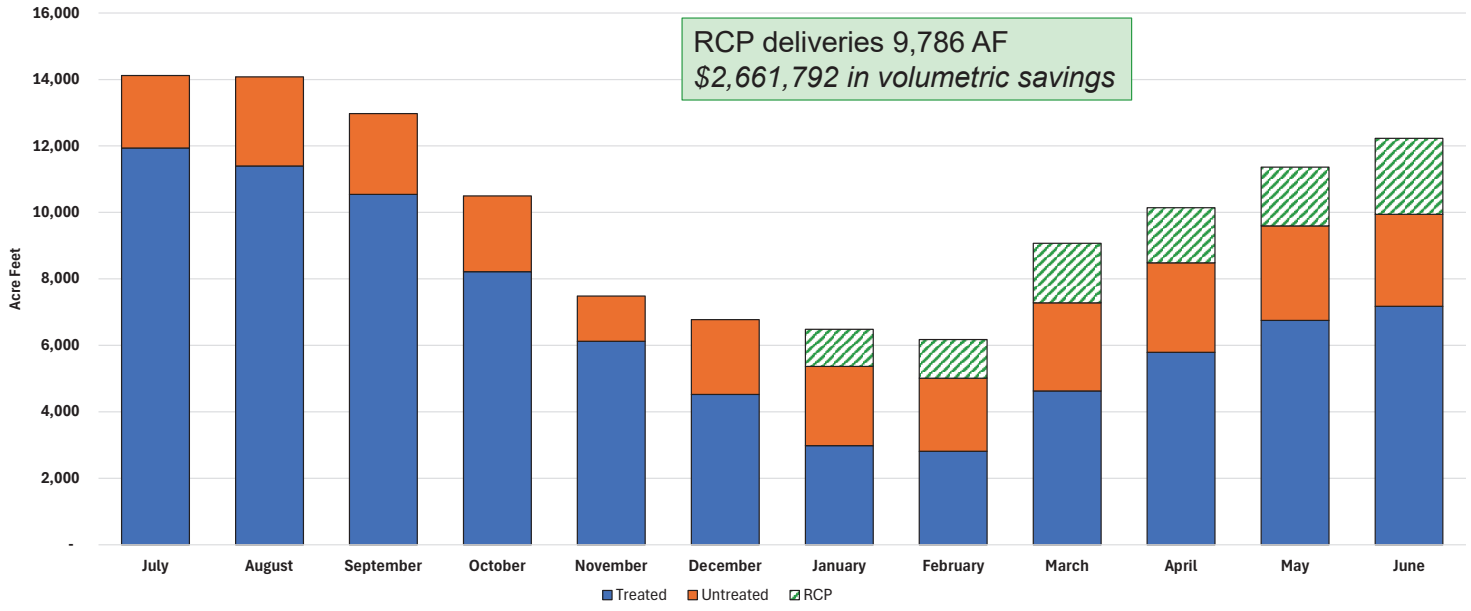
MWD Cyclic storage, RCP, and In Lieu availability



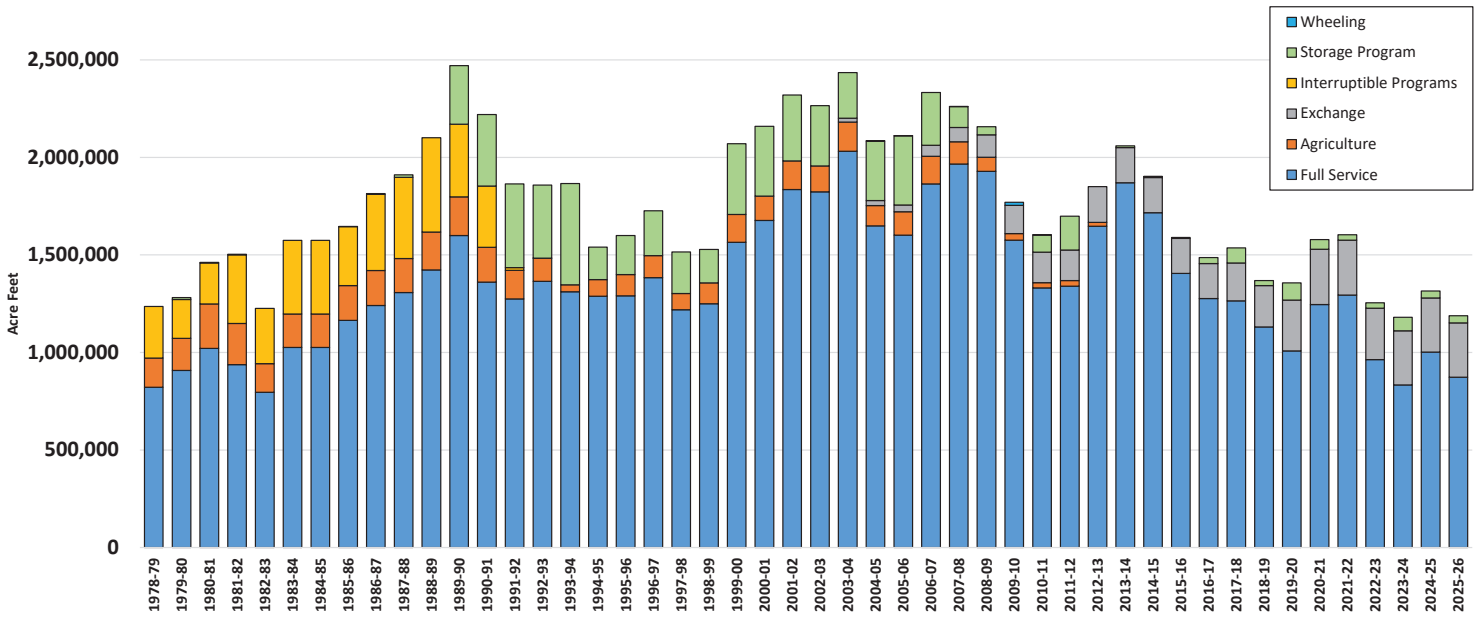
MWDOC Historical Water Sales *(Acre-Feet)*



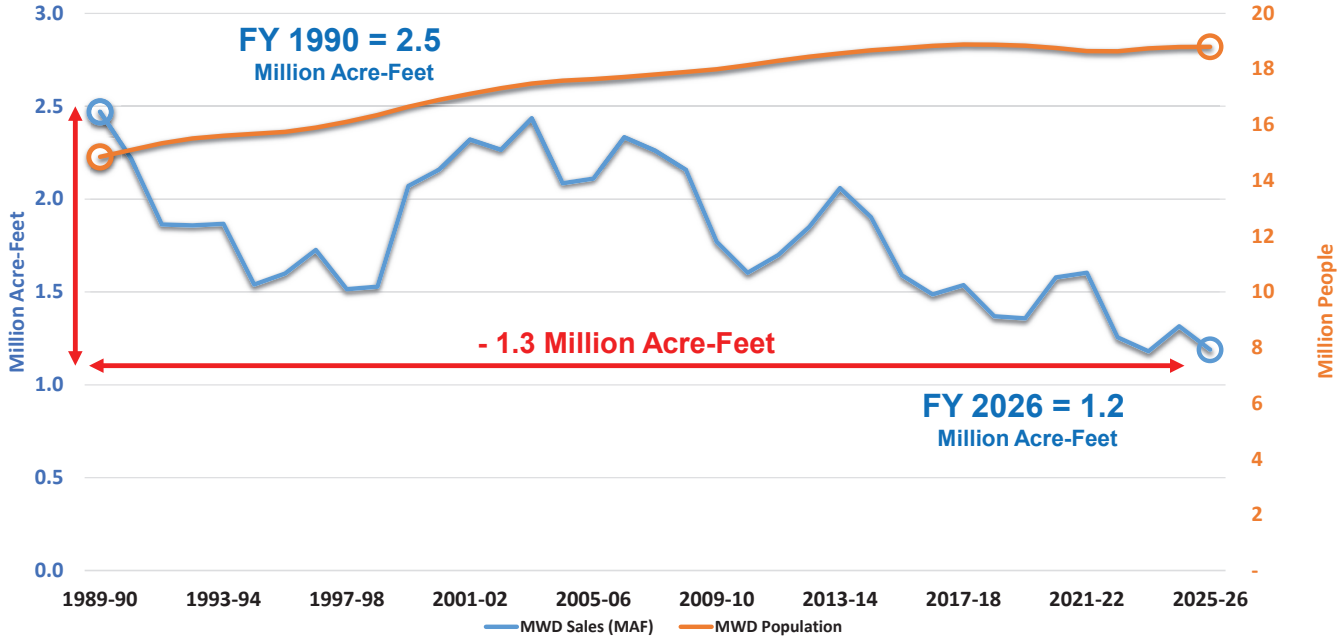
MWDOC FY 2025-26 Monthly Water Sales *(Acre-Feet)*



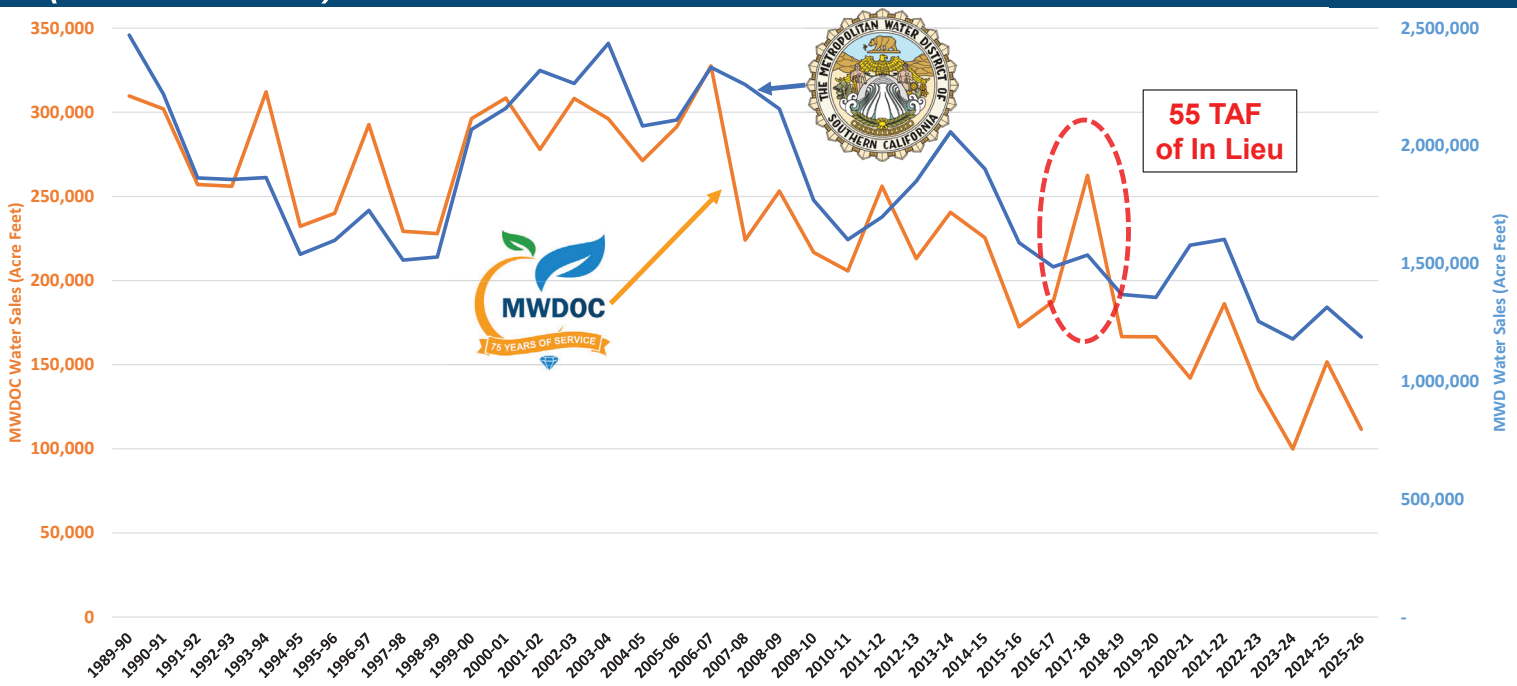
MWD Historical Water Sales *(Acre-Feet)*



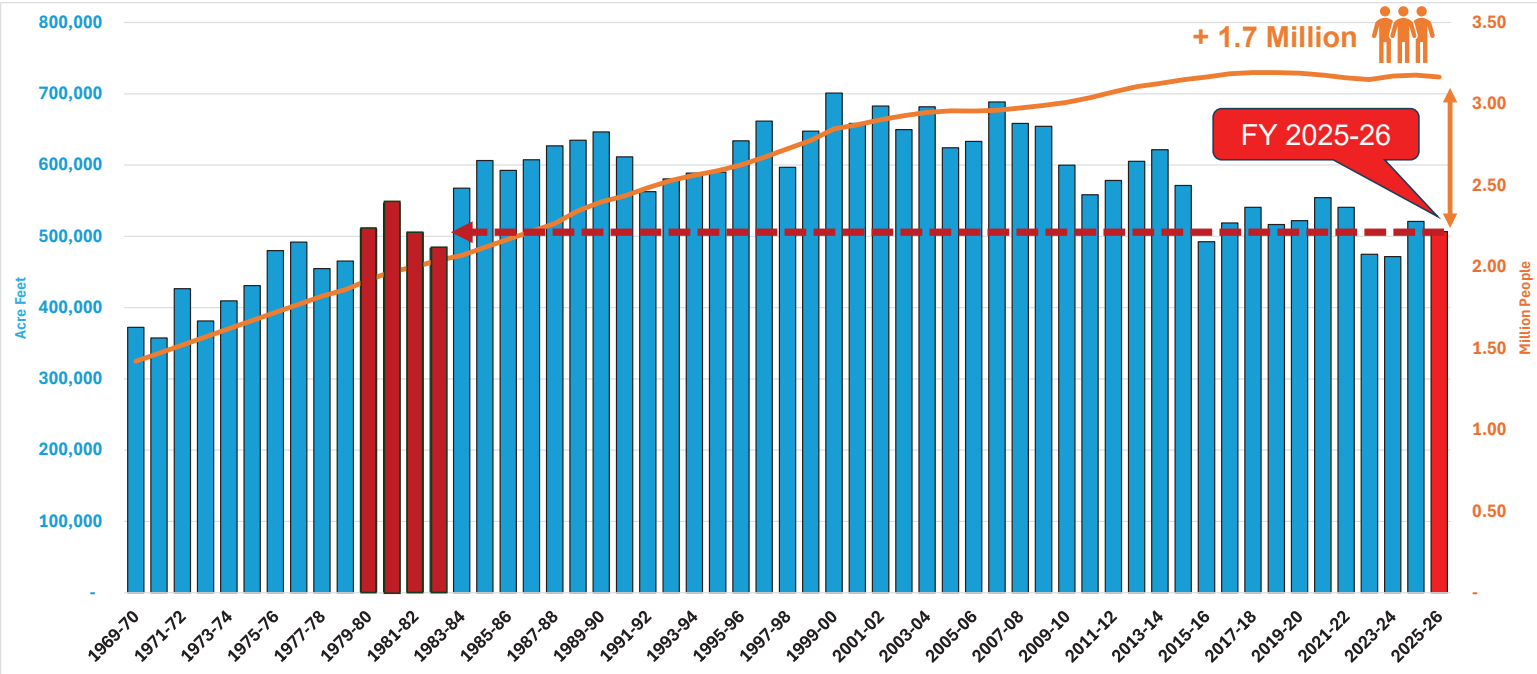
Population Growth vs. Metropolitan Imported Water Use



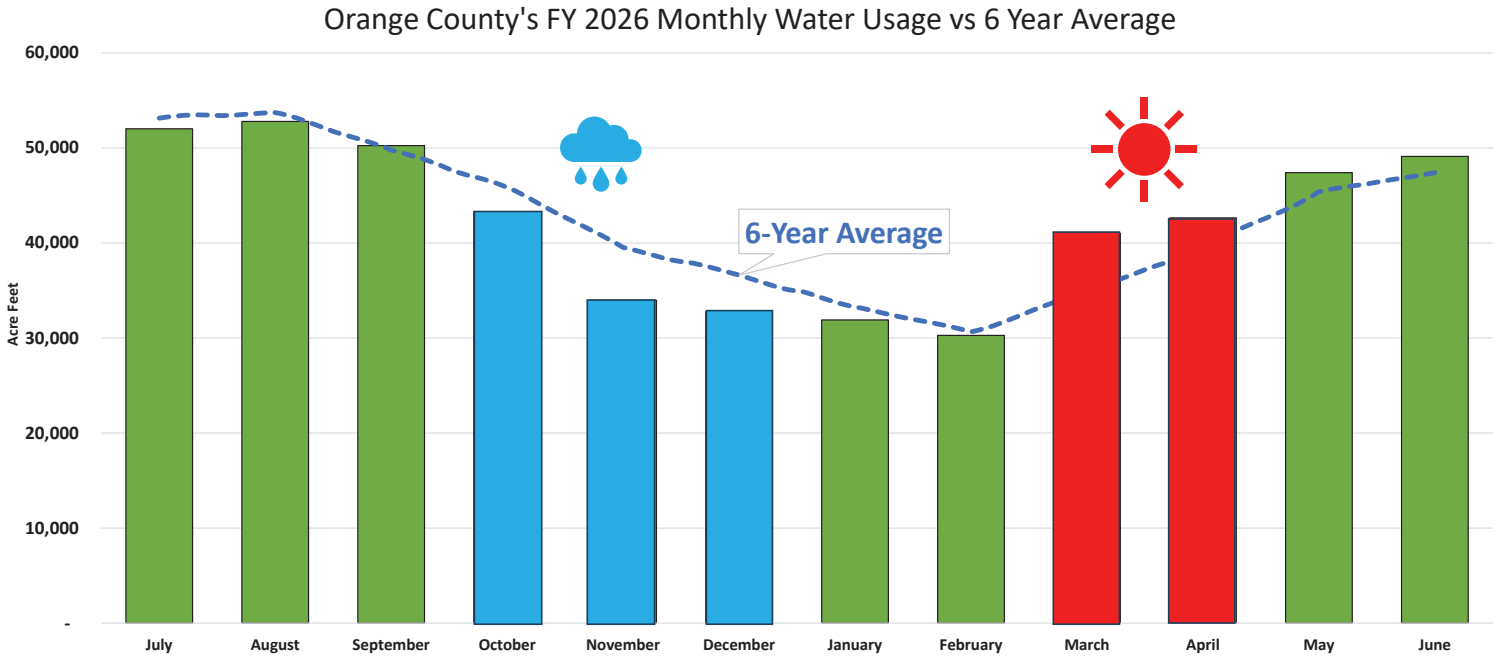
MWD Vs MWDOC Historical Water Sales *(Acre-Feet)*



Orange County M&I Usage vs Population Growth



Orange County M&I Monthly Usage





Questions?

Municipal Water District of Orange County
mwdoc.com

Item No. 2

ACTION ITEM
October 21, 2026

TO: **Board of Directors**

FROM: **Planning & Operations Committee**

Harvey De La Torre, General Manager

Staff Contact: Rachel Waite-Harvey, WUE Programs Manager
Beth Fahl, Senior Water Resources Analyst

SUBJECT: **AMENDMENT TO AGREEMENT WITH GARDENSOFT CORPORATION FOR THE ORANGE COUNTY WATER SMART GARDENS WEBSITE**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Board of Directors authorize an amendment to an agreement with GardenSoft Corporation to increase the not-to-exceed amount by $5,000 for a total revised not-to-exceed limit of $30,000 over five years ending May 31, 2029.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

(To be determined at Committee Meeting)

REPORT

Purpose

This item requests the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC or District) Board of Directors (Board or Director) authorize an amendment to the agreement with GardenSoft Corporation (GardenSoft) to increase the not-to-exceed amount by $5,000 for a total revised not-to-exceed limit of $30,000 over five years ending May 31, 2029. Funding is needed to bring the District's Orange County (OC) Water Smart Gardens website into compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, support compliance with Assembly Bill (AB) 1572, and fund additional improvements and site maintenance.

Background

At the May 15, 2019 meeting, the Board awarded a contract to GardenSoft to design and launch OC Water Smart Gardens, a customized, water-efficient landscape resources website that helps the public find water-saving solutions for their landscape needs. OC Water Smart Gardens is a standalone website linked from the District's main website. Funding was authorized for an initial start-up fee of $19,500 and $20,000 in annual fees ($4,000 per year over five years). Outside funding covered all costs and was sourced from our Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) Member Agency Administered (MAA) program funds allocation.

MWDOC is in its second agreement term with GardenSoft. GardenSoft was the sole respondent to the 2019 competitive bid process. In 2024, the General Manager awarded a Sole Source Agreement to GardenSoft pursuant to the Administrative Code to continue providing this online resource to the public.

The current agreement covers a five-year period ending May 31, 2029, and totals $25,000: $20,000 for annual fees ($4,000 per year over five years) and $5,000 for ongoing improvements and upgrades to keep pace with evolving water efficiency standards and regulations. Metropolitan MAA program funds have covered all costs under this term. Of the $5,000 allotted for ongoing improvements, $2,250 remains.

OC Water Smart Gardens supports MWDOC's landscape programs by providing local consumers with landscape information and tools. Key functions of the website include:

- A garden gallery with images organized by landscape category, each linked to a detail page for the selected plant;
- The ability to select and store plants in a list that the user can print for use when shopping at nurseries;
- A garden resources section with fact sheets on sustainable landscape fundamentals, water and soil management, composting, preventing runoff, and other related topics; and
- A watering calculator calibrated for local evapotranspiration data.

Discussion

Staff, in collaboration with MWDOC's Communications Team and Member Agencies, has identified the following upgrades to OC Water Smart Gardens:

- Upgrade the website to comply with ADA requirements ($1,000);
- Create a new landing page compiling resources to assist with AB 1572 compliance ($2,250); and
- Make ongoing improvements and additions to support Member Agencies and public compliance with water efficiency regulations (not exceed $4,000).

Bringing OC Water Smart Gardens into ADA compliance is estimated to cost $1,000. In April 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice updated its Title II ADA regulations, requiring that web content and mobile apps be accessible to people with disabilities. Special Districts must upgrade their websites to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Version 2.1, Level AA by April 26, 2028. Currently, OC Water Smart Gardens does not currently meet these standards and must be upgraded to meet the deadline.

The OC Landscape Program Advisory Committee (PAC), composed of MWDOC and MWDOC Member Agency staff, proposed creating a new landing page to support AB 1572, which prohibits the use of potable water to irrigate nonfunctional turfgrass at commercial, industrial, and institutional properties beginning January 1, 2028. The page would host relevant content for commercial landscapes and serve as a central resource for AB 1572 planning. This is estimated to cost $2,250.

The OC Landscape PAC has additionally discussed potential future upgrades to help MWDOC Member Agencies and the public comply with water efficiency regulations, such as the Making Conservation a California Way of Life regulations, and to improve functionality or integrate new education tools. Ongoing upgrades and improvements to OC Water Smart Gardens are essential to maintain its effectiveness as a resource for member agencies, landscape programs, and local consumers.

The existing contract has $2,250 remaining, which would fund the AB 1572 landing page. The requested $5,000 would fund ADA compliance ($1,000) and leave $4,000 available for future improvements through 2029. Funding would come entirely from Metropolitan's MAA Program. By proactively investing in upgrades, MWDOC ensures the OC Water Smart Gardens website remains accessible and current with water efficiency regulations.

Next Steps

Staff recommends the Board of Directors select Option #1 to authorize an amendment to an agreement with GardenSoft Corporation to increase the not-to-exceed amount by $5,000 for a total revised not-to-exceed limit of $30,000 over five years ending May 31, 2029.

If approved, staff will work with GardenSoft to align OC Water Smart Gardens with ADA requirements and to implement the new AB 1572 landing page. Discussions will continue with the Member Agencies through the OC Landscape PAC to design additional improvements that support water efficiency goals.

ALIGNMENT WITH BOARD STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

☐ *Clarifying MWDOC's mission and role; defining functions and actions.*
☒ *Balance support for Metropolitan's regional mission and OC values and interests.*
☒ *Strengthen communication and coordination of messaging.*
☐ *Work with Member Agencies to develop water supply and demand objectives.*
☒ *Solicit input and feedback from member agencies.*
☐ *Invest in workforce development and succession planning.*

BOARD OPTIONS

Option #1: Authorize an amendment to an agreement with GardenSoft Corporation to increase the not-to-exceed amount by $5,000 for a total revised not-to-exceed limit of $30,000 over five years ending May 31, 2029.

Fiscal Impact: Funding will be sourced entirely from outside funding through Metropolitan's Member Agency Administered funding allocation.

Option #2: Do not authorize an amendment to an agreement with GardenSoft Corporation.

Fiscal Impact: There is no fiscal impact to MWDOC; however, the OC Water Smart Gardens website would fail to comply with mandated ADA requirements.

Budgeted: ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A		Budgeted amount:
Core: ☐	Choice: ☒	Movement between Cost Centers: ☐ Yes ☒ No
Action item amount: $5,000		

Attachments/Links:
Link 1: OC Water Smart Gardens website https://www.ocwatersmartgardens.com

Item No. 3

ACTION ITEM
October 21, 2026

TO: **Board of Directors**

FROM: **Planning & Operations Committee**

Harvey De La Torre, General Manager

Staff Contact: Rachel Waite-Harvey, WUE Programs Manager

SUBJECT: **CALIFORNIA WATER EFFICIENCY PARTNERSHIP (CALWEP) DIRECT DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Board of Directors authorize the General Manager to enter into an agreement with the California Water Efficiency Partnership to participate in the Direct Distribution Program, which provides a customized high-efficiency irrigation equipment web store tailored for Orange County water users, at no cost to the District.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

(To be determined at Committee Meeting)

REPORT

Purpose

This item requests the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC or District) Board of Directors (Board or Director) authorize the General Manager to enter into an agreement with the California Water Efficiency Partnership (CalWEP) for the development and implementation of a public-facing high-efficiency irrigation web store, at no cost to the District.

Summary

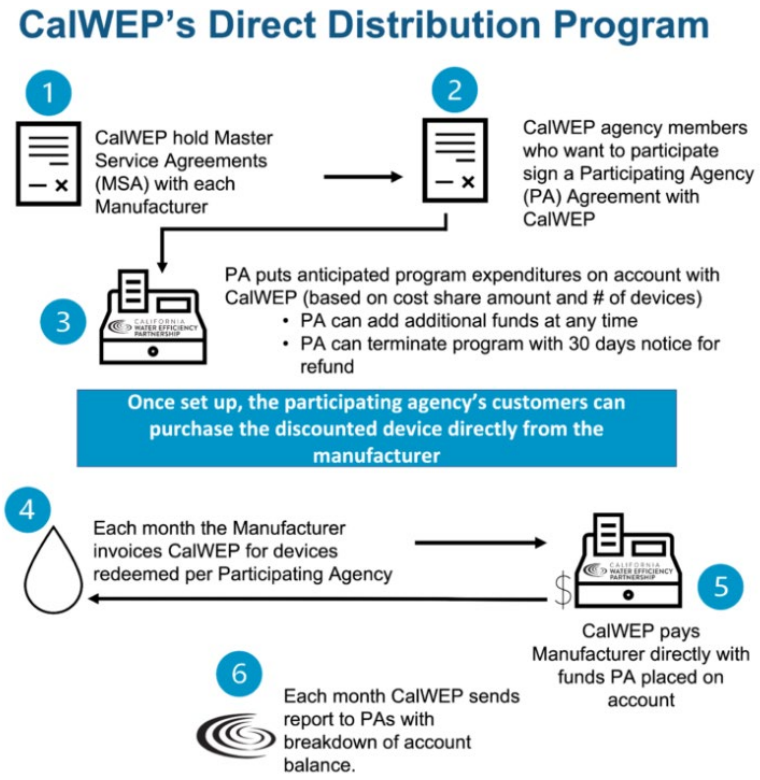
As a CalWEP member, MWDOC has access to a specialized web store that offers discounted, high-efficiency irrigation equipment to Orange County water users at no cost to the District. MWDOC provides a unique web store link and coupon code, allowing

Orange County residents and businesses to purchase water-saving equipment directly from the manufacturer at discounts of up to 50% with delivery to their location. Unlike traditional rebate programs, the discount is taken at the point of sale, making devices more accessible to customers.

Background

In 2025, CalWEP began offering its Direct Distribution Program, which provides CalWEP members with access to discounted, high-efficiency irrigation equipment. Customers of a participating agency can purchase equipment through a customized web store and receive point-of-sale discounts. Following a competitive bid process, CalWEP selected Rain Bird Corporation (Rain Bird) as the product manufacturer to supply the Direct Distribution Program.

The participating agency selects which irrigation products are available in the web store, ensuring the best options aligned with our water use efficiency goals are available. Offerings include smart controllers, sensors and flow meters, drip conversion kits, and high-efficiency spray bodies and nozzles. Customers receive discounted pricing and direct delivery. Rain Bird's online store processes all sales and shipping transactions.



Discussion

Through CalWEP's Direct Distribution Program, MWDOC would receive a District-branded web store that offers high-efficiency irrigation equipment to Orange County water users at point-of-sale discounts up to 50%. There is no cost to MWDOC to participate.

MWDOC, its Member Agencies, and the Cities of Anaheim, Fullerton, and Santa Ana (Three Cities) can promote the dedicated store link and provide a coupon code to customers. Promoting high-efficiency irrigation equipment directly aligns with MWDOC's water efficiency goals and complements existing landscape programs, such as the Turf Removal and Spray-to-Drip Rebate Programs.

The Direct Distribution Program's point-of-sale discount differs from traditional rebates, which require customers to purchase the product, submit an application, and wait to receive a rebate check in the mail. Because the discount is applied in the online shopping cart, it reduces upfront cost as a barrier to participation. Customers who purchase rebate-eligible equipment through the web store may also be eligible for a traditional rebate, up to their out-of-pocket expense.

Residential irrigation is a key category for many Orange County retailer water agencies to address within the Urban Water Use Objective component of the Making Conservation a California Way of Life regulations. The Direct Distribution Program provides another tool for MWDOC's Member Agencies and the Three Cities to achieve compliance.

Next Steps

Staff recommends the Board of Directors select Option #1 to authorize the General Manager to enter into an agreement with CalWEP to participate in the Direct Distribution Program, which provides a customized high-efficiency irrigation web store tailored for Orange County water users, at no cost to the District.

If approved, the General Manager will execute the agreement with CalWEP, and staff will receive the link to the customized MWDOC web store. Staff will coordinate with the Member Agencies and the Three Cities to promote the web store to interested customers. MWDOC will receive a monthly report summarizing activity, which staff will review to determine which products to offer. Staff will monitor the program and make adjustments as needed.

ALIGNMENT WITH BOARD STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- ☐ *Clarifying MWDOC's mission and role; defining functions and actions.*
- ☒ *Balance support for Metropolitan's regional mission and OC values and interests.*
- ☐ *Strengthen communication and coordination of messaging.*
- ☒ *Work with Member Agencies to develop water supply and demand objectives.*
- ☒ *Solicit input and feedback from member agencies.*
- ☐ *Invest in workforce development and succession planning.*

BOARD OPTIONS

Option #1: Authorize the General Manager to enter into an agreement with CalWEP to participate in the Direct Distribution Program, which provides a customized high-efficiency irrigation web store tailored for Orange County water users, at no cost to the District.

Fiscal Impact: Participation in the Direct Distribution Program has no fiscal impact on MWDOC.

Option #2: Do not authorize the General Manager to enter into an agreement with CalWEP for participation in the Direct Distribution Program.

Fiscal Impact: There is no fiscal impact to MWDOC; however, Orange County water users will miss the opportunity to purchase discounted irrigation equipment.

Budgeted: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A		Budgeted amount:
Core: ☐	Choice: ☒	Movement between Cost Centers: ☐ Yes ☒ No
Action item amount: $0		

Attachments/Links:
N/A

Item No. 4

INFORMATION ITEM
October 5, 2026

TO: **Planning & Operations Committee**

FROM: **Harvey De La Torre, General Manager**

Staff Contact: Damon Micalizzi, Director of Public Affairs

SUBJECT: **ORANGE COUNTY WATER SUMMIT RECAP**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning & Operations Committee receive and file the information.

REPORT

Purpose

This item and the accompanying oral report provide the Planning & Operations Committee with a recap of the 18th Annual Orange County Water Summit (Summit), held on Friday, September 25, 2026, at The Westin South Coast Plaza in Costa Mesa.

Background

The Summit is an annual water policy forum that brings together elected officials, water industry leaders, business executives, educators, and community stakeholders to discuss California water issues.

The Summit is a joint event of the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC or District) and the Orange County Water District (OCWD), with the lead agency alternating each year. MWDOC served as the lead agency for the 2026 Summit. The 2026 theme was “Flow Forward: Securing Water Supply Through Innovation.”

Discussion

The 2026 Summit drew 375 registrations and approximately 350 attendees. The program featured four moderated panel discussions covering the Colorado River, workforce development, long-term investment in California water, and the security of an increasingly connected water system. Charley Wilson, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Southern California Water Coalition, served as Master of

Ceremonies. Feedback at the event was overwhelmingly positive. All four sessions were well received, as was the live audience polling introduced this year, which allowed attendees to weigh in ahead of each panel and gave moderators a sense of audience views.

Sponsorships

Sponsorship commitments totaled $85,537, a record for the Summit. The year also brought in first-time sponsors and exhibitors, broadening support for future events.

Post-Event Survey

The post-event satisfaction survey remains open. As of September 28, 60 of the 116 attendees who opened the survey had submitted responses.

Favorable ratings are as follows:

- Overall satisfaction with the event (93%)
- Registration and check-in (98%)
- Venue (95%)
- Ballroom space (93%)
- Parking (91%)
- Master of Ceremonies (95%)
- Likelihood of attending future Summits (96%)

Session ratings were consistently strong:

- Recalibrating the River: The Colorado River at a Crossroads (88%)
- The Workforce Crisis No One Budgeted For: Why Talent Determines Water Reliability (81%)
- California's Water Future: Where Should We Invest Next? (86%)
- When Digital Becomes Physical: Protecting Water in the Age of Cyber, AI & Drones (78%)

Areas to Address

- **Session length.** Most respondents (68%) indicated the sessions ran too long. Written comments asked for more time for audience questions, better moderator handling of questions from the floor, and a break between sessions.
- **Food and beverage.** This drew the lowest favorable rating (70%). Audio and visual drew the second lowest (80%).
- **Entry and wayfinding.** Some guests entered through a door near the ballroom rather than the registration area. Public Affairs staff redirected them promptly. Staff will improve signage and door control next year.

- **Program content.** One respondent objected to the inclusion of a video message from a gubernatorial candidate.
- **Scheduling.** One respondent suggested moving the Summit to a Thursday, noting that some agencies operate on compressed work schedules and are closed on Fridays (e.g., four-tens).

Topics Requested for Future Summits

- Perspectives from the tribes along the Colorado River
- Artificial intelligence
- Emergency management
- The regulatory framework behind water policy

One respondent suggested a networking reception immediately following the Summit as a future sponsorship opportunity.

Next Steps

The survey will remain open through the coming weeks, and staff will report final results along with a financial accounting of the Summit. Staff will also debrief with OCWD, the lead agency for the 2027 Summit, and share this year's feedback, with particular attention to session length, time for audience questions, and a break in the program.

ALIGNMENT WITH BOARD STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

☒ *Clarifying MWDOC's mission and role; defining functions and actions.*
☐ *Balance support for Metropolitan's regional mission and OC values and interests.*
☒ *Strengthen communication and coordination of messaging.*
☐ *Work with Member Agencies to develop water supply and demand objectives.*
☒ *Solicit input and feedback from member agencies.*
☒ *Invest in workforce development and succession planning.*

Budgeted: ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A		Budgeted amount: $20,000
Core: ☒	Choice: ☐	Movement between Cost Centers: ☐ Yes ☒ No
Action item amount: N/A		

Attachments/Links:
Attachment 1: 2026 Orange County Water Summit Post-Event Survey Results (as of September 28, 2026)
Link 1: Orange County Water Summit, www.ocwatersummit.com

Constant Contact Survey Results

Campaign Name: 2026 Orange County Water Summit - Satisfaction Survey

Survey Starts: 116

Survey Submits: 60

Export Date: 09/28/2026 05:37 PM

NUMERIC SCALE

Overall Satisfaction With This Event

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
1 (Unfavorable)			0	0%
2			4	6%
3 (Favorable)			56	93%
Mean	2.93			
Median	3.00			
		Total Responses	**60**	**100%**

NUMERIC SCALE

Registration/Check-in

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
1 (Unfavorable)			0	0%
2			1	1%
3 (Favorable)			59	98%
Mean	2.98			
Median	3.00			
		Total Responses	**60**	**100%**

NUMERIC SCALE

Venue Location: Westin

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
1 (Unfavorable)			0	0%
2			3	5%
3 (Favorable)			57	95%
Mean	2.95			
Median	3.00			
		Total Responses	**60**	**100%**

NUMERIC SCALE

Parking

Answer Choice	0% 100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
1 (Unfavorable)		0	0%
2		5	8%
3 (Favorable)		55	91%
Mean	2.92		
Median	3.00		
	Total Responses	**60**	**100%**

NUMERIC SCALE

Ballroom Space

Answer Choice	0% 100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
1 (Unfavorable)		0	0%
2		4	6%
3 (Favorable)		56	93%
Mean	2.93		
Median	3.00		
	Total Responses	**60**	**100%**

NUMERIC SCALE

Food and Beverage

Answer Choice	0% 100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
1 (Unfavorable)		0	0%
2		18	30%
3 (Favorable)		42	70%
Mean	2.70		
Median	3.00		
	Total Responses	**60**	**100%**

NUMERIC SCALE

Audio/Visual

Answer Choice	0% 100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
1 (Unfavorable)		0	0%
2		12	20%
3 (Favorable)		48	80%
Mean	2.80		
Median	3.00		
	Total Responses	**60**	**100%**

OPEN QUESTION

Please provide any additional comments about the venue below.

It was a well-organized event.
Easy in. Easy out. Great venue.
There was a bit of confusion having some participants enter through a separate door, near the ballroom; however, the PA team was quick in guiding them back to the registration area. Overall the event seemed to be very well received.
11 Response(s)

NUMERIC SCALE

Master of Ceremonies - Charley Wilson

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
1 (Unfavorable)			0	0%
2			3	5%
3 (Favorable)			57	95%
Mean	2.95			
Median	3.00			
		Total Responses	**60**	**100%**

NUMERIC SCALE

Session 1: Recalibrating the River: The Colorado River at a Crossroads

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
1 (Unfavorable)			1	1%
2			6	10%
3 (Favorable)			53	88%
Mean	2.87			
Median	3.00			
		Total Responses	**60**	**100%**

NUMERIC SCALE

Session 2: The Workforce Crisis No One Budgeted For: Why Talent Determines Water Reliability

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
1 (Unfavorable)			0	0%
2			11	18%
3 (Favorable)			49	81%
Mean	2.82			
Median	3.00			
		Total Responses	**60**	**100%**

NUMERIC SCALE

Session 3: California’s Water Future: Where Should We Invest Next?

Answer Choice	0% 100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
1 (Unfavorable)		0	0%
2		8	13%
3 (Favorable)		52	86%
Mean	2.87		
Median	3.00		
	Total Responses	**60**	**100%**

NUMERIC SCALE

Session 4: When Digital Becomes Physical: Protecting Water in the Age of Cyber, AI & Drones

Answer Choice	0% 100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
1 (Unfavorable)		1	1%
2		12	20%
3 (Favorable)		47	78%
Mean	2.77		
Median	3.00		
	Total Responses	**60**	**100%**

NUMERIC SCALE

How would you rate the amount of time allocated for each session?

Answer Choice	0% 100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
1 (Too Short)		1	1%
2		18	30%
3 (Too Long)		41	68%
Mean	2.67		
Median	3.00		
	Total Responses	**60**	**100%**

OPEN QUESTION

Provide any comments about the sessions & speakers:

Great program. Emcee was entertaining and knowledgeable. Very engaging sessions. Not your typical PFAS, DCP, show.
Sessions are too long. Moderators need to do a better job of getting audience questions.
Please provide more Q&A time Need to provide a bio break between sessions
9 Response(s)

OPEN QUESTION

What topics or speakers would you like to see at future events?

More on AI. Want to hear from the tribes on the Colorado.
More about the regulatory basis maybe.
Emergency management.
8 Response(s)

NUMERIC SCALE

How likely are you to attend future OC Water Summit events?

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
1 (Unlikely)			0	0%
2			2	3%
3 (Likely)			58	96%
Mean	2.97			
Median	3.00			
		Total Responses	**60**	**100%**

OPEN QUESTION

Do you have ideas for future sponsorship opportunities?

Perhaps a networking event right after.
na
2 Response(s)

OPEN QUESTION

Do you have any suggestions for future OC Water Summit events or any additional comments you'd like to share?

Awkward at the beginning. Otherwise great event.
A video from one gubernatorial candidate seemed inappropriate.
Have OC Water Summit on THUs. Some agencies have 4-10s and do not work on FRIs.
7 Response(s)

Item No. 5

INFORMATION ITEM
October 5, 2026

TO: **Planning & Operations Committee**

FROM: **Harvey De La Torre, General Manager**

Staff Contact: Sarah Wilson, Principal Public Affairs Specialist

SUBJECT: **QUARTERLY K-12 CHOICE SCHOOL PROGRAMS UPDATE**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning & Operations Committee receive and file the information.

REPORT

Purpose

This item provides an update on the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC) K-12 Choice School Programs, including currently scheduled visits for the 2026-2027 school year, program participation, and overall program performance.

Discussion

MWDOC K-12 Choice School Program contractor, Orange County Department of Education's Inside the Outdoors (OCDE/ITO), is beginning to schedule live, interactive water education lessons for the 2026-2027 school year.

Attachment 1 outlines participation progress to date for the elementary, middle, and high school programs, including student reach and other program details such as teacher feedback, student experiences, photos, and more. All MWDOC K-12 Choice School Programs include hands-on activities and pre- and post-program learning opportunities. A snapshot of overall program performance is provided below:

Year-to-Date Participation

Grade Band	In-Person	Virtual	Students Reached
K-2	0	0	0
3-5	0	0	0

Grade Band	In-Person	Virtual	Students Reached
6-8	0	0	0
9-12	0	0	0
TOTAL PROGRAM	**0**	**0**	**0**

Upcoming Participation

Grade Band	In-Person	Virtual	Students Expected
K-2	8	0	175
3-5	16	0	1,285
6-8	11	0	303
9-12	5	0	125
TOTAL PROGRAM	**40**	**0**	**1,888**

Attachment 2 provides a three-month preview of scheduled school visits. The shared calendar is updated frequently and reflects the most current information available. Scheduled visits remain subject to change based on school and teacher availability. The calendar is updated regularly as new visits are confirmed.

The scheduling platform allows participating agencies to view visits within their respective service areas and receive email notifications when additional visits are added. For access to the complete calendar or to request notifications for the upcoming school year, please contact the Education & Workforce Development Division of the Public Affairs Department.

Next Steps

Staff and ITO will continue coordinating with schools to schedule K-12 Choice School Program sessions for the 2026-2027 school year and will update the shared calendar as new bookings occur. Staff will monitor participation levels and budget utilization closely and bring forward any overage requests as needed. Ongoing program evaluation, including teacher feedback and performance metrics, will inform future program planning and resource allocation.

ALIGNMENT WITH BOARD STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- ☒ *Clarifying MWDOC's mission and role; defining functions and actions.*
- ☒ *Balance support for Metropolitan's regional mission and OC values and interests.*
- ☒ *Strengthen communication and coordination of messaging.*
- ☐ *Work with Member Agencies to develop water supply and demand objectives.*
- ☒ *Solicit input and feedback from Member Agencies.*
- ☒ *Invest in workforce development and succession planning.*

Budgeted: ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A		Budgeted amount: $495,653
Core: ☐	Choice: ☒	Movement between Cost Centers: ☐ Yes ☒ No
Action item amount: N/A		

Attachments/Links:
Attachment 1: MWDOC K-12 Choice School Program Progress Report
Attachment 2: MWDOC K-12 Choice School Program Calendar of Visits (September-November 2026)
Link 1: MWDOC K-12 Choice School Program Overview www.mwdoc.com/school

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The MWDOC Choice K-12 School Programs build students' understanding of water, grade by grade, from kindergarten through high school. Delivered by the Orange County Department of Education's Inside the Outdoors (OCDE/ITO), the programs provide hands-on, standards-aligned learning experiences that connect students to real Orange County water issues while building environmental literacy, civic understanding, and career awareness. Each program includes an interactive experience led by an ITO educator, along with classroom lessons for teachers to implement before and after the visit. For a breakdown of each program, visit www.mwdoc.com/school.

COMPLETED PARTICIPATION TO DATE

Totals reflect sessions completed and students reached since the start of the 2026-27 school year.

Year-to-Date Participation

Grade Band	In-Person	Virtual	Students Reached
K-2	0	0	0
3-5	0	0	0
6-8	0	0	0
9-12	0	0	0
TOTAL PROGRAM	**0**	**0**	**0**

SCHEDULED PARTICIPATION

Upcoming Participation

Grade Band	In-Person	Virtual	Students Expected
K-2	8	0	175
3-5	16	0	1,285
6-8	11	0	303
9-12	5	0	125
TOTAL PROGRAM	**40**	**0**	**1,888**

PROGRAM REACH

Presentations have been completed in **0** participating agencies' service areas to date. Participating agencies select the grade bands (K–2, 3–5, 6–8, and/or 9–12) that best align with their individual needs and program priorities. Participation varies by grade band across agencies.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM DETAILS AND MEASUREMENTS

Program Interest

To date, Inside the Outdoors has received program inquiries from approximately **75** public, private, and charter schools in **14** participating agencies' service areas.

- City of Anaheim
- City of Brea
- City of Buena Park
- City of Fountain Valley
- City of Fullerton
- City of Garden Grove
- City of Huntington Beach
- City of La Habra
- City of San Clemente
- City of Santa Ana
- Santa Margarita Water District
- City of Tustin
- City of Westminster
- Yorba Linda Water District

Inside the Outdoors is working with schools to schedule programs on dates that work with the school calendars and complement school year curriculum.

Marketing & Recruitment

Inside the Outdoors has promoted the MWDOC K-12 Choice School Programs through targeted Constant Contact e-blasts, direct emails to past participants, district newsletters, a presentation at OCDE's September Teachers On Special Assignment (TOSA) Network meeting, and a dedicated Water Education webpage on ITO's new website. Constant Contact campaigns have reached **11,300** unique contacts, generating more than **3,800** opens and an average open rate of **38%**.

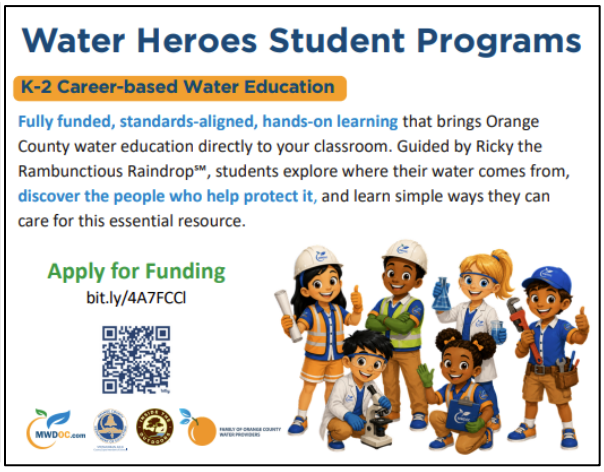
Upcoming recruitment activities include:

- A direct mail campaign featuring grade-specific postcards distributed to eligible schools using OCDE's interdistrict mail system.
- Flyer distribution through other Inside the Outdoors field trips and programs.

- Coverage of the new MWDOC Choice School Programs through OCDE's Newsroom.
- Continuing promotion through OCDE workshops, teacher networks, service-learning events, and other outreach opportunities.
- Targeted phone calls and in-person outreach to eligible schools.
- Specific promotion to charter and private schools where eligible.

These ongoing efforts are designed to expand awareness of the new programs and support participation among eligible schools throughout participating water providers' service areas.





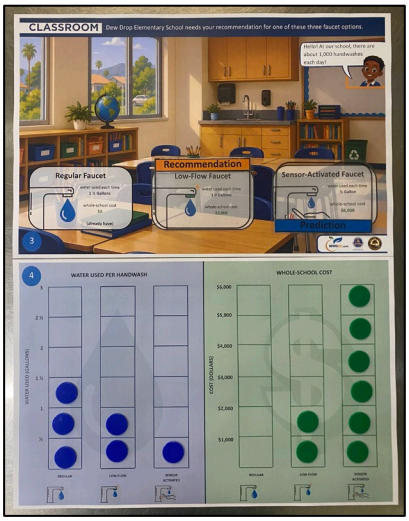
Launching the New K-12 Water Education Programs

Inside the Outdoors and MWDOC have collaborated closely on the development of the new K–12 programs for the 2026–2027 school year. In September, all ITO educators completed training on the new programs and materials, preparing the team for classroom implementation.

The new MWDOC Choice School Programs build students' understanding of Orange County's water systems from kindergarten through high school through hands-on investigations of age-appropriate, local water challenges.



Inside the Outdoors educators training to teach the Wonders of Water program for 7th and 8th grade.



New student materials for the 3rd grade Drip Drop Assembly program ask students to evaluate technology for saving water.

Key enhancements include:

- **Water career exploration at every grade level**, introducing students to the people and professions that keep Orange County's water systems running.
- **Greater visibility for participating water providers**, including agency recognition in program slideshows and family-facing materials.
- **A vertically aligned K–12 progression of local water challenges**, from saving water at home and designing water-wise school gardens in elementary grades to investigating regional water decisions and tradeoffs in middle and high school.

With curriculum development and ITO educator training complete, the new programs are ready for implementation during the 2026–2027 school year.

ITO and MWDOC will continue to refine program materials based on educator feedback and student learning data.

MWDOC K-12 Choice School Program

MWDOC School Programs

Calendars

- City of Anaheim
- City of Brea
- City of Buena Park
- City of Fountain Valley
- City of Fullerton
- City of Garden Grove
- City of Huntington Beach
- City of La Habra
- City of La Palma
- City of Orange
- City of San Clemente
- City of Santa Ana
- City of Seal Beach
- City of Tustin
- City of Westminster
- East Orange County Wate...
- El Toro Water District
- Moulton Niguel Water Dist...
- Santa Margarita Water Dis...
- Serrano Water District
- Trabuco Canyon Water Di...
- Yorba Linda Water District

October 2026

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
40	Sep 27, 2026	28	29	30	Oct 1	2	3
41	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
42	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
43	18	19	20	21	22 Paine School (6-8)	23	24
44	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Pacific Time US & Ca

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MWDOC K-12 Choice School Program

MWDOC School Programs

Calendars

- City of Anaheim
- City of Brea
- City of Buena Park
- City of Fountain Valley
- City of Fullerton
- City of Garden Grove
- City of Huntington Beach
- City of La Habra
- City of La Palma
- City of Orange
- City of San Clemente
- City of Santa Ana
- City of Seal Beach
- City of Tustin
- City of Westminster
- East Orange County Wate...
- El Toro Water District
- Moulton Niguel Water Dist...
- Santa Margarita Water Dis...
- Serrano Water District
- Trabuco Canyon Water Di...
- Yorba Linda Water District

November 2026

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
45	Nov 1, 2026	2	3	4	5	6	7
46	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
47	15	16 Fern Drive (3-5)	17	18	19	20 Arbolita School (6-8 Carrillo School (3-5	21
48	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
49	29	30	Dec 1	2	3	4 Cook School (6-8)	5

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MWDOC K-12 Choice School Program

MWDOC School Programs

Calendars

- City of Anaheim
- City of Brea
- City of Buena Park
- City of Fountain Valley
- City of Fullerton
- City of Garden Grove
- City of Huntington Beach
- City of La Habra
- City of La Palma
- City of Orange
- City of San Clemente
- City of Santa Ana
- City of Seal Beach
- City of Tustin
- City of Westminster
- East Orange County Wate...
- El Toro Water District
- Moulton Niguel Water Dist...
- Santa Margarita Water Dis...
- Serrano Water District
- Trabuco Canyon Water Di...
- Yorba Linda Water District

December 2026

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
49	Nov 29, 2026	30	Dec 1	2	3	4 Cook School (6-8)	5
50	6	7	8 St. Jeanne de Lesto	9	10	11 Heninger School (3-	12
51	13	14 Topz School (6-8)	15	16	17	18	19
52	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
1	27	28	29	30	31	Jan 1	2

Pacific Time US & Ca Powered by

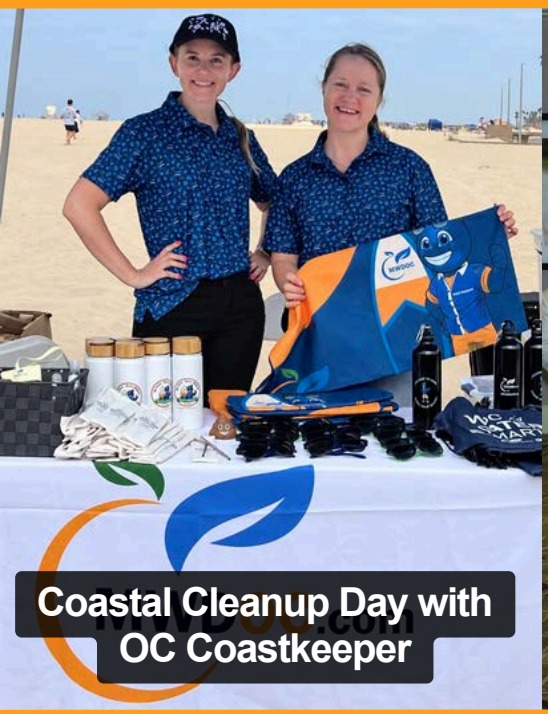
Public Affairs Department: Activity Highlights



18th Annual OC Water Summit Co-Hosted with OCWD



Inside the Outdoors Educator Training



Coastal Cleanup Day with OC Coastkeeper



OC Water Summit: NextGen Sponsored Student Participation



State Water Project Inspection Trip with Director Seckel



8.05% Social Media Engagement Rate

September 1-28, 2026. View this PDF online at: go.mwdoc.com/PAActivities

Engineering & Planning

Geographic Information System (GIS) Implementation

At its May 20 meeting, the Board awarded Hazen and Sawyer (Hazen) a 1-year contract to provide Geographic Information System (GIS) implementation assistance and authorized the General Manager to execute the contract, with the option for an additional 1-year renewal. The project kicked off in mid-June 2026.

Staff is working with Hazen to develop a draft GIS governance structure to align GIS activities with organizational goals, define roles and responsibilities, and establish policies and standards. Hazen is also preparing the Scope of Work for creation of the Water Emergency Response Organization of Orange County (WEROC) Common Operating Picture (Information-Sharing Platform).

Lead and Copper Rule Improvements Shared Services Program

A survey of MWDOC Member Agencies conducted in late May indicated a desire from at least 10 agencies for MWDOC to assist them with certain aspects of the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI) through a Shared Services Program, similar to the technical assistance provided under the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR) Shared Services Program completed in October 2024.

Under the LCRI, water systems will be required to develop and submit a baseline service line inventory, due by November 1, 2027. The baseline inventory introduces several additions and stricter reporting requirements compared to the initial October 2024 service line inventory. Water systems must identify all service line connectors (pigtails, goosenecks) and categorize them as non-lead, lead, unknown, or no connector present. Water systems must also implement state-approved methods to validate the classification of service lines previously designated as “non-lead” that are not based solely on physical visual inspection. An annual inventory update is also required after 2027.

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) approved the adoption of emergency regulations for the federal LCRI into the California Code of Regulations on August 19, 2026, thereby reaffirming Division of Drinking Water (DDW) as the state’s primacy agency. In late August 2026, DDW released Frequently Asked Questions answering questions from its June 2026 Staff-Led Workshop. The United States Environmental Protection Agency’s (USEPA) also released two brief guidance documents in mid-August 2026 to support water systems preparing for the November 1, 2027 LCRI deadline. MWDOC staff also met with DDW staff to discuss a customized DDW-approved approach to LCRI compliance.

Given the compressed timeline for the LCRI inventory, similar to the experience with the LCRR initial inventory guidance release and submission deadline, MWDOC staff are actively working to organize and communicate the components of a shared services program to potential participating agencies. Phase I will focus on LCRI inventory submittal and evaluation of eligibility for a non-lead

validation study waiver. Staff will then bring an action item to the Board for approval, including a defined Scope of Work for the LCRI Shared Services Program that aligns with the needs of our member agencies.

Upcoming Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) Shutdowns

Metropolitan staff are actively planning for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-27 shutdown season. MWDOC staff are currently coordinating with Metropolitan and affected agencies for the following shutdown events:

- **Lake Mathews and Santiago Lateral:** A 10-day shutdown of Santiago Lateral to accommodate a shutdown of Lake Mathews and portions of the Lower Feeder is planned for early December 2026.

- **Allen McColloch Pipeline (AMP):** A 7 to 10-day shutdown of the AMP for Metropolitan to inspect the remaining seven miles of unlined Prestressed Concrete Cylinder Pipeline (PCCP) to assess its condition to assist with planning of future PCCP rehabilitation of the remaining unlined reaches of the AMP is planned for late January 2027 through early February 2027. A partial shutdown of service connection OC-88 on the AMP to complete electrical work is planned for this same period.

- **Orange County Feeder:** A 6-day shutdown of the OC Feeder to conduct valve replacement at service connection A-02 is planned for late February through early March 2027.

- **Second Lower Feeder:** A 10-day shutdown of a portion of the Second Lower Feeder for PCCP inspection to assess its condition is planned for late February through early March 2027.

Staff will continue to collaborate with Metropolitan and our Member Agencies on shutdowns and other operational issues as they arise.

Water Emergency Response Organization of Orange County

Incidents/Events – September

(Incident/events listed below only include Water Emergency Response Organization of Orange County (WEROC) involvement. Events and incidents happen every day, but may not require reporting or coordination with WEROC.)

Cyber Incident Coordination (1 incident)
Gibby Fire
Hurricane Marie and Coastal Erosion Event

WEROC Member Agency Planning, Coordination, and Program Efforts

America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) Compliance
In September, Herndon Solutions Group (HSG) conducted six Emergency Response Plan (ERP) revision workshops with Tier 3 agencies. The WEROC team participated in the meetings, providing technical support and coordination assistance to member agencies.

The WEROC team continues to provide assistance and coordination throughout the planning process, as needed, to support successful completion of the project.

Cybersecurity & OCIAC Partnership
On September 21, WEROC hosted a Cybersecurity Working Group. There were 21 attendees. The Orange County Intelligence Assessment Center (OCIAC) briefed attendees on its roles and capabilities, provided a cyber threat briefing focused on water and wastewater systems, and emphasized its strong relationship with WEROC. A Member Agency also presented its data consolidation project. In addition, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) briefed attendees on its roles and capabilities and discussed how it can support WEROC and its Member Agencies. The meeting included an open and productive discussion on cyber threats and mitigation strategies. Thevin presented the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Platform, which uses Microsoft 365 SharePoint and Teams to support information sharing and collaboration. Attendees provided feedback to continue improving the SharePoint site.

WEROC is also coordinating with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) to identify opportunities for no-cost physical and cybersecurity assessments of Member Agency facilities and systems.

The agenda included the following topics and presentations:
- Threat Briefing presented by the OCIAC
- Data Consolidation Project presented by Moulton Niguel Water District Recent Event
- Ongoing CA Water Districts Campaign

- Cyber threat actor (CTA) targeting remotely accessible Programmable Logic Controllers (PLCs)
- Distributed Denial of Service (DDOS) attack against Everbridge
- Plans and Programs
- Cybersecurity Information Sharing Platform (Teams/SharePoint Presentation)
- Training, Planning and Exercises
- Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercises - ongoing education for water/wastewater representatives

Super El Niño 2026 Outlook and Preparedness
California continues to prepare for potential impacts associated with the Super El Niño outlook for the 2026–27 winter season, including periods of heavy rainfall, flooding, coastal impacts, erosion, debris flows, power disruptions, and impacts to critical infrastructure. WEROC continues to coordinate preparedness efforts with Orange County water and wastewater agencies, emphasizing continuity of operations, flood and erosion vulnerabilities, backup power and fuel, debris-flow risks, emergency contracting, mutual aid, and resource needs.

On September 21 Governor Gavin Newsom proclaimed a State of Emergency to support statewide El Niño preparedness. The proclamation includes specific orders directing and authorizing state actions intended to strengthen preparedness, expedite protective measures, and support coordination ahead of anticipated winter weather.

Following issuance of the State of Emergency, WEROC reviewed and analyzed the proclamation and its orders and distributed guidance to the Orange County water and wastewater community outlining key provisions, agency considerations, and recommended preparedness actions. The guidance also emphasized documenting preparedness and emergency protective measures, including staff time, equipment use, contracts, purchases, photographs, and work performed.

WEROC will continue monitoring the outlook and coordinating with Member Agencies and regional partners as winter preparedness efforts progress.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Readiness
The Mobile Command Vehicle (MCV) is continually maintained to ensure connectivity, functionality, and interoperable capabilities. These ongoing testing protocols ensure the MCV mutual aid resource remains in a state of readiness for rapid deployment.

The Peter’s Canyon logistics facility continues to undergo regular maintenance inspections and remains pest-free.

Regional Fuel Planning Project
On September 16, the Board of Directors awarded Merrimac Petroleum, Inc., doing business as Merrimac Energy Group, a one-year agreement with the option for four additional one-year renewals, to provide emergency fuel supply delivery and support services on an as-needed basis and authorized the General Manager to execute the agreement.

WEROC continued discussions regarding operational protocols and Fuel Points of Distribution (FPODs) with our Member Agencies to support regional fuel readiness and continuity of operations.

Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) and Stakeholder Preparedness Review (SPR)
The WEROC team participated in the initial survey of the annual THIRA/SPR review led by the Anaheim-Santa Ana Urban Area group. This review is a requirement to be eligible for critical grant programs in which the region participates with the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI).

The THIRA examines the region's threats and hazards, resulting in capability targets, while the SPR assesses the current ability to achieve those targets by identifying capability gaps and evaluating the impact of recent grant funding.

Next steps include fall workshops focused on the identified core capabilities: Infrastructure Systems (Water, Sanitation, Power, and Communications) and Cybersecurity and Intelligence.

Presentations, Training, and Exercises
Trainings/Exercises:
September 8: Monthly Operational Area Tests (Radio, WebEOC, AlertOC)
September 9: South Coast Water District Earthquake/El Niño Tabletop Exercise (Vicki)
September 9: Monthly WEROC Radio Test
September 16: G191 Incident Command System (ICS)/Emergency Operations Center Interface Training Class (Vicki)

Presentations:
Miriam and Thevin collaborated with Public Affairs to create two videos highlighting Disaster Preparedness Month. The videos focus on the importance of having an emergency kit and developing a family communication plan. Miriam's video was presented in both English and Spanish to help reach and inform a broader audience.

Operational Area, State, Federal, and other partner Meetings/Projects
(Specific details can be provided as requested by the Board of Directors, WEROC Radio)

September 1: California Office of Emergency Service (CalOES) Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) Mutual Aid Sub-Committee
September 2: American Water Works Association (AWWA) Water Infrastructure Conference
September 2: Meeting with the Orange County Intelligence Center (OCIAC) and Moulton Niguel Water District in regards to infrastructure
September 2: California Emergency Services Association (CESA) - Southern Chapter Board Meeting
September 3: Orange County Emergency Managers Organization (OCEMO) Meeting
September 14: CalWARN Leadership Working Group Meeting
September 14: City of Huntington Beach Tabletop Exercise Planning Meeting
September 15: Southern California Critical Lifelines Working Group Meeting
September 15: American Water Works Association (AWWA) Security and Emergency Management Committee Meeting
September 15: Southwestern California El Niño Briefing from the National Weather Service
September 17: MWDOC Managers Meeting
September 18: National Water Agency Response Network (WARN) Meeting
September 18: State of Orange County Sanitation District Presentation and Luncheon
September 25: Orange County Summit
September 25: CESA State Board Meeting
September 29: Southwestern California El Niño Briefing

County Operational Area Emergency Operations Center Open House
Miriam and Thevin attended the Orange County Sheriff's Department Emergency Management Division EOC Open House, an interactive "walking tabletop" designed to familiarize EOC responders with the facility, available resources, and operational workflows used during an activation.

The training provided Miriam and Thevin with practical exposure to EOC section responsibilities, cross-functional coordination, development of an EOC Action Plan, and the Public Information Hotline. They also participated in a facility orientation and guided tour and observed the annual AlertOC Regional Test. Their participation provided a valuable opportunity to strengthen their understanding of Operational Area EOC operations and coordination with partner agencies.

Operational Area Plans reviewed this month: None

Water Use Efficiency

Monthly Rebate Activity

Turf Replacement: This month, 216,818 square feet of turfgrass were converted to Orange County-friendly landscapes across 30 projects. To date, approximately 32 million square feet of turfgrass have been replaced.

New Trees: This month, 46 trees were planted as part of Turf Replacement projects. Since March 2024, the program has incentivized the planting of 1,147 trees.

Spray-to-Drip: This month, 566,790 square feet of irrigated area were converted to drip irrigation across 31 projects. To date, approximately 7.1 million square feet of landscaped area have been converted from traditional spray to drip irrigation.

Landscape Design: This month, 6 professionally created landscape designs were rebated. To date, 1,220 landscape design and/or landscape maintenance packages have been incentivized to support turf replacement projects.

Smart Timer Rebate: This month, 49 smart irrigation timers were installed. To date, 36,769 smart timers have been installed through this program.

High-Efficiency Sprinkler Nozzles: This month, 105 high-efficiency rotating nozzles were installed to replace traditional spray nozzles. To date, 587,714 nozzles have been installed through this program.

Rain Barrels: This month, 0 rain barrels were installed in Orange County. To date, 9,115 rain barrels have been installed through this program.

High-Efficiency Clothes Washers: This month, 25 high-efficiency clothes washers were installed instead of lower-efficiency models. To date, 132,017 high-efficiency clothes washers have been incentivized.

High-Efficiency Toilets: This month, 0 residential premium high-efficiency toilets were incentivized. To date, 62,037 high-efficiency toilets have been installed through this program.

Flow-Monitoring Devices: This month, 2 residential flow-monitoring devices were installed. To date, 1,166 flow-monitoring devices have been incentivized. More than 3,300 verified flow-monitoring devices have been installed in Orange County; however, not all were processed through the rebate program.

Commercial Devices: This month, 0 commercial devices were installed. To date, 119,834 high-efficiency devices (e.g., plumbing fixtures, ice machines, cooling tower conductivity controllers) have been installed at commercial properties through this program.

Water Savings Incentive Program (WSIP): This month, no properties completed a customized water-savings upgrade through the program. To date, 53 customized projects have been completed.

Recycled Water Retrofit Program: This month, no commercial/industrial water users completed customer-side recycled water retrofits through the program. To date, 196 sites irrigating a total of 1,815 acres of landscape have been converted from potable to recycled water.

California Assembly Bill (AB) 1572 Nonfunctional Turf

The following activity occurred related to AB 1572, the potable irrigation ban of commercial nonfunctional turfgrass.

- On September 8, Rachel Waite-Harvey and Sam met with City of Huntington Beach staff to discuss the regulation and what steps were needed for compliance.
- On September 9, Sam met with City of La Palma staff to discuss the regulation, the shared services MWDOC has available for support, and next steps for compliance.
- On September 24, Rachel Waite-Harvey presented to Seabreeze management company, covering an overview of AB 1572, functional and nonfunctional turfgrass, Homeowners Association (HOA)-related specifics, and resources to help their clients with compliance.

Making Conservation a California Way of Life Framework

The following activity occurred relating to the Making Conservation a California Way of Life Framework (Way of Life Framework), which requires urban water suppliers to 1) meet a supplier-level volumetric water budget based on state standards; 2) adhere to non-volumetric objectives; and 3) complete annual reporting.

Retailer Technical Assistance Support

Between August 28 and September 23, the following activity occurred for the Way of Life Framework Technical Assistance Program (Framework TAP):

- On September 2, Rachel Waite-Harvey and Sam met with Environmental Incentives (EI) and City of Westminster staff to begin work on the City's AB 1572 compliance requirements.
- On September 2, Rachel Waite-Harvey and Sam met with EI and City of Buena Park staff to discuss the development of the City's Urban Water Use Objective (UWUO) Compliance Plan.
- On September 3, Rachel Waite-Harvey and Sam met with EI to provide feedback on the draft UWUO Compliance Plan for Laguna Beach County Water District.
- On September 8, Sam met with EI and City of Fullerton staff to begin work on the City's AB 1572 compliance requirements.
- On September 9, Sam met with EI and Trabuco Canyon Water District staff to begin work on the District's AB 1572 compliance requirements.
- On September 16, EI met with City of La Palma staff to begin work on the City's AB 1572 compliance requirements.

OC Water Use Efficiency Coordinator Work Group Meeting

On September 3, Rachel Rachel Waite-Harvey, Sam, Cristal, and Ellie hosted the Orange County Water Use Efficiency Coordinator Work Group via Zoom.
Topics discussed included:

- Colorado River Update Presentation
- Making Conservation a California Way of Life Framework
    - Upcoming Deadlines
    - MWDOC Choice Consultant Services
- AB 1572 / Nonfunctional Turf
    - Commercial and HOA Outreach Material
- Clarifying AB1572 and UWUO Requirements
- Orange County Golf and Water Task Force

The meeting was attended by approximately 38 Member Agencies and city representatives. The next Water Use Efficiency Coordinator Work Group meeting is scheduled to be held in person on October 1.

California Data Collaborative (CaDC)

California Water Data Summit Planning Committee Meeting
On September 3, Cassidy attended the final CaDC California Water Data Summit Planning Committee meeting of 2026. The meeting served as a post-event debrief, gathering feedback from Summit volunteers to identify improvements for future events.

Orange County Data Acquisition Partnership (OCDAP) Steering and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) Meeting

On September 8, Cassidy attended the OCDAP STAC meeting. The working group collaborates on a regional effort to cost-share the acquisition of high-resolution aerial imagery and related products, and to plan the Orange County Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Users Meetings. Discussion reviewed EagleView's deliverables for the 2026 Cycle #3 imagery capture and agency logistics for ordering physical image copies.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 13.

California Water Efficiency Partnership (CalWEP) and Alliance for Water Efficiency (AWE)

CalWEP Fall Plenary
On September 10, Rachel Waite-Harvey attended the CalWEP Fall Plenary hosted by Western Water District. Topics discussed included varying perspectives and approaches to AB 1572, a live demonstration of the upcoming landscape maintenance application created by CalWEP, and insights from research on direct installation water efficiency programs.

CalWEP Landscape Taskforce
On September 15, Tina attended the CalWEP Landscape Taskforce meeting. Agenda topics included Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's (Metropolitan) new Landscaping

After a Fire resource, recommended updates to CalWEP's Tree Health flyer, and discussion on safe plant selections for HOAs.

CalWEP Research and Evaluation (R&E) Committee
On September 23, Rachel Waite-Harvey co-hosted the R&E Committee meeting. Topics included a presentation by AWE on their recently released cooling tower guide and an interactive presentation on commercial, industrial, and institutional best management practices required by the Way of Life Framework.

AWE Water Efficiency Research Committee (WERC)
On September 8, Rachel Waite-Harvey joined the AWE WERC committee meeting. Topics discussed included water conservation activities and updates on AWE's newest tools, the Turf Trade Tool and the Landscape Lifecycle Analysis Tool, both of which help assess landscape water efficiency efforts.

AWE WERC Climate Change Task Force
On September 17, Rachel Waite-Harvey joined the WERC Climate Change Task Force, which is currently focused on progressing work completed by the CalWEP Unintended Consequences of Turf Removal Task Force, through a climate change lens. Plans include tools to evaluate landscape benefit trade-offs and other materials to help decision makers make informed decisions.

AWE Education and Outreach Meeting
On September 22, Tina attended AWE's Education and Outreach Committee Meeting. Agenda topics included AWE's Symposium recap, new AWE tools and resources, and training and certification programs for both internal staff and the public/customers.

Metropolitan

Water Use Efficiency Workgroup Meeting
On September 17, Water Use Efficiency and Water Loss Control staff joined the monthly Metropolitan Water Use Efficiency Workgroup meeting, attended by Metropolitan Member Agencies, to receive updates and discuss relevant topics. Agenda topics included Metropolitan Board recaps, conservation program updates, and presentations on a native plant spotlight and the Community Partnering Program by Metropolitan staff.

Other

Launching the Initiative to Streamline Water Data Reporting: A New Approach to Water Data Reporting Webinar
On September 3, Cassidy and Rachel Davis attended Launching the Initiative to Streamline Water Data Reporting: A New Approach to Water Data Reporting, a webinar presented by the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA). Representatives from CalWEP, CaDC, and the California Water Data Consortium introduced the Initiative's vision to connect existing efforts, eliminate redundant reporting, and build a coordinated data framework in which information collected once can serve multiple purposes.

City of Orange Interview Panel
On September 16, Rachel Waite-Harvey served as an interview panelist for the City of Orange Water Utility Analyst position, which will serve in a water use efficiency focused capacity.

Water Loss Control

California-Nevada American Water Works Association (CA-NV AWWA) Water Loss Control Committee

On September 22, Rachel Davis organized and hosted, and Cassidy attended, Beyond the Surface: Modern Leak Detection Methods for Water Utilities, a webinar and panel discussion presented by the CA-NV AWWA Water Loss Control Committee, which Rachel chairs. The program provided a practical overview of the most common leak detection methods water utilities use to proactively identify and locate leaks before they become visible or cause main failures. Participants will learn the strengths, limitations, and best applications of acoustic leak detection, correlators, noise loggers, ground microphones, and emerging technologies. The webinar also covered survey planning, field best practices, factors that affect leak detection success, and how utilities can use leak detection as part of a comprehensive water loss control strategy. Over 70 attendees from various water agencies and consulting firms attended the webinar.

Orange County Water Loss Control Work Group

On September 8, Rachel Davis hosted the Orange County Water Loss Control Work Group on Zoom. Items on the agenda included:

- Welcome/Introductions and Water Loss Regulatory Updates
- MWDOC Updates
    - Validation reminder
    - Philanthropic grant
    - Source meter and pump efficiency testing
- Source Meter Testing and Calibration Overview
    - Best practices and things to keep in mind
- Water Loss Timeline Overview
- Questions and Open Discussion

The meeting was attended by 34 Member Agencies and three City representatives. The next Water Loss Control Work Group meeting is scheduled to be held in person on November 10.

California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Water Loss Webinar

On September 17, Rachel Davis and Hugo presented at the monthly DWR Water Loss Webinar on Zoom. The presentation was titled “Boots on the Ground: Seven Years of Leak Detection Across Orange County” and highlighted field observations, lessons learned, common challenges, and examples of both successes and struggles that have helped shape the program. The presentation also discussed how technician experience, persistence, and continuous refinement of field practices have improved leak identification rates and survey efficiency over time. Approximately 85 water agency staff and consultants attended the presentation from across California.

Leak Detection

Water Loss Control Technicians Hugo, Willie, and Trent completed a Distribution System Leak Detection Survey in Fountain Valley. They are currently working on Surveys in Huntington Beach and Buena Park. The technicians also completed a Suspected Leak Investigation in Westminster.

Water Loss Audit Validations

On September 21, Cassidy validated the Water Loss Audit for the City of Huntington Beach. Cassidy and Rachel Davis are AWWA-certified Water Audit Validators and are responsible for validating 25 audits this year. They have been working with MWDOC Member Agencies and the Cities of Anaheim, Fullerton, and Santa Ana to validate their Water Audits, as required by Senate Bill 555 and the Making California a Way of Life Framework. Each validation includes a two-hour meeting with the retail agency to review their audit inputs, as well as the completion of the validation certificate and report. This work will continue through December 2026.

Public & Government Affairs

Member Agency Support:

Public Affairs Staff:

- Met virtually with Irvine Ranch Water District staff to coordinate a Seed Center display in the Audubon House at the San Joaquin Marsh.
- Delivered Seed Center materials to Irvine Ranch Water District for them to set up a display at the Audubon House.
- Hosted an inspection trip of the State Water Project and Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's (Metropolitan) Delta Islands September 18-19.

Government Affairs Staff:

- Circulated the monthly Grants Tracking and Acquisition Report.
- Met with Mesa Water District staff to review Metropolitan's Rate Structure (Readiness to Serve & Capacity Charges).

Community and Special Events:

Public Affairs Staff:

- Prepared, hosted, and coordinated the 2026 Orange County Water Summit at the Westin South Coast Plaza on September 25 for over 320 attendees.
- Prepared and sent the final invitation for the Orange County Water Summit.
- Prepared and distributed the Orange County Water Summit Satisfaction Survey.
- Hosted the Orange County Water Summit Speakers Dinner.
- Hosted a booth at the Coastal Cleanup Day in Huntington Beach.

Government Affairs Staff:

- Met with staff from Orange County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to review our agreement with Mission Conservation Service District who provide pre- and post- turf rebate installation inspection services for the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC).
- Attended the Association of California Cities – Orange County (ACC-OC) Legislative and Regulatory Committee meeting.
- Met with OC LAFCO to review current activities.

Education Initiatives

General Education

Public Affairs Staff:

- Co-hosted a student preparation session with MWDOC, Water Energy Education Alliance (WEEA), and Tomorrow's Talent for those attending the Orange County Water Summit.
- Attended the Orange County Water Summit Speakers Dinner.

Choice the K-12 School Programs

Public Affairs Staff:

- Presented to Orange County Department of Education's Inside the Outdoors educators on MWDOC's education initiatives and Orange County water in preparation for delivering MWDOC Choice K-12 school sessions.
- Provided participating agencies with individual shared calendar links to view scheduled school sessions within their respective service areas.
- Completed review of the K-12 curricula.
- Developed persona profiles for new K-5 water helper characters for integration into school program materials and activities.

Water Energy Education Alliance

Public Affairs Staff:

- Assembled and coordinated a workforce development panel for the Orange County Water Summit.
- Met with Good Green Work, the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) Foundation, and Tomorrow's Talent about partnering on a grant proposal.
- Met with Metropolitan and the Water Replenishment District about facilitating interactive activities at Metropolitan's upcoming Workforce Development Summit.
- Met with the Orange County Water Association to discuss partnering on an upcoming training for engineers pursuing their professional engineer license.
- Coordinated 20 students' participation in the Orange County Water Summit through the event's NextGen Workforce Sponsorship, connecting students from seven colleges and universities with water industry leaders and career opportunities. Several participants were engaged through the National Society of Black Engineers.

Digital Communications, Publications, and Media Engagement

Public Affairs Staff:

- Developed and distributed social media content across all MWDOC social media channels.
- Collaborated with the Water Emergency Response Organization of Orange County (WEROC) staff to film a video, both in English and Spanish, on creating a Family Communication Plan for National Preparedness Month.
- Promoted the Orange County Water Summit on all social media platforms before and during the event.

Special Projects

Public Affairs Staff:

- Provided support for the Independent Special Districts of Orange County (ISDOC) Executive Committee Meeting.
- Provided support for the Water Advisory Committee of Orange County (WACO) monthly meeting.
- Provided support for the WACO Planning Meeting.
- Sent the ISDOC election results to our members.
- Delivered Seed Center materials to the Roosevelt-Walker Community Center in Santa Ana.

- Participated in Water Use Efficiency Workgroup on September 3.

Government Affairs Staff:
- Drafted and circulated the ISDOC Executive Committee meeting agenda and minutes.
- Staffed the ISDOC Executive Committee meeting.
- Coordinated with upcoming WACO speakers.

Outreach Metrics

Public Affairs Staff:
- Google Performance Analytics (Timeframe: September 1-28)
  - 178 business profile interactions
  - 1,813 people viewed the business profile
- mwdoc.com Website Analytics (September 1-28)
  - 11,599 page views
  - Top pages:
    - Home Page – 2,807
    - Turf Replacement – 650
    - Board Meeting – 550
    - Residential Rebates – 541
    - RFPs and RFQs – 490
    - WUE – 441
- ocwatersmartgardens.com Website Analytics (August 2026)
  - 1,157 Number of Sessions, 909 New Users
  - Top pages:
    - Home Page
    - Plant Common Name
    - Eligible Sustainability Feature Trees
- ocwatersmartparks.com Website Analytics (September 1-28)
  - 10 Site Sessions
- Social Media Analytics (September 1-28)
  - 8.05% Engagement Rate (a good rate is between 1% and 5%)
  - 24,632 Post Impressions (number of times a post was viewed)
  - 466 Post Reactions & Likes

Legislative Affairs

Government Affairs Staff:
- Attended the CMUA Advanced Clean Fleets (ACF) Working Group meeting.
- Attended the ACWA Federal Affairs Committee Drinking Water and Energy Subcommittee Meeting.
- Attended the ACWA Federal Affairs Committee meeting.