



NEWS RELEASE

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Working Together to Conserve and Overcome Drought & Water Supply Shortages *Conservation Needed to Address Drought and Water Supply Conditions*



(Presenters Left-Right: David Dolphin, Alhambra; Thomas Wong, SGVMWD; Darin Kasamoto, SGVMWD; Richard Gonzales, Monterey Park)

June 22, 2022 – Azusa, California: The San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District hosted an in-person briefing about drought, declining local and state water supplies, water conservation, water use restrictions and other water issues for Asian media representatives to share with stakeholders throughout the San Gabriel Valley. The District has hosted similar briefings each year for more than a decade in partnership with Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster and the cities of Alhambra and Monterey Park.

The primary focus of this year's meeting was to discuss the severe drought conditions within the San Gabriel Valley and our local watershed, the Main San Gabriel Basin. Our water supply has been adversely affected by a third consecutive dry year, along with long-term climate change. Statewide, a "drought emergency" is in effect, and, locally, cities and other water agencies have entered "Stage 2" water use restrictions, while also enforcing certain mandatory statewide water use restrictions.

About 80 percent of the water we use is local groundwater and 20 percent is imported water from northern California that is conveyed by the State Water Project. The imported water is used to help replenish local groundwater supplies. Local groundwater supplies have declined steadily since reaching a peak in winter 2019/2020. And, in March 2022, the State

Department of Water Resources reduced State Water Project allocations of imported water to 5% of planned amounts for the second consecutive year.

Thomas Wong, President, San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District Board of Directors, stated, “Mother Nature has presented us with a third year of severe drought, along with long-term climate change. Our District will continue to work with our member cities and water agency partners throughout the Valley to implement smart water management, build infrastructure, and promote water conservation to achieve a resilient water supply. Drought is normal in the San Gabriel Valley. Citizens and businesses have proven that conservation works and we call on everyone to work together to conserve water now.”

Wong provided information about recent District grants and zero-interest loans that assisted its member cities – Alhambra, Azusa, Monterey Park and Sierra Madre – with water supply, conservation and infrastructure projects. Alhambra received a \$50,000 grant for water-efficient landscaping projects. Monterey Park received a four million dollar zero-interest loan for construction of a nearly completed PFAS/PFOA water treatment facility, which will cost approximately seven million dollars to complete. Monterey Park also received a \$50,000 grant to increase the water-efficiency of urinals and toilets in public facilities in the City.

Darin Kasamoto, General Manager, San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District, speaking on behalf of Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster, stated, “We are again in the midst of a serious dry period. Less precipitation, less stormwater run-off to our Basin, reduced imported water deliveries, and hot, dry weather mean our precious groundwater is not being replenished as much as we’d like. We’ve had a steady decline in local groundwater supplies since the winter of 2019/2020. Watermaster’s education campaign, *The Waters That Connect Us*, emphasizes that continued conservation brings everyone together by creating long-term habits of responsible water use.”

David Dolphin, Deputy Director of Utilities for the City of Alhambra, stated, “We are experiencing the adverse effects of a historical drought. Incorporating water conservation measures into your daily routine is paramount in order to save water, our most precious resource. Future generations are depending on us!” Richard Gonzales, Water Utility Manager for the City of Monterey Park, added, “The most important message during drought is working together! Residents, business owners, and city staff should work as a community to conserve water. Only by working together can we save water for the future of our wonderful city!”

Climate change and warming temperatures are other contributors to worsening drought conditions as temperatures are about two degrees hotter, on average, now than 50 years ago, reducing the amount of water soaking into the ground and replenishing groundwater. Computer models show that in years to come, the dry years will be drier, and the wet years will be wetter. A June 2022 *U.S. Drought Monitor* map of California reveals that 100% of the state is experiencing *moderate* drought, 98% of the state is experiencing *severe* drought and

about 60% of the state is experiencing *extreme* drought
(<https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/CurrentMap/StateDroughtMonitor.aspx?CA>).

Further information about these District programs, as well as programs for rebates for the purchase of water-saving equipment, community conservation grants, school education, pilot projects and community outreach may be viewed on the District's website (www.sgvmd.com). The District also produces printed/downloadable public education materials, conservation brochures and website information to assist owners, managers and residents of apartments, condominiums and multi-family dwellings.

For further information about water supply, water quality, water conservation and water use restrictions in Alhambra, please visit: <https://www.cityofalhambra.org/departments/utilities-department>. For further information about water supply, water quality, water conservation and water use restrictions in Monterey Park, please visit: <https://www.montereypark.ca.gov/608/Water>.

About the San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District

The mission of the San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District is to provide reliable supplemental water for the communities of Alhambra, Azusa, Monterey Park and Sierra Madre in a cost-effective and environmentally responsible manner.

The District was formed in 1959 after winning approval from the voters of Alhambra, Azusa, Monterey Park, and Sierra Madre. In anticipation of its long-term water needs, the District entered into a contract with the State of California Department of Water Resources in 1962 for the import of 25,000 acre-feet of water per year (now 28,800 acre-feet per year) from the State Water Project to supplement local water supplies in the San Gabriel Valley. The District is one of 29 State Water Contractors who obtain water from the State Water Project. The District operates the 38-mile Devil Canyon-Azusa pipeline which connects to the State Water Project, as well as several other facilities including a hydroelectric plant. The District also provides extensive public education and water conservation services throughout its service area. The Board of Directors meets regularly the second Monday of each month at 8 a.m. at District headquarters in Azusa. For more information please visit our website: www.sgvmd.com. Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster's educational website is www.thewaterthatconnectus.com.

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