

San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority Local Water Is Critical for a Secure Water Future

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Valerie Muñoz
Board Chairwoman

When the San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority (WQA) formed in 1993, its mission was to facilitate the clean up the contaminated water in the Main

San Gabriel Basin, a large underground aquifer that provides drinking water to 90 percent of the people living and working in the San Gabriel Valley.

Years of industrial dumping of chemical pollutants into the ground had contaminated this important water source to the point that a massive, years-long cleanup effort was needed. The WQA was formed to coordinate the groundwater cleanup, inform the public, work with the responsible parties, prevent or minimize the spreading of contaminants, remove contamination quickly and effectively, protect groundwater resources, and seek funding so ratepayers wouldn’t have to foot the bill.



The Puente Valley Operable Unit Intermediate Zone Remedy is the first groundwater treatment facility in the basin to incorporate state-of-the-art Reverse Osmosis in its treatment process.

To date, 32 treatment plants have removed 195,000 pounds of contaminants and treated 1.8 million acre-feet of groundwater.

Over time, the basin cleanup story evolved into a restoration effort to preserve this vital natural source of water for a more secure water future. And, as the ongoing drought years continue to take an increasing toll on Southern California’s water supply, the Basin and the important work of the WQA will become even more crucial.

“The mission of the WQA has become much more than a water cleanup story. It’s now become a basin restoration effort that is a critical component of our important local water supply,” said WQA Board Chairwoman Valerie Muñoz. “Our basin in the San Gabriel Valley is a major asset to the region and we need to protect it.”

With the prolonged drought, never before has the WQA’s mission become so significant. Having a clean, local water source right here in the San Gabriel Valley can minimize the Valley’s dependence on imported water, which is unreliable in drought years and costs significantly more than clean, potable local water.

HOW RESIDENTS CAN HELP

In times of drought Valley residents can play an enormous role in sustaining our local water supply by moderating their water usage and respecting calls for conservation. Communicating with others in their households and neighborhoods about the importance of sustaining the Valley’s water supply and making conscience efforts

to decrease water usage can have a profound impact on our water supply.

Residents can practice water efficiency and make a difference by finding and fixing leaks, taking shorter showers and installing California-friendly landscapes. Replacing older appliances with water efficient products, including toilets, washing machines and showerheads also helps. High-efficiency toilets, for example, save approximately 19 gallons per person each day. Also, residents can irrigate without waste by adjusting sprinkler times based on climate and installing a drip irrigation system with a smart controller can help make sure you are not wasting water on landscaping that doesn’t need it.

The Basin is a critical part of a more secure water future for the San Gabriel Valley. The cleanup still has many years to go. Millions more in funding will be needed as new contaminants emerge and require removal. The WQA continues to pursue new funding sources to get the job done. ○

Learn how the WQA is keeping your water safe and clean at www.wqa.com.

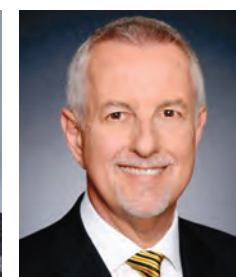


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