

# SJW Happenings

## What is the difference between SJW and Valley Water?



People ask us all the time about who we are versus Valley Water. In a nutshell, they are the wholesaler for Santa Clara County (meaning they supply water to 13 different water utilities). We purchase treated water from Valley Water's three water treatment plants: Rinconada, Santa Teresa and Penitencia. We also pump groundwater from the groundwater basin managed by Valley Water. In addition, Valley Water manages 333 miles of waterways or creeks in Santa Clara County. Approximately 1/3 of the more than 800 miles of creeks and rivers in Santa Clara County are owned by Valley Water. So, if you have a question about trash or the unhoused population in or near a creek or reservoir, reach out to Valley Water!

Whereas Valley Water is the wholesaler, the utilities that buy water from them, including SJW, are retailers who deliver water to homes and businesses. We pay Valley Water for treated water charges from their treatment plants and groundwater fees (more commonly known as a pump tax) when we pump water

from our wells. Valley Water determines the cost for both treated and groundwater every year through their rate setting process. The rates are approved by Valley Water's elected Board of Directors consisting of seven members. The water supply cost from Valley Water makes up a significant portion of your bill.

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## SJW Employees Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month

National Hispanic Heritage Month is observed from September 15 to October 15, celebrating the histories, cultures and contributions of US citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America. We're highlighting two employees who shared their stories of celebration.

**Gil Rivas, Director of Distribution Systems** - Gil's mother hails from Sahuayo, Michoacán, Mexico. Growing up, she taught Gil and his siblings about the significance of Mexico's Independence Day, September 16. Today, his family celebrates by attending community events, reuniting with relatives, enjoying Mariachi music, sharing stories, and passing down traditions to younger generations.

**Kristal Castrejon, Senior Executive Assistant** - Kristal moved from Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico, to Redwood City, CA thirty years ago. As Redwood City started celebrating Mexico's Independence Day, her family always attended the city's events and watched the popular televised ceremony hosted by Mexico's president each year. Today, she deeply admires and appreciates San Jose's diversity, as it enables her to educate her son about his cultural background.

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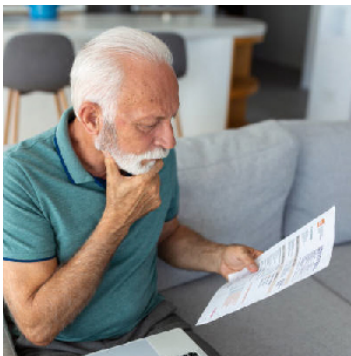
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## Fire And Water: The Role Of Water Utilities In Facing Wildfire Threats

Wildfire season has unfortunately become an annual reality. Minimizing wildfire risk is a central focus of SJW's operations and emergency management strategy. Jared Lewis, Environmental Planning & Natural Resources Manager, recently wrote in *Water Online* about how wildfires (perhaps somewhat counterintuitively) negatively impact water resources and what role water utilities should play to mitigate these threats.

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## What to Know About Our Service Charge

The service charge is a monthly readiness-to-serve charge that is applied to all accounts based on the meter size. This charge helps cover some of SJW's fixed costs. Like any business we have both fixed and variable costs to deliver high quality and reliable water service. Fixed costs cover water mains, tanks, wells, personnel, and other expenses. These costs *do not vary* with the amount of water consumed. Water utilities have some of the highest fixed costs compared to other utilities, typically around 60% of the total cost of service. Variable costs cover water supply, chemicals and power. These costs *do vary* with the amount of water consumed.

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## Service Line Inventory Webinar

On Wednesday, October 30 at 12:00 pm, Director of Water Quality, Suzanne DeLorenzo, will discuss the development of our new Service Line Inventory and what it means for customers. We'll explain how the inventory was created, the importance of identifying service line materials, and the steps being taken to ensure water reliability. This session will provide key insights into the latest regulations and San Jose Water's ongoing efforts to maintain clean, reliable water for the community.

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## Asset Management (IAM) North American Excellence Awards

SJW has been named a finalist for the Institute of Asset Management (IAM) North American Excellence Awards, in the category of Digital Innovation! SJW is being recognized for our innovative Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) System implementation for our Distribution Systems department. This award honors innovative advancements in asset management in the face of current challenges.

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## Senior Safari at Happy Hollow Park and Zoo

It's the 10th anniversary of Happy Hollow's Senior Safari! We're excited to attend our second Senior Safari event of the season on October 24. We'll be handing out fun freebies to attendees. Come say hi to us at the SJW booth from 9:00-10:00 am — located near the mini SJW water tower. Senior Safari is designed to help older

adults avoid social isolation and enjoy a unique environment that stimulates both mind and body.

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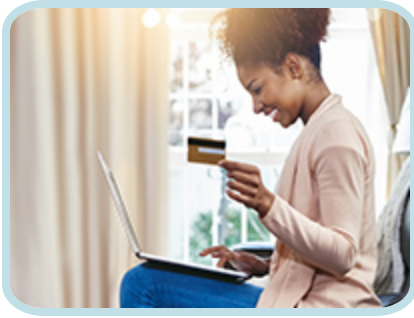


## Conservation is a California way of life

Water is a precious resource. Conserving now means more for generations to come. Check out our guides to help make your home more water-efficient.

[LEARN MORE](#)





## Pay Your Bill Online

We offer a secure and easy way to make bill payments online. Use your credit or debit card to submit payments at a time that works best for you. Our Billing and Payment page has a quick link to our Pay by Credit Card feature. For questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

[More Info >>](#)



## Third-Party Notification

Want to make sure someone other than you knows about a water-shutoff before it happens? You can designate a friend, family member or neighbor to receive a copy of any disconnection notice due to non-payment. Before the water is shutoff, they will be notified. Please note that the person you designate is NOT financially responsible for your bill.

[More Info >>](#)

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October 2024



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