



## **WATER SUPPLY AND CONSERVATION**

### Overview

The City of Santa Clara operates 21 wells that tap the underground aquifers and make up about 62% of the City's potable water supply. The underground aquifers are replenished from local reservoirs by the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) water recharge program and through surface water infiltration. The remaining water is supplied by water imported from the SCVWD and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) through the Hetch-Hetchy Reservoir.

For certain approved non-potable uses, recycled water from the San Jose/Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility's South Bay Recycled Water (SBWR) facility is used. This highly treated water is delivered through separate pipelines and makes up about 20% of the water sales in the City. Recycled water offsets the use of potable sources in drought-prone California and is a reliable source for conservation of potable sources. The City continues to work closely with SBWR in order to increase recycled water supplies in order to meet existing demands within the City.

The City continually works to meet State reporting requirements. The State Water Resources Control Board adopted new regulations in July 2024, *Making Conservation a California Way of Life*, that establish unique efficiency goals for each urban retail water supplier in California. As part of the regulation, suppliers—not individual households or businesses—will be held to Urban Water Use Objectives. Starting January 1, 2025, and by January 1 every year after, each urban retail water supplier must calculate its Urban Water Use Objective and, beginning January 1, 2027, annually demonstrate compliance with its objective.

### Guiding Principles

The City of Santa Clara's guiding principles for legislative advocacy include and are not limited to:

- Support the League of California Cities and National League of Cities positions on priority bills that benefit Santa Clara.
- Protect local revenue sources and prevent unfunded mandates.
- Protect and/or increase funding for specific programs and services.
- Protect and/or increase local government discretion.
- Advance approved policies such as the City's Statement of Values, the General Plan, or the Climate Action Plan.

### Legislative Advocacy Position

In order to ensure that the City is able to maintain an affordable and reliable supply of quality water, the City maintains the following advocacy positions:

- Support *Making Conservation a California Way of Life* legislation and funding.
- Support and implement water conservation, or demand reduction, measures for businesses and residents including state regulatory efforts which build on ongoing efforts to "Making Water Conservation a California Way of Life."

- Support California Municipal Utilities Association (CMUA) positions on legislation that benefit Santa Clara.
- Support State initiatives to fund water supply projects to improve water supply conditions including expediting permitting for recharge and other projects to mitigate the ongoing climate-driven emergency drought conditions.
- Support regional water conservation including potable and recycled water supply efforts in cooperation with agencies such as Santa Clara Valley Water District, City of San Jose, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), and the Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency.
- Support efforts to establish alternative funding sources for water infrastructure and improved water quality projects.
- Support state and regional efforts to delivery water to Santa Clara customers using clean energy and other environmentally sustainable practices.
- Support legislation and funding to protect the public health of the community from the exposure to water quality contaminants including lead in drinking water at daycares, school facilities, residences, and commercial facilities.
- Support legislation and funding with regional partners that allows purified recycled water to be added to the potable water supply through indirect and direct applications that improve local water resiliency for residents and businesses.
- Support regional partners and wholesale water providers in their efforts to ensure water supply reliability by protecting against any water rights curtailments under the California current water rights system that might impact Santa Clara customers.
- Support legislation that provides flexibility to utilize revenue for the implementation of low-income rate assistance programs, or similar assistance programs.
- Support legislation and efforts aimed at reducing water loss, including increased penalties associated with water and water related appurtenances theft.
- Work with regional partners to maintain the reliability of the water supply and water sustainability to support current customers and to allow for expected growth in the near future and beyond.
- Monitor federal, state, and regional activity related to the Bay-Delta Plan. Support a comprehensive Bay-Delta watershed voluntary settlement agreement between stakeholders that includes SFPUC.
- Oppose legislative efforts to impose new taxes or fees on drinking water.