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Bakersfield Mayor & Save Our Water Highlight California Water Service & Bakersfield HOA Partnership; Project Expected to Save 1.34 Million Gallons of Water

Lawn replacement project highlights HOA as a local water conservation leader

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. – Save Our Water, California’s statewide water conservation program, gathered alongside local leaders in Kern County today to highlight the Solera at Kern Canyon Homeowners Association’s (HOA) successful transformation of a thirsty grass area into a water-wise landscape. The event showcased the dedication of the Solera HOA community in conserving water and highlighted the important role of water agencies like California Water Service (Cal Water) in providing rebates and resources to residents to help make water conservation a way of life.

The project was funded through Cal Water’s lawn-to-garden rebate program. It included the landscaping around the main entrance on Park Place Drive, as well as two back entrances to the subdivision, for about 50,000 square feet. Cal Water estimates that the HOA will save 1.34 million gallons of water per year – enough to fill more than two Olympic-sized swimming pools and a backyard pool – through this transformation project. Solera has also been nominated for a 2023 City of Bakersfield Beautification Award, which will be announced June 17.

Hosted near the Solera’s main entrance, attendees included Mayor Karen Goh, who emphasized the importance of collective action at the local level to conserve water.

“Water conservation must be an everyday way of life for Californians whether in wet years or dry years, that must be a way of life for all of us. We’ve seen the wonderful wet years and the abundance of water, but we all know that there are those dry years,” Goh said. “Cal Water thank you so much for your generosity and investment. This is an investment not just in Solera, but for our entire community as together we save water. Let us continue setting this example.”

Solera HOA Board President Karyl Ralles also shared remarks about the positive impact that the transformed area has had on the community.

“When we took on this experiment, I didn’t know how it would turn out, but it is so beautiful,” Ralles said. “You might not expect an older community like ours to be at the forefront of conservation, but we believe it is important.”

Cal Water began the partnership project with Solera HOA when its landscaper, Enhanced Landscape Management, suggested the rebate program in the fall of 2022. Bakersfield

District Manager Tammy Johnson highlighted the partnership as one they hope will be replicated across the state.

“We are pleased to partner with Solera on this important and impactful water conservation project. Not only has the HOA itself been dedicated to this transformation on a community level, but we also applaud the more than 20 residents in the community who transformed their own lawns to gardens,” Johnson said. “As we anticipate our changing climate to cause the weather to eventually swing back to drier and hotter, the Solera HOA and its residents are leaders in making water conservation a way of life, and preparing for when those drier years hit.”

Cal Water also provided an educational hands-on activity for children, aimed at demonstrating the importance of water-wise landscapes.

Jordi Vázquez, a senior environmental scientist with the California Department of Water Resources, applauded Solera HOA, Cal Water and local leaders for their proactive efforts in engaging and encouraging Californians to save water. He spoke as a representative of the state’s Save Our Water program.

“Bakersfield residents are stepping up to make water conservation a way of life,” Vázquez said. “The exemplary work of individuals and organizations like Solera HOA are setting an example for how other areas throughout the state can transform outdoor areas to be both beautiful and water-wise.”

For more information on Cal Water’s programs and rebates visit CalWater.com, and for water-saving tips and information, visit SaveOurWater.com.

- **Save Our Water** is California’s statewide water conservation program. Started in 2009 by the California Department of Water Resources, Save Our Water’s goal is to make water conservation a daily habit among Californians. The program reaches millions of Californians each year through partnerships with local water agencies and other community-based organizations, social marketing efforts, paid and earned media and event sponsorships. Please visit SaveOurWater.com and follow @saveourwater on Twitter and Instagram and @SaveOurWaterCA on Facebook.
- **California Water Service** provides high-quality, reliable water utility services to about 445,600 people through 153,400 service connections in its Bakersfield District and the City of Bakersfield water system, which it operates, and about 2 million people through 496,400 service connections statewide. What sets Cal Water apart is its commitment to enhancing the quality of life for its customers and communities. Guided daily by their promise to provide quality, service, and value, the utility’s employees lead the way in working to protect the planet, care for people, and operate with the utmost integrity. Integral to Cal Water’s strategy is investing responsibly in infrastructure, sustainability initiatives, and community well-being. The utility has been named one of “America’s Most Responsible Companies” and “America’s Most Trusted Companies” by Newsweek and a Great Place to Work®. More information is available at calwater.com.
- **Solera HOA** Built in 2006 by the Pulte Development Company as a Del Webb 55+ community, Solera at Kern Canyon is nestled against the Sequoia National Forest and the Southern Sierra Mountains. Part of the greater Bakersfield community, our residents enjoy the quiet and tranquil life east of greater downtown Bakersfield. We are located 30 miles from Tehachapi, 7 miles from Bakersfield College and 15 miles from Cal State Bakersfield, and 12 miles from Crystal Palace. Residents of Solera enjoy the

rich agriculture of the San Joaquin Valley, close access to the Sequoia National Forest, and, of course, the many venues of The Bakersfield Sound.