

California Water Service Infrastructure Upgrades Underway to Improve Water Supply Reliability and Fire Protection in Salinas

SALINAS, Calif.—California Water Service (Cal Water) is working on major infrastructure upgrades, with more planned in coming months and years, to the water system that provides safe, clean, reliable drinking water to about 126,620 people in Salinas. The utility hosted media at a few of its project sites today to provide a more in-depth view.

Currently, construction of a new 150,000 gallon water storage tank for the community of Las Lomas, along with a new booster station on Harrison Road, is underway to expand the system's capacity to provide water amid peak demands in northern Salinas. Additionally, to support water supply in the southeast part of the city, Cal Water is installing 1,871 feet of new 8-inch water main. By the end of the month, Cal Water will also begin construction on two new groundwater wells—the first of their kind in the region in more than a decade—to help increase water supply and system reliability for residents and businesses in the southern area of Salinas.

"We continually modernize and upgrade our water system to provide safe, clean, reliable drinking water for our customers and community—any time they need it," said Brenda Granillo, Cal Water Salinas District Manager. "These ongoing infrastructure improvements help us maintain a reliable water supply for both everyday and emergency needs."

The storage tank is expected to be fully operational in April, while the booster station is expected to go online in March 2025. Salinas' two newest wells, along with 100 feet of new water main to help each well deliver water to the system, are expected to be completed by December 2026. These two new wells replace wells that have been out of service over the past few years due to declining natural water quality. The new wells will provide water to existing customers and help meet customers' peak hourly and maximum daily demands.

Cal Water's investment in infrastructure is spelled out in its Infrastructure Improvement Plan (IIP), which it is required to file every three years with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). Cal Water filed its most recent IIP on July 8, 2024, beginning an approximately 18-month review process by the CPUC, an independent state agency. The CPUC will analyze the plans to establish water rates for 2026-2028 that reflect the actual cost of providing safe, reliable water service. Associated rates set by the CPUC would become effective no sooner than January 2026.

In Salinas, Cal Water proposes to make future upgrades that will strengthen reliability, safety, and supply through projects such as:

- Replacing 28,191 feet of water main to prevent failure of aging and high-risk pipelines.

- Installing new treatment facilities and upgrading existing water sites to provide safe, clean water.
- Adding two new wells and purchase land for a future well to meet water supply needs of the community.

For these important upgrades and costs to maintain and operate this system, under this proposal, the typical customer with a 5/8x3/4" meter and using 5,236 gallons (7 Ccf) of water per month would have an increase of 22 cents per day beginning in 2026, followed by 17 cents per day in 2027, and 20 cents per day in 2028.

"Rate adjustments for our triennial Infrastructure Improvement Plan help fund critical water infrastructure projects such as new pipes, treatment facilities, pumps, and fire hydrants, along with upgrades for water supply and storage," Granillo said. "Even with our strong record of system upgrades, our delivery of safe, clean tap water, and our commitment to exceptional customer service, our customers pay about a penny per gallon."

About California Water Service

California Water Service provides high-quality, reliable water utility services to about 126,620 people through approximately 29,000 service connections in Salinas, about 16,000 people through approximately 2,800 service connections in King City, and more than 2 million people statewide through 497,700 service connections. Cal Water's purpose is to enhance the quality of life for customers and communities. To do so, it invests responsibly in water and wastewater infrastructure, sustainability initiatives, and community well-being. The company's 1,100+ employees live by a set of strong core values and share a commitment to protecting the planet, caring for people, and operating with the utmost integrity. The utility has been named one of "America's Most Responsible Companies" and the "World's Most Trustworthy Companies" by *Newsweek*, a Top Workplace, and a Great Place to Work®. More information is available at www.calwater.com.