



Quality. Service. Value.®

# WATER QUALITY REPORT 2022

**KERN RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT**

Onyx System

Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua potable. Tradúzcalo o hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.

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# WELCOME

Since 1926, California Water Service (Cal Water) has been committed to providing a reliable supply of safe, clean water to our customers and communities. As water quality regulations have become more stringent, we have added or adjusted treatment to ensure the water we deliver meets or surpasses all standards, because protecting our customers' health and safety is our highest priority.

**In this system in 2022, we conducted 1,127 tests on 228 water samples for 54 constituents. We are pleased to confirm that we met every primary and secondary federal and state water quality standard last year.**

Our promise to provide quality, service, and value means more than just treating and testing water. It means having expert professionals available to assist with routine services in a safe and efficient manner. It means having personnel available to handle emergencies 24 hours per day. It means maintaining and upgrading the infrastructure needed to transport water through a network of pumps, tanks, and pipes to your tap. It also means that, even with costs increasing across the country, we do everything we can to operate as efficiently as possible to keep your water affordable.

I encourage you to review this annual water quality report, also called your Consumer Confidence Report, as it details any constituents detected in your water supply in 2022 and shows how your water compares to federal and state standards. It also provides information on current water quality issues and steps we are taking to protect your health and safety.

If you have any questions, we are here to assist you. You can reach us by phone or email at our local office, or online at [www.calwater.com](http://www.calwater.com). You can also get water service news on our web site and via our Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram pages. If you're an account holder, you can find updates in your monthly bill and should keep your contact information up to date by visiting [ccu.calwater.com](http://ccu.calwater.com) to ensure you receive important emergency and other information.

Sincerely,  
Jon Yasin, Local Manager, Kern River Valley District

[Kern River Valley District | 7138 Lake Isabella Boulevard, Lake Isabella, CA 93240 | (760) 379-5336]

### ACTION ITEMS

There were no significant issues in your water system in 2022, and we have no recommended action items for our customers in this area.



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# YOUR WATER SYSTEM



## YOUR WATER

Cal Water's Kern River Valley District provides high-quality water to customers throughout the Valley. Onyx is served by a local supply pumped from two wells in rock fissures beneath the ground. This report provides results of water quality testing conducted in our Onyx system.

Our company-wide water quality assurance program includes vigilant monitoring throughout our systems and testing at our state-of-the-art laboratory. Additionally, we proactively maintain and upgrade our facilities to ensure a reliable, high-quality supply.

## CHLORINATION

Chlorination is the addition of chlorine to drinking water systems. It is the most common type of drinking water disinfection, killing bacteria, viruses, and other microorganisms that cause disease or immediate illness. Chlorine is effective and continues to keep water safe as it travels through pipelines to the consumer's tap.

## WATER RESOURCE SUSTAINABILITY

Cal Water helps our customers conserve water by offering programs and incentives to reduce indoor and outdoor water use, develop more efficient habits, and educate the next generation about the importance of managing water resources sustainably. We also continue to invest diligently in our infrastructure to reduce the amount of water lost to pipeline leaks and, in 2022, completed an updated assessment of the impacts of climate change on water supply and demand. Whether in wet or dry years, it's important that we make saving water every day a way of life. Using water wisely will ensure that we have enough water in periods of drought and for generations to come.

Visit [www.calwater.com/conservation](http://www.calwater.com/conservation) for details.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our local office by phone at (760) 379-5336 or through the Contact Us link at [www.calwater.com](http://www.calwater.com).



# WATER QUALITY

## THE WATER QUALITY LAB

Water professionals collect samples from throughout the water system for testing at our newly upgraded, state-of-the-art water quality laboratory, which is certified each year through the stringent Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP).

Scientists, chemists, and microbiologists test the water for 326 constituents with equipment so sensitive it can detect levels as low as one part per trillion. In order to maintain the ELAP certification, all of our scientists must pass blind-study proficiency tests for every water quality test performed. Water quality test results are entered into our Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS), a sophisticated software program that enables us to react quickly to changes in water quality and analyze water quality trends in order to plan effectively for future needs.

## CROSS-CONNECTION CONTROL

To ensure that the high-quality water we deliver is not compromised in the distribution system, Cal Water has a robust cross-connection control program in place. Cross-connection control is critical to ensuring that activities on customers' properties do not affect the public water supply. Our cross-connection control specialists ensure that all of the existing backflow prevention assemblies are tested annually, assess all connections, and enforce and manage the installation of new commercial and residential assemblies.

Backflow can occur when certain pressure conditions exist either in our distribution system or within the customer's plumbing, so our customers are our first line of defense. A minor home improvement project—without the proper protections—can create a potentially hazardous situation, so careful adherence to plumbing codes and standards will ensure the community's water supply remains safe. Please be sure to utilize the advice or services of a qualified plumbing professional.

Many water-use activities involve substances that, if allowed to enter the distribution system, would be aesthetically displeasing or could even present health concerns. Some common cross-connections are:

- Garden hoses connected to a hose bib without a simple hose-type vacuum breaker (available at a home improvement store)

- Improperly installed toilet tank fill valves that do not have the required air gap between the valve or refill tube
- Landscape irrigation systems that do not have the proper backflow prevention assembly installed on the supply line

The list of materials that could potentially contaminate the water system is vast. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), a wide variety of substances have contaminated drinking water systems throughout the country as a result of poor cross-connection control. Examples include:

- Antifreeze from a heating system
- Lawn chemicals from a garden hose or sprinkler head
- Blue water from a toilet tank
- Carbonated water from a soda dispenser

Customers must ensure that all plumbing is in conformance with local plumbing codes. Additionally, state law requires certain types of facilities to install and maintain backflow prevention assemblies at the water meter. Cal Water's cross-connection control staff will determine whether you need to install a backflow prevention assembly based on water uses at your location.

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# DWSAPP

By the end of 2002, Cal Water had submitted to the Division of Drinking Water (DDW) a Drinking Water Source Assessment and Protection Program (DWSAPP) report for each water source in the water system. The DWSAPP report identifies possible sources of contamination to aid in prioritizing cleanup and pollution prevention efforts. All reports are available for viewing or copying at our office.

The water source in your system is considered most vulnerable to:

- Septic systems
- Pesticide/fertilizer/petroleum storage
- Grazing
- Agricultural drainage
- Irrigated crops
- Fertilizer/pesticide/herbicide applications
- Stormwater drainage

We encourage customers to join us in our efforts to prevent water pollution and protect our most precious natural resource.



## FLUORIDE

State law requires Cal Water to add fluoride to drinking water if public funding is available to pay for it, and it is a practice endorsed by the American Medical Association and the American Dental Association to prevent tooth decay. In this area, low levels of fluoride occur naturally, and Cal Water doesn't add any to the water supply. Show the table in this report to your dentist to see if he or she recommends giving your children fluoride supplements.



More information about fluoridation, oral health, and related issues can be found on the **DDW** web site.

For general information on water fluoridation, visit us online at [www.calwater.com/waterquality/fluoride](http://www.calwater.com/waterquality/fluoride).

## WATER HARDNESS

Hardness is a measure of the magnesium, calcium, and carbonate minerals in the water. Water is considered soft if its hardness is less than 75 parts per million (ppm), moderately hard at 75 to 150 ppm, hard between 150 and 300 ppm, and very hard at 300 ppm or higher.

Hard water is generally not a health concern, but it can have an impact on how well soap lathers and is significant for some industrial and manufacturing processes. Hard water may also lead to mineral buildup in pipes or water heaters.

Some people with hard water opt to buy a water softener for aesthetic reasons; however, some water softeners add salt to the water, which can cause problems at wastewater treatment plants. Additionally, people on low-sodium diets should be aware that some water softeners increase the sodium content of the water.

For more information on water hardness, visit [www.calwater.com/video/hardness](http://www.calwater.com/video/hardness).

**The current water quality table for your service area shows an average hardness of 164 ppm.**

# POSSIBLE CONTAMINANTS

All drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants.

The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk.

**More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.**

The sources of drinking water (both tap and bottled) include rivers, lake, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals—and in some cases radioactive material—and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or human activities. Prior to entering the distribution system, source water with constituents over maximum contaminant levels is treated to reduce levels to meet standards set by public health experts.

## CONTAMINANTS THAT MAY BE PRESENT IN SOURCE WATER INCLUDE:

**Microbial contaminants**, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.

**Inorganic contaminants**, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.

**Pesticides and herbicides**, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and residential uses.

**Organic chemical contaminants**, including synthetic and volatile organic compounds, which are byproducts of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, agricultural applications, and septic systems.

**Radioactive contaminants**, which can be naturally occurring or the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the EPA and DDW prescribe regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. FDA regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immunocompromised people, such as those with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, those who have undergone organ transplants, and those with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders; some elderly people; and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice from their health care providers about drinking water contaminants. EPA and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline.



As the issue of lead in water continues to be top of mind for many Americans, Cal Water wants to assure you about the quality of your water. We are compliant with health and safety codes mandating use of lead-free materials in water system replacements, repairs, and new installations. We have no known lead service lines in our systems. We test and treat (if necessary) water sources to ensure that the water delivered to customer meters meets all water quality standards and is not corrosive toward plumbing materials.

The water we deliver to your home meets lead standards. However, if present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing (for example, lead solder used to join copper plumbing, and brass and other lead-containing fixtures).

Cal Water is responsible for providing high-quality drinking water to our customers' meters, but cannot control the variety of materials used in properties' plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking.

If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested by a certified lab. More information about lead in drinking water can be found on the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).

## Testing for Lead in Schools

The State of California required that all public schools built before 2010 test for lead in their drinking water by July 1, 2019. We are committed to supporting our school districts' efforts to protect students and ensure that the drinking water at their school sites are below regulatory limits. We worked with all school districts in our service area that serve kindergarten through 12th grade to develop sampling plans, test samples, and conduct follow-up monitoring, if needed, for corrective actions.

For more information, please see our [Testing for Lead in Schools](#) web page. For specific information regarding local school data, see the [state web portal](#).

## Lead and Copper Rule

The Lead and Copper Rule requires us to test water inside a representative number of homes that have plumbing most likely to contain lead and/or lead solder to determine the presence of lead and copper or any action level exceedance. An action level is the concentration of a contaminant which, when exceeded,

triggers corrective actions before it becomes a health concern. If action levels are exceeded, either at a customer's home or system-wide, we work with the customer to investigate the issue and/or implement corrosion control treatment to reduce lead levels.

## Lead Service Line Inventory (LSLI)

Protecting our customers' health and safety is our highest priority. As part of this commitment, we have been working to identify and replace any old customer water service lines and fittings that may contain lead. California Senate Bill (SB) 1398 required all water utilities in California to develop an inventory of all distribution service line materials, and submit a list of known lead service lines to the state by 2018. A list of unknown service lines that may contain lead, along with a plan for replacement, was due to the state by July 1, 2020. Known lines must be replaced as soon as possible.

More information regarding LSLI and specific data for each water system can be found on [the state web site](#).

In your system, results from our lead monitoring program, conducted in accordance with the Lead and Copper Rule, were below the action level for the presence of lead.

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are manmade compounds that have been used to make carpets, clothing, fabrics for furniture, paper packaging for food, and other materials (e.g., cookware) that are resistant to water, grease, or stains. These compounds are also used for firefighting at airfields, which is one way they have found their way into groundwater in certain areas.

In March 2023, EPA issued a proposed national primary drinking water regulation for certain PFAS. The proposed regulation calls for a maximum containment level for PFOS and PFOA of 4 ppt each. Four additional PFAS—PFNA, PFHxS, PFBS, and GenX— would have a combined hazard index limit of 1.0; the hazard index calculation would determine if the levels of these PFAS as a mixture pose a potential risk.

Knowing that these were constituents of emerging concern, Cal Water proactively tested active sources in our systems for these PFAS years ago. Although not required, we believed it was the right thing to do. In any areas across the state where detections were above levels at which DDW recommends water suppliers take action (the response level), we took the affected sources out of service until treatment was or can be installed.

None of our active water sources have levels of these six PFAS compounds over current California response levels. The response level, which is the level at which a water system should make operational changes to reduce the concentration of a compound, is set with a margin of protection for all people (including sensitive populations) over a lifetime of exposure. We are currently

evaluating the impact of the proposed regulation on our systems and any treatment required should the proposed regulation be adopted as is.

Additionally, we believe a comprehensive approach is needed to properly address the situation. We urged the EPA to establish a consistent, science-based standard as quickly as feasible, and strongly supported state legislation that will prohibit the sale and use of certain products that contain PFAS, require the certification of accurate testing methods for PFAS, and establish a publicly accessible database that houses the sources of PFAS entering water supplies. We have also filed a lawsuit to hold PFAS manufacturers responsible—and ultimately prevent our customers from bearing the costs of treatment, to the extent possible—and are pursuing grants where available to further offset customer cost impacts.

Studies indicate that long-term exposure to PFAS over certain levels could have adverse health effects, including developmental effects to fetuses during pregnancy or infants; cancer; or impacts on liver, immunity, thyroid, and other functions. Potential health effects related to PFAS are still being studied, and research is still evolving on this issue.

While we are doing our part to treat the water and meet the standards public health experts have set, it's important that our population as a whole focuses on being good stewards of the environment and takes steps to prevent impacting the water supply.

More information on  
PFAS is available  
on the  
DDW web site.

**IN COMPLIANCE:** Does not exceed any applicable MCL, SMCL, or action level, as determined by DDW. For some compounds, compliance is determined by averaging the results for one source over a one-year period.

**LEVEL 1 ASSESSMENT:** A Level 1 assessment is a study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why total coliform bacteria have been found in the system.

**LEVEL 2 ASSESSMENT:** A Level 2 assessment is a very detailed study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why an E. coli MCL violation has occurred and/or why total coliform bacteria have been found in the system on multiple occasions.

**MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVEL (MCL):** The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. Primary MCLs are set as close to the PHGs (or MCLGs) as is economically and technologically feasible. Secondary MCLs (SMCLs) are set to protect the odor, taste, and appearance of drinking water.

**MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVEL GOAL (MCLG):** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs are set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

**MAXIMUM RESIDUAL DISINFECTANT LEVEL (MRDL):** The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

**MAXIMUM RESIDUAL DISINFECTANT LEVEL GOAL (MRDLG):** The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

**NOTIFICATION LEVEL (NL) AND RESPONSE LEVEL (RL):** Health-based advisory levels for unregulated contaminants in drinking water. They are used by DDW to provide guidance to drinking water systems.

## STANDARD ABBREVIATIONS

AL	Action level	Max	Maximum
Min	Minimum	N/A	Not applicable
NL	Notification level	NTU	Nephelometric turbidity unit
ND	Constituent not detected		
pCi/L	Picocuries per liter (a measure of radiation)		
ppb	Parts per billion or micrograms per liter (µg/L)		
ppm	Parts per million or milligrams per liter (mg/L)		
ppq	Parts per quadrillion or picogram per liter (pg/L)		
ppt	Parts per trillion or nanograms per liter (ng/L)		
µS/cm	Microsiemens/centimeter		

**PRIMARY DRINKING WATER STANDARDS (PDWS):** MCLs, MRDLs, and TTs for contaminants that affect health along with their monitoring, reporting, and water treatment requirements.

**PUBLIC HEALTH GOAL (PHG):** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. PHGs are set by the California Environmental Protection Agency without regard to technological or economic feasibility.

**REGULATORY ACTION LEVEL (AL):** The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow.

**TREATMENT TECHNIQUE (TT):** A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

**VARIANCES AND EXEMPTIONS:** Permissions from the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) to exceed an MCL or not comply with a treatment technique under certain conditions.



Every year, Cal Water performs hundreds of thousands of tests to monitor the quality of our water. If any contaminants are detected, they are included in this annual water quality report. However, most of the contaminants we test for are not detected, so they are not listed.

See the **Potential Contaminants** web page for a complete list of contaminants we test for.

In the table, water quality test results are divided into four major sections: “Primary Drinking Water Standards,” “Secondary Drinking Water Standards,” “State-Monitored Contaminants with Notification Levels,” and “Unregulated Compounds.” Primary standards protect public health by limiting the levels of certain constituents in drinking water. Secondary standards are set for substances that don’t impact health but could affect the water’s taste, odor, or appearance. Some unregulated substances (hardness and sodium, for example) are included for your information. The State allows us to monitor for some contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently. Some of our data, though representative, are more than one year old.

## SUBSTANCE SOURCES

DI	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection
DS	Drinking water disinfectant added for treatment
EN	Naturally present in the environment
ER	Erosion of natural deposits
FE	Human and animal waste
FL	Water additive that promotes strong teeth; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
FR	Runoff and leaching from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks and sewage
IC	Internal corrosion of household plumbing systems
IM	Discharge from industrial manufacturers
IO	Substances that form ions when in water
IW	Industrial waste
RU	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits
SO	Soil runoff
SP	Discharge from steel and pulp mills and chrome plating
SW	Seawater influence
WD	Leaching from wood preservatives
UR	Unregulated constituents with no source listed and that do not have standardized “source of substance” language

Our testing equipment is so sensitive, it can detect constituents as small as 1 part per trillion. That is equivalent to 1 inch over 15 million miles.

## Primary Drinking Water Standards

Microbiological	Year Tested	Unit	MCL	PHG (MCLG)	In Compliance	Distribution System-Wide		Source
						Highest Monthly		
Fecal coliform and E. coli	2022	Positive Samples	0 <sup>1</sup>	(0)	Yes	0		FE
Radiological	Year Tested	Unit	MCL	PHG (MCLG)	In Compliance	Groundwater		Source
						Range	Average	
Gross alpha particle activity	2020–2022	pCi/L	15	(0)	Yes	ND–13	6.5	ER
Uranium	2022	pCi/L	20	0.43 (0)	Yes	4.0–5.4	4.8	ER
Inorganic Chemicals	Year Tested	Unit	MCL	PHG (MCLG)	In Compliance	Groundwater		Source
						Range	Average	
Chromium (total)	2022	ppb	50	(100)	Yes	ND–10	ND	ER, SP
Fluoride	2020	ppm	2	1 (4.0)	Yes	0.60–1.6	1.2	ER, FL
Nitrate as N	2020–2022	ppm	10	10 (10)	Yes	0.69–2.2	1.1	ER, FR
Lead and Copper	Year Tested	Unit	AL	PHG (MCLG)	In Compliance	Distribution System-Wide		Source
						90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Samples > AL	
Copper	2022	ppm	1.3	0.3	Yes	0.33	0 of 10	IC, ER, WD
Lead	2022	ppb	15	0.2	Yes	ND	0 of 10	IC, IM, ER
Disinfection Byproducts	Year Tested	Unit	MCL	PHG (MCLG)	In Compliance	Distribution System-Wide		Source
						Range	Highest Annual Average	
Total haloacetic acids (THAA)	2022	ppb	60	N/A	Yes	ND	ND	DI
Total trihalomethane (TTHM)	2022	ppb	80	N/A	Yes	2.6–5.3	5.3	DI
Disinfectants	Year Tested	Unit	MRDL	MRDLG	In Compliance	Distribution System-Wide		Source
						Range	Average	
Free chlorine	2022	ppm	4	4	Yes	0.52–1.8	1.0	DS

<sup>1</sup> Exceeded if routine and repeat samples are total coliform-positive and either is E. coli-positive, the system fails to take repeat samples following an E. coli-positive routine sample, or the system fails to analyze a total coliform-positive repeat sample for E. coli.

## Secondary Drinking Water Standards

Contaminants	Year Tested	Unit	SMCL	PHG (MCLG)	In Compliance	Groundwater		Source
						Range	Average	
Chloride	2020	ppm	500	N/A	Yes	9.4–17	15	RU, SW
Specific conductance	2019–2022	µS/cm	1600	N/A	Yes	400–520	459	SW, IO
Iron	2022	ppb	300	N/A	Yes	ND–130	ND	RU, IW
Manganese	2022	ppb	50	N/A	Yes	26–46	38	RU
Sulfate	2020	ppm	500	N/A	Yes	15–26	18	RU, IW
Total dissolved solids	2020	ppm	1000	N/A	Yes	270–310	298	RU
Turbidity (groundwater)	2020	NTU	5	N/A	Yes	0.13–0.46	0.30	SO

## State-Regulated Contaminants with Notification Levels

Contaminants	Year Tested	Unit	NL	PHG (MCLG)	In Compliance	Groundwater		Source
						Range	Average	
Boron	2018	ppm	1	N/A	Yes	ND–0.51	0.29	UR
Vanadium	2022	ppb	50	N/A	Yes	ND–8.0	3.6	UR

## Unregulated Compounds

Constituents	Year Tested	Unit	MCL	PHG (MCLG)	In Compliance	Groundwater		Source
						Range	Average	
Alkalinity (total)	2019–2022	ppm	N/A	N/A	N/A	170–220	184	UR
Calcium	2019–2022	ppm	N/A	N/A	N/A	36–54	43	UR
Hardness (total)	2018–2020	ppm	N/A	N/A	N/A	140–200	164	UR
Potassium	2018–2020	ppm	N/A	N/A	N/A	3.2–4.0	3.6	UR
Magnesium	2018–2020	ppm	N/A	N/A	N/A	11–16	13	UR
Sodium	2018–2020	ppm	N/A	N/A	N/A	32–41	37	UR
pH	2019–2022	Units	N/A	N/A	N/A	6.2–7.1	6.6	UR



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Thanks for taking the time  
to learn more about  
your water quality!

Even more information awaits you at [www.calwater.com](http://www.calwater.com).

Visit our web site to get information about your account, water-use history,  
water rates, and water system.

You will also find water-saving tips and news about  
water conservation programs and rebates available in your area.



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THANK YOU.



- ▶ Conservation resources
- ▶ Lead in water
- ▶ Water treatment and disinfection
- ▶ Protecting the water supply