



Big and Small Ways to Deal with the Drought

Large public projects and small personal efforts are both important in surviving the fourth year of drought. Large projects like those managed by the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency (PV Water) are bringing thousands of acre feet of new water supplies on line. Despite historic drought conditions PV Water continues to increase water supplies.

Even under unprecedented drought conditions local coastal agriculture is continuing with the help of water deliveries from the agency's Recycled Water Facility and Coastal Distribution System. Since 2002 PV Water has delivered over 25,570 acre feet of supplemental water to coastal growers in support of the local economy and the mission of reducing sea water intrusion. If 25,570 acre feet sounds impressive, it is, that's well over eight billion gallons, or to be precise, 8,332,010,070 gallons of water.

PV Water has recently received several grants made available by the Governor's emergency drought response efforts, and is pursuing long-term, low interest loans. This funding will allow the agency to implement projects identified in their Basin Management Plan Update that were not planned to be constructed for several years. Early implementation of these projects will improve basin conditions sooner and result in cost savings to ratepayers – both are huge benefits to the economy and groundwater resources.

One of the largest of these projects is the Recycled Water Facility Storage Tanks Project. The initial phase includes a new 1.5 million gallon storage tank to allow night time production and storage of recycled water for day time irrigation use. Construction of this storage will allow increased recycled water production which creates new water supply for the basin, and reduces discharge of wastewater into the National Marine Sanctuary. When completed, this project will produce 750 acre feet/year of additional supply.



Large projects are great but each household also has a part to play in reducing water use. One of the best resources can be found at PVWater.org. On the home page is the picture of a toolbox and it is a link to the water conservation tool kit. This toolkit is filled with practical solutions to saving water and money.

Big or small, California needs to save it all. Every drop counts as every part of the state learns how to do more with less water.