



Our Region's Trusted Water Leader
San Diego County Water Authority

WEDNESDAY WATER TALK

by Sandra L. Kerl, General Manager

Good afternoon, San Diego County leaders.

In recent weeks, we as a nation have been tasked – more urgently than ever before – with directly **confronting and correcting long-standing, systemic racial injustice in our society**. If our efforts as a nation are to finally succeed, they will require deep, difficult, enduring work and partnerships at both the personal and collective level. As the Water Authority's general manager, **I am committed to being part of the solution** in the days and weeks ahead to ensure the Water Authority is a workplace and community partner where everyone feels equally valued no matter a person's race, gender, religion or sexual orientation. **There is no place for discrimination at the Water Authority.**

Change begins with each one of us taking meaningful action in our personal and professional "homes." The need to listen to one another respectfully, confront our own biases, and ensure we create lasting change has never been more critical. I am looking forward to conversations with other regional leaders on actions we can take as an agency and as a region to **address racial inequities that affect employees, customers and other stakeholders.**

In the midst of this national movement, we're still working to advance a few major initiatives, including our energy program. While many people don't realize it, **the Water Authority plays an important role in our region's energy landscape** – and we are always seeking new ways to leverage our assets to generate more clean power.

One of our major projects is near Escondido, where we generate up to 40 megawatts of energy on demand by moving water back and forth between Lake Hodges and Olivenhain Reservoir. This pumped storage system **helps manage peak electrical demands and unplanned outages while creating revenue and helping offset operating costs.**

That's a good start, but there are more opportunities. That's why the Water Authority is partnering with the City of San Diego to develop a much larger energy storage system at San Vicente Reservoir. It would act like a **giant regional battery, storing clean solar and wind power** for when it's needed most, then generating on-demand power. The bonus is that this project could **help restart California's economy** with construction jobs.

We're also looking at how to install **floating solar panels on Olivenhain Reservoir** by working with a potential developer to optimize value to the Water Authority, and ultimately to ratepayers. And, we're planning to build a hydroelectric facility next year to **capture the energy from water we're delivering** to the City of San Diego's Alvarado Treatment Plant.

Thank you for your support. I would love to hear from you at GM@sdewa.org with your comments, suggestions or questions – particularly about how we move toward a more inclusive workplace and society.



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