



# Nipomo Community Services District DISTRICT NEWS

## Supplemental Water: On the Right Track

From July 2007 to June 2008, Nipomo received 10.5" inches of rain. Although this total was higher than the 6.6" recorded in the prior year, it was well below our historic average. Below-average rainfall translates into below-average percolation into our groundwater basin, which currently accounts for 100% of Nipomo's water supply.

Historically, the highest groundwater level is in April. Because of the low rainfall this year, it is not surprising that the April 2008 groundwater level (83,000 acre-feet) was lower than the April 2007 level (93,000 acre-feet) and the April 2006 level (104,000 acre-feet).

The April 2008 reading of 83,000 acre-feet is greater than the lowest-recorded April volume (59,000 acre-feet in 1989). However, overall water consumption is significantly greater today than it was in 1989. Consequently, NCS D's hydrologists predict that, in an average year, the volume of groundwater will drop by about 5,000 acre-feet per year.\*

As reported in previous editions of the District News, the NCS D Board has committed to developing the Waterline Intertie Project connecting the Nipomo Mesa to the City of Santa Maria so that supplemental water is available.

This new waterline would initially deliver 2,000 acre-feet per year, and could ultimately supply as much as 6,200 acre-feet per year. Completion of the first phase is expected in approximately three years and, assuming permits can be secured, by the end of 2009, the new water should be available in 2011.

On July 9, 2008, the NCS D Board hired Boyle Engineering Corporation to design the project. The overall design process is expected to take 16 months, with progressively more detailed sets of plans produced for review. The first phase of the design, development of the Concept Design Report,

including eleven technical memorandums, is expected to be completed by February 2009. The second phase of the design will be delivered when the design is 60% complete, and the third phase when the design is at 90% completion. At that point, the project construction contract will be sent out for bid, and competitive bids from qualified contractors are expected in October 2009, with construction occurring in late 2009 and all of 2010.



The proposed project involves construction of about five miles of new pipeline, starting at the corner of Blosser and Taylor in Santa Maria, where it is anticipated the NCS D will connect to the City of Santa Maria water distribution system. From this point, an 18" main will be constructed in Blosser north to the levy, and a 24" main will be constructed under the levy and the Santa Maria River using a technique called horizontal directional drilling. At the top of the bluff on the north side of the Santa Maria River, a pump station

and a 500,000-gallon storage reservoir will be built. The new water then will be connected with NCS D's existing water system at the corner of Orchard Road and Joshua. In addition, the NCS D will construct two new 12" water mains: one in Southland Street from

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## Supplemental Water: On The Right Track

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Orchard Road to South Frontage, and one in South Frontage from Southland to Tefft. Part of Boyle's design will evaluate options for eliminating the previously proposed pressure-reduction valves in the service lines of NCS's water customers living in the area bounded by Story Road, Orchard Road, Southland Street and South Frontage.

At the same time Boyle will be working on design of the project, Douglas Wood and Associates (DWA) will be preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). DWA is scheduled to release the Draft EIR in October 2008. Interested parties will be able to submit comments on the Draft EIR through November 27, 2008. DWA will then draft responses to the comments and prepare a Final EIR by the end of January 2009. The NCS Board will then consider certifying the Final EIR in February 2009.

Readers interested in more details can access the "Nipomo Waterline Intertie Project - Preliminary Engineering Memorandum" on the NCS's website ([www.ncsd.ca.gov](http://www.ncsd.ca.gov)), or contact the NCS office at 929-1133. The District's Supplemental Water Project Committee generally meets once per month to consider project issues. Public input is welcome and encouraged.

*\*This information has not been reviewed by the Nipomo Mesa Area Technical Group*

## High-Efficiency Clothes Washer Rebates Are Here!

**Save water, save energy, save money!** The Nipomo area's increasing population puts an increasing strain on our primary source of water: the Nipomo groundwater basin. One of the best ways to meet this increasing demand is for residents to install high-efficiency appliances.

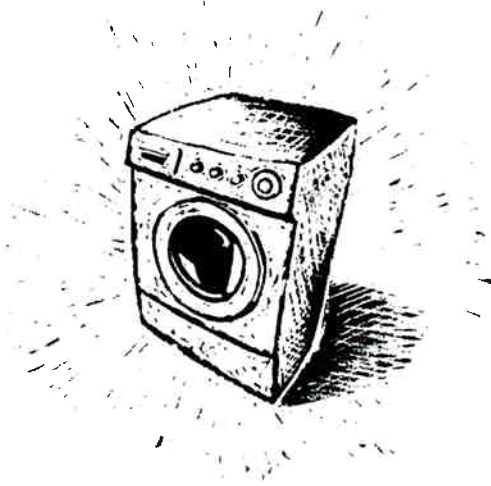
The NCS, in cooperation with the California Urban Water Conservation Council, will be offering \$150 rebates for the purchase of a high-efficiency clothes washer (6 gallons per wash or less). Compared to non-efficient models, the high-efficiency washers use 35-50% less water and require 50% less energy to heat the water. The clothes come out of the spin cycle

with much less moisture, resulting in energy savings from decreased clothes-dryer cycles

This rebate is funded by the NCS, but administered by the CUWCC. To apply for a rebate, or to get more information, visit [www.cuwcc.org](http://www.cuwcc.org) (click on "Smart Rebates").

In addition to this rebate, Southern California Gas Company ([www.socalgas.com](http://www.socalgas.com)) provides a \$30 rebate and PG&E ([www.pge.com](http://www.pge.com)) a rebate of \$35 or \$75, depending on the efficiency of the clothes washer. Visit their websites for more information.

NOTE: The District rebate, So Cal. Gas rebate and PG&E rebate have separate lists for qualifying models. If you want to qualify for all three rebates, be sure to check all three lists to ensure your washer is on all lists.



The District has posted on its website ([www.ncsd.ca.gov](http://www.ncsd.ca.gov), click on "Conservation") a list of high-efficiency washers that qualify (as of July 15, 2008) on all three lists.

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## Water Quality Report

NCS mailed out our 2007 Water Quality Report to all customers in June 2008.

The report confirmed that the water NCS delivers is better than all of the State and Federal Primary Drinking Water Standards, and is below the

Action Levels for Unregulated Contaminants. In addition, water taken at the tap inside a sampling of residences was lower than the action level for lead and copper.

On Evaluation for Secondary Standards (non-health related), NCS's average result was worse than the recommended levels for iron and corrosivity. Some of the samples were higher than the recommended levels for color and manganese, although each average of the respective samples was lower.

As most customers already know, NCS delivers relatively hard water. In 2007, the average reading for total hardness, measured as CaCO<sub>3</sub>, (calcium carbonate) was 311 parts per million. Hard water is common to coastal groundwater where the soil contains relatively high levels of magnesium and/or calcium. High levels of total hardness do not pose a health risk, but the water can cause scaling in plumbing and appliances.

Readers who want more detailed information are encouraged to pick up a 2007 Water Quality Report at the office, or read the report on NCS's website ([www.ncsd.ca.gov](http://www.ncsd.ca.gov)).

## Groundwater Salts Management

NCSD's future water supply will include softer water from the City of Santa Maria. However, some of our production will still be Nipomo Mesa groundwater, and the NCSD is committed to protecting the quality of that groundwater. The importance of this goal is heightened by our obligation to treat our wastewater so that it complies with California State's hardness limits. We currently exceed those limits and, even with a portion of our water source comprised of softer water, studies show that we will exceed our future discharge limits.

To solve this problem, NCSD is requesting that property owners with self-regenerating water softeners (rock salt water softeners) replace those systems with the canister systems offered by various water-softener companies. In homes connected to a sewer, the self-regenerating softeners discharge salt into the sewer. In homes connected to a septic system, the salt percolates to the groundwater basin. If 100% of the self-regenerative water softeners were replaced, the concentration of dissolved solids would drop by approximately 23%, and NCSD would achieve compliance with state discharge standards.

## Southland Wastewater Treatment Facility Upgrade

NCSD provides sewer service to a majority of its water customers with one treatment facility on Willow Road serving the Blacklake Village, and a second treatment facility on Southland Street (the Southland Wastewater Treatment Facility) serving the Town Division customers who do not have septic systems.

The Southland Wastewater Treatment Facility (SWTF) is approaching its hydraulic (flow) capacity, and it has chronic problems achieving the quality of treatment prescribed by the State of California.

To resolve these problems, the NCSD Board of Directors has researched the upgrade options and has selected a retrofit treatment technology that will increase the facility's hydraulic capacity and its treatment quality. Additionally, the SWTF is currently undersized and it must be replaced.

NCSD will consider proceeding with environmental review and design of these upgrades this Fall. The Board is

scheduled to select both a design engineer and an environmental specialist, which will allow preparation of an Environmental Impact Report and completion of the bid documents in 2009. Assuming that permits can be secured, this work should take place in 2010.

The issue of disposal of the treated wastewater remains unresolved. Unfortunately, the existing percolation ponds to the south of the facility are not working as designed, and NCSD needs to find a substitute disposal site. Although the treated wastewater does percolate into the soil at the existing site, the Santa Maria Valley Fault running down Orchard Road acts as a barrier to the migration of groundwater to the West. As a result, a mound of groundwater is building underneath the site with nowhere to go.

The Board will continue to evaluate options to resolve this problem, and the alternatives will be equally evaluated in the upgrade of the Environmental Impact Report. It is likely that the solution to the SWTF's wastewater discharge problem will be implemented at a later date.



### NCSD Mission and Vision Statements

*"The Nipomo Community Services District's mission is to provide the community with reliable, quality and cost-effective services."*

*"The Nipomo Community Services District's vision is to manage the resources and future growth of the community."*



## Upcoming Events

**Fall Community Clean-Up: September 22-26, 2008.** Your extra trash will be collected, free, on your regular trash day! Call South County Sanitary Services (489-4246) for further information.

**SLO County Creek Day 2008: September 27, 9 AM to Noon.** Support your local creek! Nipomo Creek plays a vital role in our community. Debris in the creek contributes to community pollution, ocean pollution, and flooding in the winter. Fall is a great time to clean out the accumulated debris in the creek because it helps prevent winter flooding.

Join us on September 27, 9 AM to Noon to work with other members of our community in this important cleanup project. We will meet at the Adobe Plaza on Tefft Street. Bring comfortable working clothes and your enthusiasm!

**CREEK DAY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**  
Call 929-1133 to register.

Questions? Call Celeste at 929-1133.



## For More Information

### Water-Efficient Home and Landscape

**Be Water Wise:** [www.bewaterwise.com](http://www.bewaterwise.com)

**Santa Barbara Water Page:** [www.sbwater.org](http://www.sbwater.org)

**Water House:** [www.h2ouse.org](http://www.h2ouse.org)

**Water Family Game:** [www.thewaterfamily.co.uk](http://www.thewaterfamily.co.uk)

### Water-Efficient Irrigation Systems:

[www.sbwater.org/WeatherTechnology.htm](http://www.sbwater.org/WeatherTechnology.htm)

**Irrigation tutorials:** [www.irrigationtutorials.com](http://www.irrigationtutorials.com)

**Drip Irrigation:** [www.dripirrigation.ca](http://www.dripirrigation.ca)

### Info on the NCS D Website

(<http://www.ncsd.ca.gov/cm/Resources/Conservation.html>)

- "Reading Your Water Meter"
- "Detecting Leaks"
- "Drip Irrigation"
- "Septic Tank Maintenance"
- "Even You Can Fix a Leaky Faucet"
- "Why Use California Native Plants?"
- "Selected Drought-Tolerant Plants for the Nipomo Area"
- "Frequently Asked Questions about Water Conservation"
- "Tired of Paying a High Price for Your Landscape?"
- "Timing is Everything! You and Your Irrigation Controller"
- "Pharmaceuticals in the Water Supply"
- "Recycling and ReUse Guide"
- "Household Hazardous Waste: Where Do I Put It?"

**Printed copies of these documents (and more!) are available in the lobby at the NCS D Office.**



## NCS D Staff

- Bruce S. Buel, General Manager.
- Lisa S. Bognuda, Assistant General Manager
- Peter Sevcik, District Engineer
- Tina Grietens, Utilities Superintendent
- Celeste Whitlow, Water Conservation Coordinator



*"Water and air, the two essential fluids on which all life depends, have become global garbage cans."*

-Jacques Cousteau (1910-1997)

## Up-Coming Meetings

### SEPTEMBER

- Wednesday 9/10/08 (Board)
- Wednesday 9/24/08 (Board)

### OCTOBER

- Wednesday 10/8/08 (Board)
- Wednesday 10/22/08 (Board)

### NOVEMBER

- Wednesday 11/12/08 (Board)
- Wednesday 11/26/08 (Board)

**Board Meetings, unless otherwise indicated, are held in the Board Room at the NCS D office (148 S. Wilson St., Nipomo) .**

**Board packets can be downloaded from the NCS D website ([www.ncsd.ca.gov](http://www.ncsd.ca.gov)) 72 hours before the meeting**



## Water Conservation Update: Conserve Now

After two years of less-than-average rainfall and three years of decreased snow-pack, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger recently proclaimed California is in a statewide drought.

Communities throughout the state are using increasingly stronger incentives to help their residents decrease their consumption of water. Incentives range from subsidized programs to replace lawns with drought-tolerant plant material to increasing water rates, especially for the consumers who use large amounts of water.



In California, an estimated 60% of the water consumption for a single-family home is for outdoor use. Of the total water used for outdoor purposes, an estimated 80% to 90% is for lawn irrigation.

A typical residence with an average-sized yard, if watered efficiently, is estimated to be able to save about 127,000 gallons a year.

Clearly, we need to ensure we use water as efficiently as possible. Fixing leaks is the first step, but there are many other ways in which we can save water. For water saving tips, visit the NCS D's website ([www.ncsd.ca.gov](http://www.ncsd.ca.gov)) and click on "CONSERVATION."