



# WATER VIEWS

SERVING THE PUBLIC, RESPECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

## CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS WITH CLEAN AND CLEAR PIPES

What goes down your drain doesn't simply disappear!



Fats, oils and grease can build up in your pipes and cause messy clogs and sewer backups.

### Avoid FOG Clogs

Preparing a piping hot, home-cooked holiday feast makes the season brighter and is a wonderful way to connect with family and friends on chillier winter days. But the fats, oils and grease, called FOG, from your favorite holiday dishes, including

turkey drippings, cooking oils, gravy and more, can cause big trouble if not disposed of properly.

Keep your holiday celebrations flowing smoothly by disposing of FOG in the trash, not down the drain. This step is essential to protect your plumbing because FOG hardens as it cools, building up inside plumbing and sewer pipes, and potentially leading to clogs and messy sewer backups that can require expensive repairs and damage your home and our community's wastewater system.

### Stress-free Holiday Kitchen Tips

- Scrape food scraps and grease into the trash and wipe oily pots and pans with a paper towel before washing dishes.
- Collect cooled cooking grease and other FOG substances in a container, such as a coffee can or jar, and dispose of it in your green waste container or in the trash if you do not have organic recycling in your area.

### FOG Substances to Keep Out of Your Drain

- Gravy
- Meat drippings
- Cooking oil
- Butter, margarine, shortening and lard
- Mayonnaise



## Wipes Can Wreck Your Pipes

Despite what the label might say, "flushable" wipes aren't truly flushable. They don't break down like toilet paper. Flushing wipes down the toilet can cause massive plumbing issues. Stay plumbing-safe this holiday season – toss wipes in the trash can and only flush the 3 Ps: pee, poop and (toilet) paper.

### What to Flush: The 3 P's



DON'T FLUSH IT



## EL TORO WATER DISTRICT

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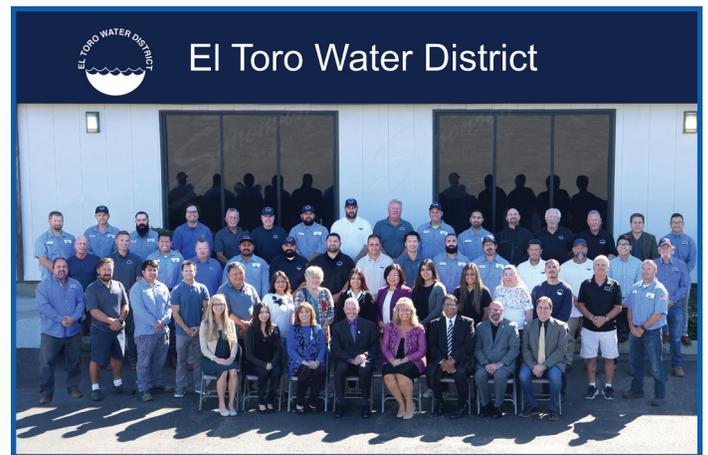
# ETWD CELEBRATES WATER AGENCY STAFF DURING CALIFORNIA'S WATER PROFESSIONALS APPRECIATION WEEK

Each October, California celebrates Water Professionals Appreciation Week—a time dedicated to recognizing the critical work of the individuals who ensure our state's water systems run safely and efficiently. This year marks the ninth annual observance, and El Toro Water District (ETWD) is proud to join in honoring the dedicated professionals who protect one of our most vital resources.

## Honoring the People Behind the Water

At ETWD, our success depends on a diverse team of highly trained professionals who work tirelessly to provide safe, reliable, and sustainable water, wastewater, and recycled water services to our community. From field technicians responding to emergencies, to engineers designing system improvements, to customer service representatives assisting residents—each plays a vital role in maintaining the high quality of service our customers expect and deserve.

Our water operators carefully monitor and maintain water quality to meet or exceed state and federal standards. Distribution system operators ensure that clean water reaches homes and businesses every day. Maintenance crews and utility technicians keep pipelines, valves, and pumps operating efficiently. Meanwhile, administrative and customer service staff support operations, manage billing, and communicate with the public to ensure transparency and trust.



## A Team Dedicated to the Community

We are grateful for the commitment and professionalism of our employees, whose expertise ensures that every drop of water is managed responsibly—from collection and treatment to distribution and reuse. Their efforts not only safeguard public health but also support local sustainability and environmental stewardship.

## Explore a Career in Water

As California faces growing challenges related to water supply, conservation, and climate change, the need for skilled water professionals has never been greater. Careers in the water industry are as diverse as they are rewarding, offering opportunities in engineering, operations, information technology, environmental science, finance, and public affairs.

If you're looking for a meaningful career that makes a difference every day, consider a career in water. Together, we can continue to protect and deliver one of our most precious resources—safe, reliable water for generations to come.

# REBATE NEWS FLASH



Laguna Woods Village Commercial Common Area before and after.



## Commercial Customers Can Now Get More Cash for Grass

ETWD commercial customers and HOAs can now receive up to \$7 per square foot\* (on a limited basis) to remove thirsty turf and replace it with water-wise landscaping. The increase in funds will help commercial customers prepare for AB 1572, California's new legislation that will ban using drinking water to irrigate nonfunctional turf on most commercial and public properties in a phased approach starting in 2027. The new rules do not apply to single-family residential properties.

Applications are due February 28, 2026 and projects must be completed by July 31, 2026. To learn more, contact ETWD Water Resources Supervisor Vu Chu at **(949) 837-7050, ext. 253**, or visit [etwd.com/conservation/ab-1572](http://etwd.com/conservation/ab-1572).

*\*Turf rebates do not apply to designated recycled water sites. If you have already removed your turf, your project is not eligible for this program. Additionally, projects must not be started prior to the receipt and acknowledgment of this Program's Letter to Proceed.*

## RESIDENTIAL REBATES HOLD STRONG THIS SEASON, PLUS A NEW TREE REBATE



For more information, visit [etwd.com/conservation/rebates](http://etwd.com/conservation/rebates).

## Residential Outdoor Rebates

PROGRAM/DEVICE	REBATE LEVEL
<b>New Tree Rebate</b>	ETWD customers participating in the Turf Replacement Program will be eligible for a Tree Rebate that provides \$100 per tree installed, with a maximum rebate of \$500 for up to 5 trees per turf replacement project.
<b>Weather Based Smart Sprinkler Timer</b>	Up to \$250
<b>Soil Moisture Sensor Controller</b>	Up to \$150
<b>Rotating Sprinkler Nozzles</b>	Up to \$2 per nozzle (min. 15)
<b>Drip Irrigation</b>	\$1 sq. ft. up to 5,000 sq. ft.
<b>Rain Barrels and Cisterns</b>	Up to \$50 per rain barrel and \$250 - \$350 per cistern
<b>Turf Removal</b>	\$4 sq. ft. up to 5,000 sq. ft. (annual maximum)* <i>For applications received by February 26, 2026 and projects completed by July 31, 2026.</i>

*\*Turf rebates do not apply to designated recycled water sites*

*\*If you have already removed your turf, your project is not eligible for this program. Additionally, projects must not be started prior to the receipt and acknowledgment of this Program's Letter to Proceed.*

## Residential Indoor Rebates

PROGRAM/DEVICE	REBATE LEVEL
<b>High Efficiency Clothes Washers</b>	Up to \$200
<b>Premium High Efficiency Toilets</b> (4-Liter) Replace existing 1.6 gpf toilets with a 1.1 gpf or less toilet.	Up to \$100 per toilet

## Water Saving Programs

<b>Turf Replacement Resources</b>	Program Documents, Turf Replacement Guide, Tree Resources, Firescaping, Plant Lists, How to Hire a Contractor, Irrigation Guide and more!
<b>California Friendly Landscape Designs</b>	FREE OC Friendly Landscape Designs for your use

# NEW ETWD WEBSITE COMING SOON

El Toro Water District (ETWD) is excited to announce that a new and improved District website is on the way. The District's website plays a vital role in connecting customers with essential information, services, and updates. From paying utility bills to accessing water rate details, reviewing public notices, exploring conservation programs, and learning about District operations, the ETWD website is a key resource for our community.

## A More User-Friendly Experience

The redesigned website will offer a streamlined experience that makes it easier to find the information you need.

## Improved Accessibility and Transparency

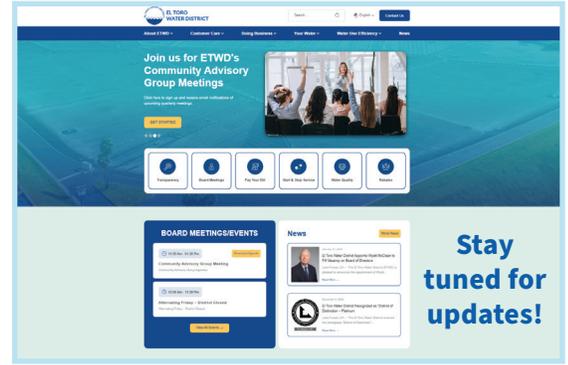
ETWD is committed to making District information accessible to everyone. The new website will ensure that all community members easily navigate and understand site content.

## Enhanced Security and Compliance

The new website incorporates updated security features that safeguard customer data and ensure reliable access to online services. The project also aligns with industry regulations and transparency requirements, reinforcing ETWD's dedication to accountability and customer trust.

## Supporting Public Engagement

With improved navigation, updated content, and better integration of District news and announcements, the new website will make it even easier for the community to stay informed and involved.

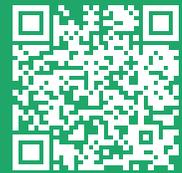


## Learn About Your Water at the next ETWD Community Advisory Group Meeting

Join ETWD for our quarterly Community Advisory Group (CAG) Meeting on Thursday, Feb. 12, 2026, from 11:30 am - 1:30 p.m.

ETWD will share the latest updates on water, wastewater, and recycled water with our community.

Lunch will be provided. Scan the QR code to sign up for CAG Meeting invitations.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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The Board of Directors meeting takes place on the fourth Thursday of the month, and the Engineering and Finance Committee meets on the Monday before the Board of Directors meeting. Both meetings start at 7:30 a.m. in person and via Zoom teleconference.

We encourage you to join us. Meeting agendas are posted on our website and include teleconference access and instructions. Learn more: [etwd.com/governance/meetings-agendas-minutes](https://etwd.com/governance/meetings-agendas-minutes)

ETWD delivers drinking water, recycled water and wastewater services to customers in the City of Laguna Woods and portions of the cities of Lake Forest, Mission Viejo, Laguna Hills and Aliso Viejo

Have questions? Call us at (949) 837-7050 or email us at [district@etwd.com](mailto:district@etwd.com).

