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# Pacifica Tribune

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Conservation | Dealing with drought

## Water districts talk tech, habits during drought

By August Howell  
Staff writer

Water agencies are eyeing another dry year across the state and local water districts are taking steps to get their users to cut back and invest in water conservation methods.

Two area water agencies, Coastside County Water District and the North Coast County Water District, are asking their customers to voluntarily reduce outdoor water use by 10 percent. For households, saving water comes down to changing behavior and investing in automatic systems, said Cathleen Brennan, CCWD's resource analyst. Customers might wash the car less, take shorter showers or wait to run the dishwasher until it's full. One benefit of installing timers or aerators is the convenience.

"People don't have to think about it," Brennan said. "They can take the same five-

to 10-minute shower and use less water. It's not something they have to change their routine around."

Adrienne Carr, the NCCWD's general manager, said that local water agencies are still seeing reduced daily water use in the Bay Area after customers cut back during the last statewide drought from 2012-2017. She believes that the combination of habit changes from customers and emphasis on conservation technology has led to lower water use.

Although automated methods are convenient, Brennan and other district leaders say the most impactful way to reduce water use in San Mateo County is by reducing landscape watering.

Studies have shown that statewide, outdoor irrigation is responsible for as much as half of all water used by a household. Alternatives like installing mulch and drought-resistant plants are sometimes more expensive but are among the most effective ways

for a household to save water. Mulch alone can save 20 to 30 gallons per 1,000 square feet. Planting proper vegetation can save between 30 to 60 gallons per 1,000 square feet, according to the CCWD's website.

A drip irrigation system saves 15 gallons each time you water, and adding a smart controller saves more than 24 gallons per day. Fixing sprinkler heads saves 12 to 15 gallons each time you water, and even small leaks can waste as much as 6,300 gallons a month, the website says.

But while it's tempting to replant lawns with drought-resistant plants, Brennan noted now might not be the best time for a full lawn makeover. Because young plants require more water to grow, it can be counterproductive to make such decisions during a drought season.

"During a drought, it's not the time to decide to re-landscape," she said. "It's those in-between years when we're not dealing with water shortages or really dry

**More information**

- ▶ Free conservation tools from the North Coast County Water District <https://www.nccwd.com/conservation-rebates/free-conservation-tools.html>
- ▶ The Coastside County Water District has methods for indoor and outdoor water conservation.
- ▶ [coastsidewater.org/water-use-efficiency/water-conservation-tips](https://coastsidewater.org/water-use-efficiency/water-conservation-tips)

landscapes."

Some water agencies offer incentives for customers, like Mid-Peninsula Water District's Lawn-Be-Gone Rebate program that allows select customers on the bayside to be paid to build drought-tolerant and water-efficient landscaping. Some water districts also

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Sports | Back on track



ADAM PARDEE / TRIBUNE

### Another shot at last

Terra Nova's Tyler Parker launches his shot during a track and field event against Hillsdale at Terra Nova High School in Pacifica on Thursday. The event was just another sign of a more normal high school experience. **Story, Page 8.**

Health | COVID-19

## Contact tracing program brought mixed results in county

By Sarah Wright  
Staff writer

State and local health leaders say that over the past year, they had some success with contact tracing — the process of notifying people who came in close contact with a positive COVID-19 case — but acknowledge that trouble with remote training, changing protocols and understaffing during surges of the disease hobbled the program.

San Mateo County public health leaders say that while the winter surge of COVID-19 cases stretched their contact tracing capacity, the \$19 million effort to find those exposed to the disease led to some success

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Certified | General Plan guidelines

## Planning Commission approves capital improvements in Pacifica

By Sarah Wright  
Staff writer

The Pacifica Planning Commission certified all items on the city's capital improvement program, saying they meet general plan guidelines and local coastal land use plan rules.

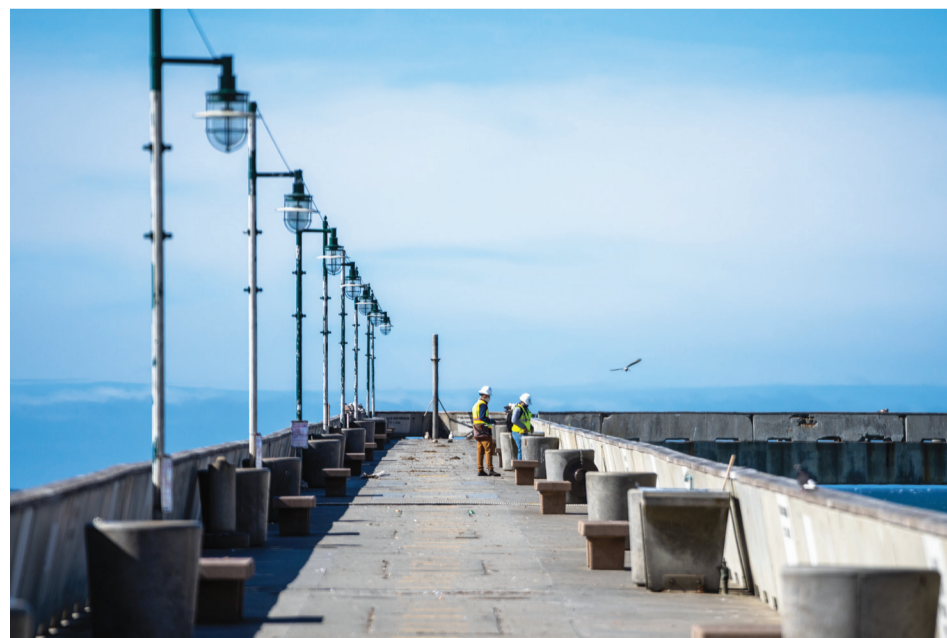
There are 20 new projects the city of Pacifica is undertaking this fiscal year, said Bonny O'Connor, associate planner at the May 17 meeting.

They include upgrading the heating and ventilation system at the Community Center and resurfacing city streets in the Sharp Park and Rockaway Beach areas. Riprap was repaired on Adobe Drive. Inspectors completed an inspection of storm drains.

The Police Department improved radio infrastructure. North Coast County Fire Authority's fire station 72 had emergency signals restored. The Public Works motor pool building was repaired.

Esplanade and Palmetto avenues got bike lane improvements and the area had pedestrian improvements completed. Repairs were made to the Pacifica Pier.

The Calera Creek Water Recycling Plant



ADAM PARDEE / TRIBUNE

**As the city of Pacifica sets its capital improvement budget, the city's pier looms as an expensive priority.**

generated projects, replacing pipes at the drain pump station, pipe line spot repairs, electrical condition assessment, adminis-

trative building elevator assessment, Linda Mar Pump Station pump upgrade and 540 Crespi Drive tree replacement. ■

Environment | Public meeting

## New county agency takes on flooding, sea level rise

By Sarah Wright  
Staff writer

A new local district aimed at combating the effects of sea level rise and flooding is making waves this year starting with a series of public meetings as it works to define its budget and priorities.

The San Mateo County Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District, known as One-Shoreline, was founded in early 2020 by the California Legislature to work to prevent and to address the effects of flooding and sea level rise throughout the county and on its shores, both on the Bayside and the Coastside.

Vice Chair Debbie Ruddock, who represents coastal cities Pacifica, Daly City and

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