

WATER RELIABILITY 2020 FACT SHEET



Imported Water Challenged

Southern California lies at the end of a very long water delivery system. We cannot exist without imported water from Northern California and the Colorado River. Imported water currently provides about 66 percent of the water used by communities served by West Basin Municipal Water District, and this is a problem.

California's water system was built in the 1970s to serve 18 million people. It is currently serving 37 million people and soon will be serving 50 million. Our water infrastructure is out of date. The hub of the system, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta, is broken and vulnerable to earthquakes that could interrupt Southern California water deliveries for up to two years, according to the Association of California Water Agencies. A historic court order that mandates a 30 percent reduction in pumping to Southern California is in place to protect the Delta's failing ecosystem.

The Colorado River basin, our other source of imported water, is over allocated, over taxed and in its eighth year of drought. It is serving some of the fastest growing cities and states in the nation. California has already lost its surplus water from the Colorado River and we are faced with future environmental and international challenges for this resource. Climatologists are predicting a permanent climate change is ahead for the Colorado River basin, similar to the dust bowl of the 1930s.

Water's relationship with the environment, agriculture and cities has changed. We now need to modify our water system to accommodate climate change, variations in California's annual snowpack and a growing population to make our water more reliable. There are no quick solutions on the horizon.

Water Reliability 2020

Since the District's formation in 1947, West Basin has remained steadfast in its commitment to ensuring water reliability. Faced with water supply challenges, West Basin is launching a far-reaching initiative that increases supply dependability. The Water Reliability 2020 program will reduce our dependence on imported water by extending recycled water pipelines, doubling conservation, expanding education programs and developing ocean-water desalination. The combination of these efforts will cut our regional dependence on imported water from about 66 percent today to 33 percent in 2020.

Benefits of Water Reliability 2020

What does this mean at the tap for West Basin customers?

- Protection from mandatory water restrictions
- An emergency water supply when, and if, imported water is temporarily cut off by earthquake or terrorists
- Help for the local environment by reducing overall energy use through increased education, conservation and recycling`
- Excellent quality of life maintained for the coastal area of Los Angeles
- Over time, local water quality improvements





“Hooking Up” to Recycled Water

West Basin has a long recycling history and reputation as a world-class leader in water reuse. Since 1992, West Basin has reclaimed 30 million gallons of water daily from the state-of-the-art Edward C. Little Water Recycling Facility in El Segundo. Our facility supplies five different qualities of customer-desired, “designer” water that meet the unique needs of West Basin’s municipal, commercial and industrial customers. This huge effort conserves enough drinking water--about 7 percent of the region’s water supply--to meet the needs of 60,000 households for a year. The Water Reliability 2020 Program will roughly triple West Basin’s recycled efforts from 7 percent to 22 percent of our local water supply.



Aggressive Conservation

Since the drought of the 1990s, West Basin has launched aggressive water conservation programs to help residents, businesses, and public facilities use water more efficiently. Using such tools as education, rebate incentives and plumbing hardware retrofits, West Basin’s conservation measures have saved more than 5.4 billion gallons of imported water, equivalent to the amount used by 30,000 households. This is expected to double with the Water Reliability 2020 Program.



Looking Toward the Ocean

West Basin has been testing the feasibility of ocean-water desalination since 2002. After six successful years of study and tens of thousands of water-quality tests conducted at our pilot facility in El Segundo, West Basin is developing a Temporary Ocean-Water Desalination Demonstration Facility at the SEA Lab in Redondo Beach. The facility will research and test the safest intake methods for ocean-water using a simulated under-ocean floor system and passive wedge wire screen technology. The goal is to produce 20 million gallons a day to help supplement our water supply and be available in case of emergency.



About West Basin

West Basin is an innovative public agency that provides drinking and recycled water to its 185-square mile service area. West Basin purchases imported water from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and wholesales the imported water to cities and private companies in coastal Los Angeles County. West Basin is a recognized leader in the production of recycled water and its conservation and education programs are fundamental to West Basin’s diverse water supply portfolio. To protect our local groundwater basin from seawater intrusion, West Basin provides water for injection into the South Bay’s seawater barriers. West Basin is committed to providing our customers and communities with water reliability, water quality, sound financial and resource management, customer service and environmental stewardship.

