



Media Release

Water Board grants Lamont District \$25.4 million to secure safe drinking water for 20,000 residents

Project will consolidate systems of two severely disadvantaged communities

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LAMONT – In Kern County today, the State Water Resources Control Board joined Lamont Public Utility District and elected representatives to celebrate a \$25.4 million grant the utility is receiving from the board’s [Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience \(SAFER\)](#) drinking water program – which has to date invested over \$65 million in the county since 2019. The grant announced today will allow the consolidation of the historically failing water systems serving Lamont and El Adobe Property Owners’ Association to create a new, upgraded system that will supply safe and affordable water to over 20,000 residents.

“This is the result of many years of hard work—coordinating separate authorities and overcoming many challenges to craft a feasible solution that will provide safe and affordable drinking water,” said Nichole Morgan, member of the State Water Board. “But through the sheer determination, cooperation and goodwill of all involved, Lamont PUD now has a sound plan and the means to build a drinking water system that will serve this community for generations to come.”

The project includes drilling three new drinking water wells, the destruction of three 45-year-old wells—that exceeded the state [Maximum Contaminant Levels \(MCL\)](#) for [arsenic](#) and [1,2,3-trichloropropane](#)— and the construction of a new water distribution system for El Adobe, which currently has elevated levels of arsenic. El Adobe will be connected to Lamont PUD through the installation of a 10-inch transmission main and water meters.

“For us, this is monumental. We have never received assistance of this magnitude in our 80-year existence,” said Scott Taylor, general manager of Lamont PUD. “The grant helps us make critical repairs and upgrades to our system so that we can reliably provide safe and affordable drinking water for our customers and El Adobe as well. Both Lamont and El Adobe are severely disadvantaged communities and our customers are mostly agricultural workers. This never would have been possible without the board’s funding and technical support through the SAFER program.”

In Kern County, where Lamont is located, 14 other projects consolidating more than 50 systems, including two schools, are currently being developed through SAFER. Since it



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was launched in July 2019, the program has invested over \$65 million in the county for a variety of drinking water projects that will ultimately benefit 212,000 people. Statewide, 95 consolidations have been completed, providing 78,000 people with safe drinking water.

SAFER uses a set of tools, funding sources and regulatory authorities designed to ensure Californians who currently lack safe and affordable drinking water receive it as quickly as possible. Funding provided through the program is drawn from various drinking water funding sources. The grant awarded for this project is comprised of funding for drinking water infrastructure authorized in the 2021-22 state budget and Proposition 68.

Lamont PUD anticipates it will begin construction this summer.

The State Water Board's mission is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment and public health, and to ensure proper resource allocation and efficient use for present and future generations.



The SAFER Program includes projects funded by the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund, which is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide initiative that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment-particularly in disadvantaged communities.