



Media Release

State-funded project will protect groundwater, increase water recycling in Coachella Valley

\$68 million grant funds new wastewater treatment plant

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DESERT HOT SPRINGS – The Mission Springs Water District today celebrated the ribbon-cutting of a new state-funded wastewater facility, the Nancy Wright Regional Water Reclamation Facility, which will improve groundwater quality and support future growth in the Coachella Valley.

The State Water Resources Control Board in 2022 awarded the district a \$68 million grant from a combination of general fund investments made by Gov. Gavin Newsom and the Legislature in 2021 and voter-approved Proposition 1 grant funds. The grant is the third largest small community wastewater grant ever issued by the State Water Board.

The new facility will greatly reduce wastewater discharges into local groundwater supplies by allowing approximately 700 Desert Hot Springs homes and businesses currently using septic tanks to connect to the public sewer system. More than 25,000 feet of new underground sewer pipes will expand the district's wastewater treatment capacity and extend the lifespan of an existing treatment plant by as much as 10 years.

“Modernizing and expanding wastewater systems keeps harmful pollutants such as nitrates out of our aquifers and moves us closer to meeting the state’s ambitious water recycling goals,” said Joaquin Esquivel, State Water Board chair. “This project demonstrates the board’s commitment to working with local water and sanitation agencies and funding multi-benefit projects that can protect groundwater quality and allow sustainable growth in their communities.”

The state-of-the-art reclamation facility was also designed to produce recycled water, an essential alternative source of water that could be used in the future to replenish groundwater supplies, grow crops, irrigate lawns and meet industrial needs.

Increasing wastewater recycling capabilities is a key piece of Gov. Newsom’s [Water Supply Strategy](#) for adapting to a hotter, drier future. Over the past three fiscal years, the state has provided \$1.4 billion in assistance for water recycling projects that, when complete, will generate about 245,000 acre-feet per year of additional water, or about half the capacity of Millerton Lake, located near the city of Fresno.



These efforts also support Gov. Newsom's [build more, faster agenda](#) to deliver infrastructure upgrades across the state.

The facility, located near an important Riverside County transit corridor, will allow the district to treat an additional 1.5 million gallons of wastewater per day while reducing the burden on an older treatment plant. The increased wastewater treatment capacity and the ability to recycle wastewater will support growth in Desert Hot Springs and the surrounding area.

"We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the state for making the grant funding for this project available," said Ivan Sewell, Mission Springs Water District board president. "This project is especially vital for our disadvantaged community, providing essential infrastructure that promotes public health and environmental sustainability."

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, public health, and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper resource allocation and efficient use for present and future generations.