

# THE ACWD AQUEDUCT

News and Information for the Customers of the Alameda County Water District

Shinn Pond, Fremont



## Message From the General Manager

As we start a new year, I am excited to share some updates and initiatives ACWD has planned for our customers and community in 2024.

Many of you already know about ACWD's new customer portal called "My Smart Water Connect" which allows you to view your water consumption, set alerts for high water use, handle bill payment and automation, and provides many other ways for you to monitor and manage your water. My Smart Water Connect becomes even more powerful when coupled with the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) meters we are currently installing system wide. Customers can download the ACWD My Smart Water Connect app or visit [portal.acwd.org](http://portal.acwd.org) to access these great new tools – especially if you already have an AMI meter!

ACWD continues to advance programs that enhance water quality and sustainability. We released a new web-based residential do-it-yourself home water survey which guides customers through steps to increase water savings at your convenience. Continue reading to learn more about how to use this convenient tool to receive a free customized water savings report and free water efficient fixtures and devices for your home. At the same time, ACWD's water main cleaning program is fully underway for 2024 following program reductions during the recent drought.

With your water quality as a top priority, ACWD is proactively addressing an issue of emerging concern to water agencies nationwide. We have started the construction of a state-of-the-art treatment facility to remove PFAS from groundwater. PFAS are synthetic compounds used in many household, hygiene, and industrial products. To ensure the utmost water quality protection, we are fast-tracking implementation of this treatment technology. Read on to learn more.

A modest, previously approved rate increase will become effective March 1 to enable ACWD to continue to provide quality service, treatment technology, and water supply reliability. This adjustment is essential to fund crucial infrastructure improvements and maintain the high standards you expect from us. We understand your costs for everything, including utilities, have been going up and we continue to do our best to control our costs, while providing the greatest value in our services, programs, and facilities.

At ACWD, we know transparency is the foundation of trust, and we value the trust you have placed in us. We will continue and constantly enhance our work to keep customers informed. While this newsletter provides information on some of our programs, community members are always encouraged to attend any of our many public meetings, call us, or visit [acwd.org](http://acwd.org) to learn more. Please reach out if you have questions or simply want to learn more about anything ACWD does.

We appreciate your ongoing support as we work collectively to provide you the best service while creating a more resilient and sustainable water future for our community.

May you have a healthy and prosperous year.  
Ed Stevenson, General Manager



## 2024 Rates Effective March 1

Water rates are essential to funding critical infrastructure projects and services to carry out ACWD's mission. Each rate cycle, the District reviews revenues and expenses and proposes necessary adjustments so customers continue to receive expected services without compromise.

The ACWD Board of Directors approved a two-year water rate increase on February 9, 2023. The second phase of that rate increase takes effect on March 1, 2024, when the service and consumption charges will increase by 4 percent.

ACWD will use the revenues from the rate increase to:

- Construct and modernize capital infrastructure to meet increasing environmental and water quality regulations and standards
- Fund significant water supply and water quality initiatives
- Meet debt covenants
- Maintain competitive salaries and benefits to attract and retain a qualified workforce

In our commitment to fiscal responsibility, we actively seek grants and alternative funding sources to reduce the pressure on rates. Any additional rate increases are subject to future approvals. A series of public rate-setting workshops are planned for the summer/fall of 2024 to review water rates, and public participation is encouraged. Learn more about the District's water rates process at [acwd.org/rates](http://acwd.org/rates).



## New Program Makes Saving Water Easy and Convenient

A new Residential Do-It-Yourself Home Water Use Online Survey Form is available to help customers conduct a comprehensive water use review and leak check of their homes.

### What the survey includes:

Instructions and guidance for checking indoor and outdoor fixture flow rates, leaks, and inefficiencies, including in bathrooms and irrigation systems.



Customers who complete the survey form will receive custom recommendations for improving water use efficiency in their homes and free water-efficient fixtures such as low-flow aerators and showerheads, if needed. For more information and to complete the online form (the survey form is also available as a hard copy), please visit [acwd.org/homesurvey](http://acwd.org/homesurvey).



# The People of ACWD



Christine S.  
Office Supervisor for the  
Operations Department

Christine S., Office Supervisor for the Operations Department | Whether ACWD customers have questions about the Main Cleaning Program or there is a water emergency, Christine S., Operations Office Supervisor and her team are there to answer your questions and dispatch the staff needed to resolve issues. Internally, Christine and her team support the employees in Operations, from the staff members who test water samples and hydrants, to the team that keeps ACWD's facilities running to ensure we provide the Tri-City area with quality water.

**WHAT WERE YOU DOING BEFORE WORKING AT ACWD?** Prior to working at ACWD, I was a Work Rehabilitation Aid. My disposition to provide guidance to others lead me to a position managing a physical therapy office for 20 years. I knew I wanted to continue to help people in my next career and was introduced to the water industry from a former colleague. Working at ACWD was an opportunity for me to serve the public.

**HOW HAS YOUR ROLE CHANGED SINCE YOU STARTED AT ACWD?** I joined ACWD in 2015, and my first role was in the Engineering and Technology Services (ETS) department as an Office Assistant. I worked in ETS for six years, starting as an Office Assistant I and then getting promoted to Office Assistant II. In 2021, I applied for an opportunity to become an Office Supervisor in Operations and was thrilled to receive the promotion. I have been a supervisor for two years and enjoy my role and working with my team.

**WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF IN YOUR CAREER?** The best part about my job is working with the people in the Operations department. We have good group dynamics and a team environment. I am proud to contribute to our great culture at ACWD by mentoring and coaching colleagues and being a loyal employee. We support each other, and I do my best to assist staff members and customers. My staff and I speak to multiple customers, sometimes in stressful situations during water emergencies. We get to address their issues and help find solutions.



Listen to some of Christine's favorite songs on ACWD's Spotify Channel!

**WHAT DO YOU ENJOY DOING WHEN YOU ARE NOT AT WORK?** The two places that ground me are the beach and the mountains. One of my go-to beaches is in Half Moon Bay; I recently went there with my kids and grandkids. It was a great time. I also love spending time with my twin sister when I can make the drive to visit her!



## ACWD Tackles PFAS: Proactive Treatment & Transparency

Facing the challenge of PFAS, a group of synthetic chemicals widely used in consumer and industrial products that has impacted many water supply sources throughout the country, ACWD has taken swift action, including:

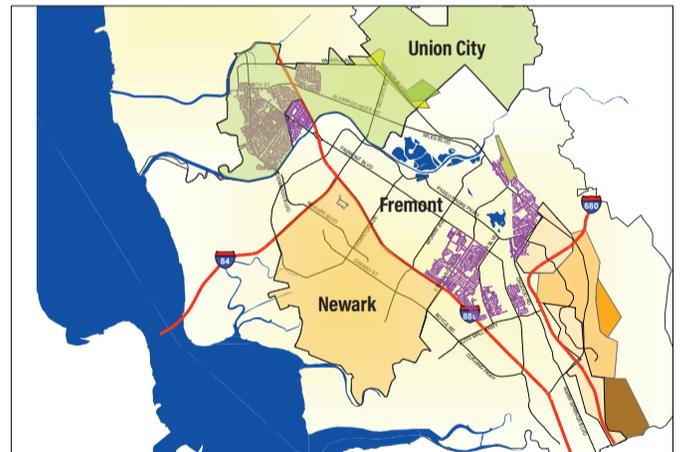
- **Early Detection & Planning:** Extensive testing since 2020 pinpointed PFAS-affected sources, enabling implementation of operational strategies to minimize PFAS in produced water. Proactive planning explored treatment options and laid the groundwork for implementing treatment solutions.
- **Fast-track PFAS Treatment:** The construction of a PFAS treatment system at ACWD's Blending Facility in Fremont began in December 2023, aiming to remove PFAS from groundwater when the project is complete later this year.
- **Transparency & Community Engagement:** Regular website updates, public meetings and workshops, and readily available resources keep customers informed and questions answered. For information on ACWD's PFAS frequently asked questions, visit [acwd.org/PFAS](http://acwd.org/PFAS).

ACWD's proactive approach ensures sustainable water for the community, meeting or surpassing all current and future drinking water quality standards. For more information on this and other projects the District is building to deliver quality drinking water, visit [acwd.org/currentprojects](http://acwd.org/currentprojects).



## Water Main Cleaning Program in Progress

Every January through June, ACWD crews clean water mains to maintain the high-quality of your tap water. ACWD cleans a portion of the water mains each year, and all dead-end mains in the Tri-City area are cleaned every year. In 2024, the areas highlighted in magenta color on the map will also be cleaned.



Map of neighborhoods scheduled for main cleaning (highlighted in magenta color).

Visit [acwd.org/maincleaning](http://acwd.org/maincleaning) or call 510.668.6500, for program details, including:

- Frequently asked questions
- Street lists of neighborhoods scheduled
- What to do if you experience discolored water following main cleaning
- Program updates

## The ACWD Aqueduct A publication of the Alameda County Water District



### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

James G. Gunther, President  
Judy Huang, Vice President  
Aziz Akbari  
Paul Sethy  
John Weed

Board meetings are open to the public and generally held in the ACWD Board Room, 43885 South Grimmer Blvd., Fremont, with optional participation via Zoom, unless otherwise noted. Please visit [www.acwd.org](http://www.acwd.org) for 2024 board meeting dates.

Ed Stevenson, General Manager

### BUSINESS OFFICE

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