

# Be Water Wise This Winter!

## IN THIS ISSUE

- Ask a Water Worker
- Water Efficiency Update
- Water is Too Precious – Water Reuse Practices
- How to Dispose of Medications
- Fix a Leak Week
- Facts & Figures



# WaterLines

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[www.MNWD.com](http://www.MNWD.com)

## Water is Too Precious to Use Just Once

### Our Future Water Supply Depends Upon Effective Water Reuse Practices

Moulton Niguel Water District continues to strive for cost-effective ways to preserve our water supply. During the 1960's, MNWD began providing recycled water to local golf courses. The program expanded into advance treatment and other uses in the



**Recycled water pipes**

1990's. The recycled water program was implemented as a way to stretch our potable (drinking) water resources. MNWD is 100 percent dependent on imported water supplies. Water recycling also helps to keep overall water rates low because it reduces the need to import more costly water from far-away sources like the Colorado River and Northern California. Recycled water now makes up approximately 25 percent of MNWD's total water supply, reducing the District's dependence on imported potable water.

### What is Recycled Water?

Recycled water, sometimes referred to as reclaimed water, is wastewater that is treated to remove solids and impurities. Recycled water is purified through multiple levels of treatment. Recycled water is clean, clear, and safe. This processed water is treated to strict standards that have been set and regulated by the California Department of Public Health and is rigorously monitored by local, state and federal agencies to ensure it continuously meets those standards.

Once treated, recycled water is delivered throughout the MNWD service area through a distribution system in which the recycled (non-potable) water pipes are completely separate from the potable water pipes. The recycled system includes 140 of mile of pipelines, and 11 storage reservoirs and pump stations. Recycled water is used in manufacturing operations and to irrigate landscapes, including parks, school grounds, golf courses, freeway landscaping, streetscapes and common area managed by many local community associations.

—continued inside

## Ask a Water Worker

### QUESTION:

*How many customers does MNWD serve?*

### ANSWER:

**MNWD provides water and wastewater service to more than 165,000 people living in Aliso Viejo, Laguna Niguel, Laguna Hills, Mission Viejo and Dana Point.**

Do you have a question for the Water District? Send your question to [askyourwaterworker@MNWD.com](mailto:askyourwaterworker@MNWD.com) and your question/answer may appear on the next edition of WaterLines.

## Water Efficiency Update

Last month

# 83%

of MNWD customers remained within their water budgets.

***Are you using more than you need?***

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## Water is Too Precious to Use Just Once

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### High Salt Content in Recycled Water and How to Prevent it

MNWD is proud that recycled water makes up 25 percent of our total water supply. Though this cost-effective resource saves potable water in cost and supply, it is becoming more expensive to treat and remove the excess salt content that is produced from water softeners, which is a major source of salt in recycled water.

If you install a water softener, please note that MNWD prohibits self-regenerating softeners – the type that requires rock salt, potassium or other materials to be added. The salty brine that is discharged by these softeners is not removed during the treatment process, thus it enters the wastewater system and is becoming more expensive to treat and remove the additional salt content.

If you desire soft water in your home, MNWD encourages you to subscribe to a water softener service that picks up and exchanges the cylinder, preventing the salt from entering the collection system.

### Conservation

The use of recycled water is a key component of MNWD's conservation and water use efficiency programs as every gallon of recycled water used, results in a gallon of drinking water that can be saved for potable uses. In total, we save 2.7 billion gallons of water each year through water recycling.

For more questions about our recycled water, please contact our Engineering Department at (949) 831-2500.

## Do You Know What to do With Unused or Expired Medications?

In the past, many of us were directed and encouraged to dispose of unused or expired medications (or pharmaceuticals) by flushing them down the drain or toilet. With data from current research, it is now an improper way to dispose of such materials.



Research has indicated that surface waters have tested positive for pharmaceuticals, resulting from wastewater discharges. Wastewater treatment plants are designed to remove conventional pollutants, such as solids and biodegradable materials; they are not designed to remove man-made pollutants, such as medications. The presence of medications in surface water has increased bacterial resistance to antibiotics and is interfering with the growth and reproduction of aquatic organisms, such as frogs and fish.

Though research is ongoing as to the environmental and health effects to humans, a public outreach program has been introduced to reduce the improper disposal of pharmaceuticals. "No Drugs Down The Drain," encourages Southern Californians to dispose of their unused or expired medicines in ways other than flushing them down the drain or toilet. Unused prescriptions and over-the-counter medications that are put in drains or flushed down the toilet pollute the environment; please take medication as prescribed and dispose of unused portions properly.










To learn more about the outreach program, please visit [www.nodrugsdownthedrain.org](http://www.nodrugsdownthedrain.org). You can enter your zip code and the site will direct you to locations that residents can visit to dispose of medications and other hard-to-dispose/hazardous materials such as antifreeze, brake fluid, fire extinguishers, fluorescent tubes, fungicides and much more.

# Crews Working in the Street to Fix Vital Infrastructure

Every day, Moulton Niguel Water District is working to maintain water and wastewater infrastructure to provide great service throughout our service area. The main water lines beneath our streets are more than 50 years old and require repair or replacement. MNWD's distribution system is decades old and in order to continue to provide reliable water service to our customers, we must maintain our infrastructure.



When you see MNWD crews repairing or replacing the pipelines, remember:

-  This is a construction zone. Our highest priority is safety. Orange cones and barricades keep you out and keep you safe. You may see crewmembers directing traffic, acting as spotters and practicing other safety measures. Please slow down when driving past a work site.
-  Great service is our top priority. MNWD does everything in our power to make the repair as quickly and safely as possible, and to minimize the effect it has on you.
-  Most of our infrastructure was installed in the street. When it breaks, MNWD often has no choice but to close off roads or lanes of traffic. We understand your drive time could be impacted. District staff works as quickly as possible to minimize the impact to our customers.
-  Often times, repairs are just like the plumbing repairs you make on your house. It is very common for a job that starts as a quick fix to become very complex. Sometimes a steel plate is placed over the hole, and MNWD will make the repair at a later date. We haven't forgotten about the problem and are most likely waiting for parts or a good time to finish the repair that is safer for our crews and has less impact on the community.
-  We always try to isolate line breaks without putting your homes or businesses out of water. Many times our crews will come in during the middle of the night to make the repair when the service interruption has the least effect on your drive, lifestyle or business.
-  MNWD was one of the first Districts in the County to employ the use of Hydro Excavators. Rather than dig down to our pipes and valves using a backhoe, we use high-power water jets to liquefy the dirt and then vacuum it out of the hole into a large tank truck. This means that if a utility is mismarked and we find it unexpectedly, we do it without damaging the utility. Also, we are a coastal water district, and this type of excavation keeps our job sites and your streets very clean. This ensures that our beaches are protected as well.
-  MNWD has one of the lowest incidents of sewer spills of any water district in the state. When we have an incident, the material is captured before it makes it to the storm drain system and ocean, which may include temporarily shutting down the street. During these times, we appreciate your patience.
-  Unavoidable water service interruptions to your home or business may occur due to a pipeline break. If water is shut-off while crews work to make the repairs, please use your emergency water supply until service has been turned back on.
-  MNWD crews are working hard for you, so please be patient and safe.

MNWD emergency standby crews are available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. If you see flooding in the street, broken or hit hydrants, or suspicious activity, please call (949) 831-2500.

# MNWD Facts and Figures

Ever wonder what it takes to ensure a reliable supply of quality water every time you turn on the tap?

Number of employees:	114
Population served:	165,000
Water service connections:	54,553
Sewer service connections:	50,200
Potable water reservoirs:	28
Recycled water reservoirs:	11
Miles of potable water pipelines:	700
Miles of recycled water pipelines:	140
Miles of sewer pipelines:	537
Pressure zones:	9
Pump stations:	39
Pressure reducing stations:	31
Average daily water demand:	24,430,000 gallons
Average peak water demand:	35,208,000 gallons



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For meeting dates and agendas, visit [www.MNWD.com](http://www.MNWD.com). *WaterLines* is a bi-monthly publication to keep water users in the Moulton Niguel Water District informed about water-related issues and events. Please send any comments or suggestions to MNWD, 27500 La Paz Road, Laguna Niguel, CA, 92677, or call us at (949) 831-2500. [www.MNWD.com](http://www.MNWD.com).

## March 18 - 24, 2013 – Fix a Leak Week

Did you know that more than 10,000 gallons of water can be wasted each year by not fixing one typical household leak, such as a dripping faucet or a running toilet? That is enough water to fill a residential swimming pool.

### Locating a water leak is as easy as 1-2-3!

- 1.** Check all toilets by placing a few drops of food coloring inside the tank; don't use the toilet and wait about 15 minutes. If you see some of the dye inside the bowl that means you have a leaky toilet. Also, check your irrigation system and spigots for leaks.
- 2.** Twist and tighten all pipe connections. You can save even more by installing new faucet aerators.
- 3.** Replace fixtures that are leaking or are using too much water. MNWD offers rebates for installing water-saving devices such as high efficient toilets and clothes washers, weather based irrigation controllers, turf removal, synthetic turf installation and much more. Please visit [www.MNWD.com](http://www.MNWD.com) to learn more about qualified devices and guidelines.

**Conserve Today - Save Water. Save Money.  
Protect the Environment.**