



Sunnyslope
Water District

Fall/Winter 2024

Sign up for immediate
leak alerts P. 4

Safeguarding emergency
fire response P. 2

When is a leak
my problem? P. 3

Water lines

News you can use from your Sunnyslope Water District

New projects to enhance water quality and service

Sunnyslope engineers are constantly evaluating our community's water system to enhance quality, improve efficiency, and ensure reliable water delivery into the future. Here are just a few projects that are in the works:

A new booster pump station will be constructed off Enterprise Road to enhance water quality and reliability in the far southern and eastern area of Hollister, including Ridgemark. The \$3 million pump station will allow us to provide treated surface water from the West Hills Water Treatment Plant to these higher elevations, instead of exclusively from the older Lessalt Water Treatment Plant. Right now, when

Lessalt is offline due to drought or mechanical issues our system can only provide well water to this area, so having an alternate surface water supply will greatly improve water quality for these customers during outages. Since the newer West Hills plant utilizes a more efficient chemical treatment process, expanding its service area will also reduce operational costs over time.



A new pump station will provide a second source of surface water for neighborhoods in the far southern and eastern section of Hollister (including Ridgemark, pictured above). This will greatly increase water quality when the Lessalt treatment plant is closed due to drought or maintenance.



**¿Prefieres tu
newsletter en español?**

Por favor, visite sunnyslopewater.org
y haga clic en el enlace del
boletín para ver o descargar.
¡Muchas gracias!

The rehabilitation of a 2 million gallon water tank

off Fairview Road will provide backup storage in the northern area of Hollister. The tank has been out of commission since 1960 and will receive upgrades to meet current seismic and OSHA regulations. The tank will help provide proper water pressure for the varied elevations in this area, and serve as a backup water source during maintenance of the other three tanks in that pressure zone. The additional tank will also ensure we have adequate emergency water supply if there is earthquake damage or increased water demand for firefighting. The project will take five years for completion with an estimated cost of \$???. (Cont. on page 2)



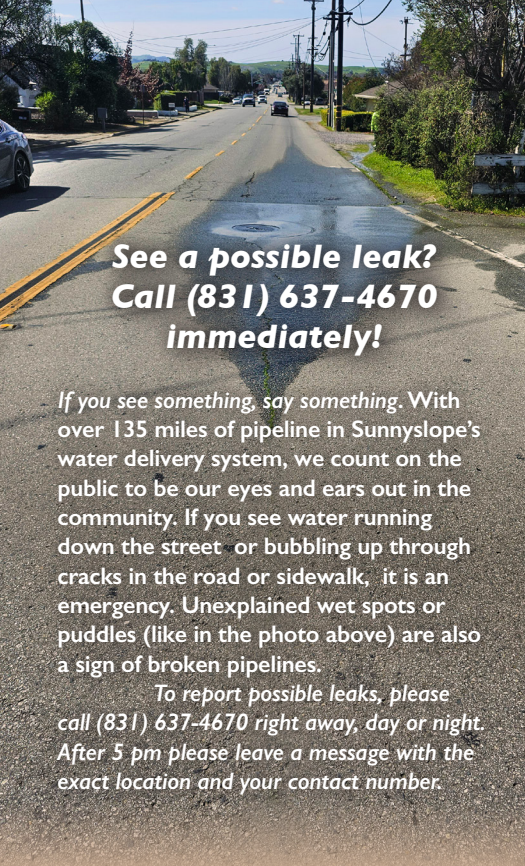
**Win a \$100
gift card
when you
sign up for
paperless
or autopay!**

Get two chances to win
when you sign up for both! Just
click on the contest icon at
sunnyslopewater.org to enroll in
paperless billing, and you'll be
automatically entered to win a
\$100 gift card to Paine's restaurant!

We congratulate our
current winners, ??, and thank
our many conscientious customers
who signed up for paperless billing
to save time and money, and help
keep water rates down!

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Sunnyslope Water
3570 Airline Hwy.
Hollister, CA 95023



**See a possible leak?
Call (831) 637-4670
immediately!**

If you see something, say something. With over 135 miles of pipeline in Sunnyslope's water delivery system, we count on the public to be our eyes and ears out in the community. If you see water running down the street or bubbling up through cracks in the road or sidewalk, it is an emergency. Unexplained wet spots or puddles (like in the photo above) are also a sign of broken pipelines.

To report possible leaks, please call (831) 637-4670 right away, day or night. After 5 pm please leave a message with the exact location and your contact number.



**Sunnyslope
Water District**

*Providing reliable, high-quality,
cost-effective water and sanitary services
to our community, to protect human
health and the environment*

3570 Airline Hwy, Hollister, CA 95023
(831) 637-4670 • sunnyslopewater.org
Open Monday-Friday, 8 am to 5 pm

Free 24-hour emergency service:

If you think your water meter is leaking, or you see water gushing in the street, it is an emergency. Do not hesitate to contact us at (831) 637-4670, day or night! Our on-call staff will return your call immediately.

The public is welcome to attend Sunnyslope Water District board meetings, held every fourth Tuesday of the month at 5:15 pm. To attend remotely via Zoom, please click the board meeting link at sunnyslopewater.org.

Board of Directors

Ed Mauro, President
James Parker, Vice-president
Mike Alcorn
Dorothy (Dee) Brown
Jerry Buzzetta

General Manager

Drew Lander, P.E.

Did you know.....?

Sunnyslope safeguards fire response

Sunnyslope's mission to provide reliable water service includes making sure that our local firefighters have the supply and flow they need to protect homes and property.

We provide regular maintenance on all fire hydrants in our service area, such as replacing worn parts, greasing threads, and exercising valves to make sure they open during a fire emergency. Sunnyslope also rehabilitates and replaces aging hydrants as needed, and conducts regular testing to ensure that hydrant flow meets International Fire Code regulations. Like most water districts, our main lines are configured so that hydrants receive water from two directions, which provides redundancy in case of a main line failure.

In addition, Sunnyslope crews regularly flush hydrants to protect our water supply. Hydrants connect to the drinking water system, and over time their rarely-used pipelines can contain aging water and sediment. Last fiscal year we flushed 315 of the total 1,000 hydrants in our service area.



**Sunnyslope Water
Operator Diego
Perez-Bribiesca
flushes a fire hydrant
to protect the
drinking water system
and ensure flow for
fire emergencies.**

New projects *(Cont. from page 1)*

We recently installed a **new water modeling system** using free public software, which saved thousands of dollars on proprietary software. Water system modeling allows us to test the impacts of proposed projects and equipment on our unique distribution system before committing resources; this enables us to get the best value from capital projects and other investments. Sunnyslope engineers use modeling for many tasks such as: checking the size of new pipelines so that development does not negatively impact existing customers, identifying the best strategies to reduce water hardness and improve overall water quality, and simulating fire hydrant demand to ensure adequate flow for firefighting while still maintaining customer service.

Our ongoing valve replacement program helps minimize service disruptions, prevents leaks and failures, and increases the reliability of our distribution system. We triage aging valves in our main line and replace 15 of them annually as part of our capital improvement master plan. If a valve is frozen and can't be shut off during maintenance, the next valve down the pipeline has to be shut off, leaving more households without water. Timely replacement and our ongoing valve exercising program ensures that we can shut off water quickly so that necessary service interruptions are short and restricted to the immediate vicinity.

PROTECTING PUBLIC HEALTH Sunnyslope Principal Engineer Rob Hillebrecht and Assistant Engineer Alvin Do.....

How do Sunnyslope fees compare to other water providers?

Approximate monthly water bill comparison for average household
(150 gallons/day; 15,000-gallon monthly total average summer usage)



Note: this chart represents the latest rate increases for local water providers except for City of Hollister... [do we know when they will raise rates?]



Sunnyslope personnel excavate a pipeline to restore a customer's service after receiving an emergency after-hours call.

Have a water outage? We're here for you!

It's not a good feeling: you turn on the faucet and nothing comes out, or it's just a sad trickle. It's rare, but if happens to you we've got your back. Sunnyslope emergency crews are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We can be at your property within 30 minutes to determine if the problem is in the public water system or in your plumbing.

If the issue is on our side, there is usually water around the meter or in the street. Most often the issue is a bad meter gasket, or—less likely—the lateral line which

connects your meter to the main line under the street. Regardless, we can usually restore your service within a couple hours or sooner. Of the average [??] emergency calls we receive each month, only [??? #] are problems with the public system—most are plumbing issues in the house or business. Here are some tips to help you troubleshoot:

- Check your outside faucets. If they are working normally, water is flowing onto your property and the issue is somewhere in your plumbing.
- If the problem is everywhere, your house shut-off valve may have inadvertently been turned off or down, reducing water flow. Shut-offs are located on your lateral line that runs straight from the street meter to your house, usually in the crawl space or basement, by the hot water heater, or outside where the pipeline enters your home.
- If only the cold water works, the problem is likely your water heater: Sediment buildup, leaks, or broken valves can block or slow water flow.
- Water softeners can block or reduce flow in many ways: mineral buildup, leaks, faulty valves, clogged sediment filters, and clumping salt that blocks flow. Try bypassing the water softener to see if that restores your water (resin beads can also escape into the plumbing system to clog fixtures, in which case bypassing will not help).
- Check your plumbing system for signs of leaks or seepage. Broken or deteriorated pipelines can be hidden inside walls or crawl spaces and can cause costly damage if not remedied quickly.

If you have an emergency, call (831) 637-4670; after hours please leave a message and your phone number and a friendly technician will return your call immediately.

**You ask;
we answer!**



“How do I know if a leak is my responsibility to fix?”

All property owners own the water pipes which connect their homes to their water meter, and are responsible for repairs on them. This includes the entire length of pipeline including the connection to the water meter on the street, regardless of where your property line ends.

Your meter only measures water when you turn on a tap or hose to pull water from our pressurized main line onto your property. If you receive a leak alert or unusually high bill you should check your home and yard immediately. Our new, highly accurate AMI metering system provides hour by hour readings (see back page article), so you can pinpoint when a leak started by checking your account at sunnyslopewater.org. Step by step directions for isolating leaks can be found in our Winter 2022 issue, which you can view and download at sunnyslopewater.org/newsletters.

Sunnyslope Water is responsible for all water meters and public pipelines in the system. If your meter is leaking or there is water in the street, please call us right away and we will promptly fix the problem. When a water meter fails it does not measure water, so you will not be charged for the leak (or the repair).

We are happy to answer any and all questions from our customers. Please contact us at billing@sunnyslopewater.org, or call (831) 637-4670, and your question may appear in our newsletter!



TRAVELING SOON?
Whether near or far from home,
make sure your house is safe by
signing up for leak alerts.

Tap into your new benefits!

It's here! After three years of planning and equipment upgrades, now all Sunnyslope Water District customers have unprecedented control over their water bills, thank to our new Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system. If you haven't already signed in to your WaterSmart account page, do it now! You'll find many features to help you save money and conserve water.

Immediate leak notifications Every night, your hour-by-hour water use for the previous day is uploaded to your WaterSmart account page. This allows us to detect continuous or higher-than-normal usage within 24 hours. Sign up to get an alert via text, email, and/or phone so you can fix leaks right away instead of finding out when your bill arrives, or when you get home from vacation and find water damage.

High use notifications Opt in to be notified if your water use is higher than your usual seasonal usage. With advance warning you can make adjustments to conserve water and avoid a costly bill.

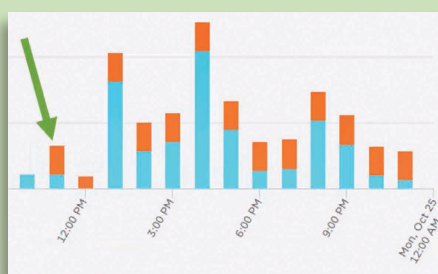
Unplanned use notifications Set a start and end date when you are going on vacation and expect to use little or no water. You can set a threshold to allow for automatic irrigation, humidifiers, or other water use while you're away.

Receive emergency alerts about outages, boil notices, or scheduled maintenance. Sign up for the notices you want—Sunnyslope Water District does not share your information with anyone.

Knowledge is power. Find out your conservation score and view sophisticated, easy-to-read graphics that reveal deep insights into your water use. See your hourly, daily, monthly, and annual water use and compare it to your previous usage. Get money-saving suggestions based on your specific household and usage patterns.

Are you paying more or less than others? Compare your water consumption to households with the same number of people and similar yard size.

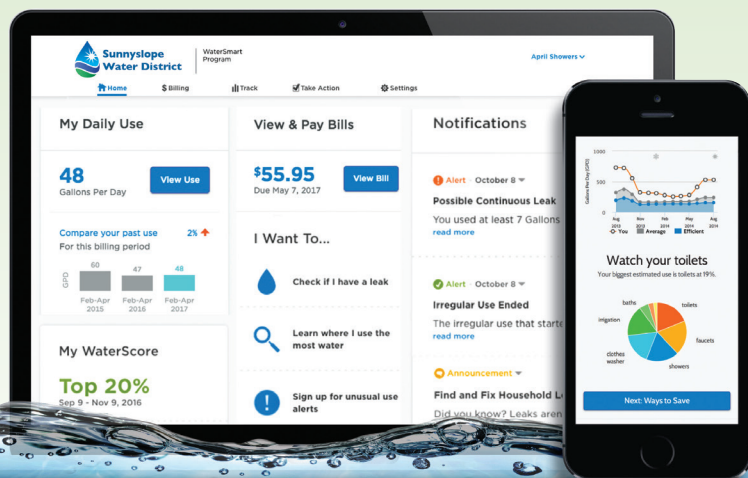
These powerful tools and rich data access are the result of Sunnyslope's investment in our community. We are committed to empowering customers and improving satisfaction. Together, we can take charge of our consumption and protect our community's precious water resources into the future!



Your online account now shows hour by hour water usage. Continuous use is in orange so you can pinpoint when a leak started (around 11 am in this sample).



You must sign up to receive immediate leak alerts!
Please visit sunnyslopewater.org and tap on this icon!



DON'T MISS OUT! Our sophisticated customer service platform is loaded with insightful, money-saving features. Click on the leak alert icon (above right) at sunnyslopewater.org, and use your account number and zip code to find your page.



This product is made of material from well-managed FSC®-certified forests and from recycled materials. Printed by a certified Monterey Bay Area Green Business with vegetable-based inks. Please recycle!