

# Community Report

2019-2020

## Your Water

For over 75 years, the San Lorenzo Valley Water District has been delivering safe drinking water to approximately 7,900 connections.

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

# SLVWD

## 2020

### State of District Letter

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**Rick Rogers**  
District Manager

Over the last 40 years, I have seen the San Lorenzo Valley Water District (District) take on many difficult challenges, including drought, landslides, flooding, earthquakes, and fire. However, none of the previous years proved to be as difficult and challenging as 2020. Before August, the District was focused on its response to COVID-19 to ensure its staff and community's safety. That included implementing new office and field protocols to improve sanitation, meeting all State and County orders and separating work forces to ensure adequate staffing. The District also met the challenge of two PG&E public safety power outages while dealing with changes in staffing and meeting new protocols. Then in August the CZU Lightning Complex Fire moved through the San Lorenzo Valley. The District saw more than 1,600 acres of its watershed properties burned, lost miles of raw water pipeline, and suffered damage to our water storage and surface water infrastructure. It was not only the District who grieved losses, but the surrounding San Lorenzo Valley community as well, with many losing homes to the fire. Although these were difficult circumstances, I am beyond proud of our community's, Board of Directors' and staff's response. The resiliency of the San Lorenzo Valley and surrounding areas to work together to rebuild and restore continues to impress me.

I am looking forward to welcoming the new year and with it the productive track the District remains set on. In 2021 the District plans to continue to improve its infrastructure, restore post-fire damage, harden its facilities from future disasters, deliver high-quality water, provide outstanding customer service, and work with the community to create a stronger San Lorenzo Valley.

There is no doubt 2021 will be a challenging year, as the District will have to work through new challenges while moving forward a multitude of previously established projects. The impacts from the CZU fire will be felt for many years to come and our community is still preparing for the potential of debris flows. The District completed a project on its watershed property to harden the stream channel in case of a debris-flow disaster, is working closely with the County of Santa Cruz in preparation for evacuations, and has allowed State and other agencies such as the United States Geological Survey (USGS) to complete debris-flow monitoring studies on our watershed land.

Beyond the impacts of the fire, customers and the District are still dealing with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The District and its customers are in a reciprocal partnership – the District is a public utility and depends on its customers, while its customers depend on the District to receive high-quality water service. Many residents in our community are struggling with economic distress and unable to regularly pay their water bill. The District understands these circumstances and wants to extend help to anyone in need. Customers need to contact our customer service staff to start a payment plan or visit our website (SLVWD.com) to qualify for the District's Rate Assistance Program.

We look forward to working with the community, partner agencies, and our Board of Directors in the new year. I am honored to work for our community with such a dedicated Board of Directors and staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Rogers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard Rogers  
District Manager



# The CZU Lightning Complex Fire & Water Quality:

In August of 2020, the CZU Lightning Complex Fire burned dozens of structures throughout the service area of the SLVWD. In late August of 2020, the SLVWD sampled for Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) in the fire-impacted neighborhoods.

These sampling events revealed isolated detections of benzene and other VOC's in the Riverside Grove neighborhood. Benzene and other fire-related VOCs have not been detected in any mainline samples since September 16th, 2020, however the SLVWD plans to monitor the distribution system for VOCs in the long term. In conjunction with the State Water Resources Control Board-Division of Drinking Water, the SLVWD has developed a Long-Term VOC Monitoring Plan, which can be viewed in the link below. The Long-Term VOC Monitoring Plan details the sample collection locations as well as the frequency of sampling. The plan specifies that the SLVWD will continue to monitor the distribution system for VOCs until at least December of 2022. Learn more and see sample results <https://bit.ly/3bzVzZd>



The District is primarily using well water sources to supply its customers in its system (areas including Ben Lomond, Brookdale, and Boulder Creek) due to the CZU Lightning Complex Fires. As a majority of the District's surface water sources were damaged during the fires, demand can no longer be met with surface water alone and the District is relying on its wells. The wells have much higher dissolved mineral content than other District water sources.

These minerals include iron, manganese and carbonate hardness and are naturally occurring in well water. These minerals do not pose a health hazard, but can affect the aesthetic qualities of water, such as taste, odor and color.

The District uses "free chlorine" as a residual disinfectant throughout the water distribution system. Chlorine odors become stronger as the water temperature increases. This can especially be noticed in the shower, or on hot days.

To learn more, view the District's Water Quality Troubleshooting guide <https://bit.ly/3q9aBcm>

To view additional information on water quality relating to the CZU fires and to see all lab results <https://bit.ly/3smkaGM>

# Upcoming Projects 2021:



## Redwood Park Tank:

The Redwood Park Tank Project consists of the construction and operation of a new 125,000-gallon bolted steel water storage tank on a 6,530-square-foot parcel (Assessor's Parcel Number 078-233-05) located northwest of the intersection of Country Club Drive and Dundee Avenue in Ben Lomond, California.

The Redwood Park Tank Project will replace the tanks, known as the "Swim Tanks," located off Scenic Way in Ben Lomond. The Swim Tanks are part of the original water distribution system acquired by the District from Citizens Utility Company in 1965. The current tanks are undersized (20,000 gallons) for the service area and require ongoing maintenance to control leaks.



## Felton Heights Tank Replacement:

The existing Pine Tank, which serves this part of Felton at Lost Acres Drive is undersized and has reached its service life. The Felton Heights Tank Replacement project includes the construction of a new steel tank, site improvements, and SCADA controls.



## Quail Hollow Pipeline:

The Quail Hollow Pipeline Replacement Project consists of the replacement of a water supply pipeline. The San Lorenzo Valley Water District proposes to install approximately 7,500 linear feet (LF) of a 12-inch water supply transmission main pipeline that runs parallel to an existing 6-inch

pipeline in the community of Lompico in Santa Cruz County, California. The project would be located within the Quail Hollow Road right-of-way, specifically between Cumora Lane and West Zayante Road. The project would improve water conveyance from the existing water lines to customers within the system. The proposed project includes only the installation of a new water supply pipeline and would not require regular operation activities or maintenance.

The project is proposed for the community of Lompico in Santa Cruz County, California, near Quail Hollow Ranch County Park. Regional access is provided to the project site via East Zayante Road, which connects to Highway 9 at Felton about eight miles north of Lompico. The project site consists of paved roadway within Quail Hollow Road surrounded primarily by forest/mountainous land. Some residences are also located along Quail Hollow Road.



## Rate Assistance Program & Payment Arrangement Options

Are you currently experiencing financial hardship that may cause delay in paying your bill? The District offers two programs for customers struggling to pay their bills; payment arrangements & the rate assistance program. Payment arrangements allow customers to pay down their accumulated bills and avoid late fees. While the rate assistance program can deduct \$10 off of eligible customer's bills.

### Rate Assistance Program

Beginning on July 15, 2020 SLVWD implemented a low-income assistance program for up to 208 qualifying residential customers. If you are an income-eligible customer who currently receives a discounted rate through PG&E's CARE program you may be eligible to receive \$10 off your monthly water bill.

### Does your household qualify?

- ◆ Yes, I pay SLVWD for an individually metered residential water service;
- ◆ Yes, I receive a discounted rate through PG&E's CARE program for the same address and in the same name;
- ◆ Yes, I live at the property that receives these services and the SLVWD bill is in my name

### If you said yes to all 3 of the required qualifications, you may apply by doing the following:

- ◆ Complete the web form below. For a printable application go to <https://bit.ly/3ikF0Sn>, however it is strongly suggested the web form is used for most expedited processing.
- ◆ Attach your most recent PG&E bill showing participation in the CARE program for the same address as the water bill.
- ◆ If you are a tenant, attach a copy of your lease agreement. If you do not have a lease agreement, contact Customer Service so we can send the owner a verification form.

Approved applications will be granted on a first-come first-served basis. Visit the District's website at <https://bit.ly/3iavAcy>

### Payment Arrangement

Any customer who is unable to pay for water service within the normal payment period may request an alternative payment arrangement to avoid late fees or disruption of service. The District will consider all circumstances surrounding the request and make a determination as to whether the payment arrangement is warranted.

To set up a payment arrangement please contact our customer service staff either through email, [customerservice@slvwd.com](mailto:customerservice@slvwd.com) or calling **831-338-2153** from 9:00am-12:00pm & 1:00pm-4:00pm, Monday through Friday.

The District has also put together a list of payment-assistance programs offered by other agencies within the San Lorenzo Valley. Visit our website here: <https://bit.ly/3oGcgWG> to find a potential program that fits your circumstances.

## SLVWD completes several capital improvement projects during tumultuous 2020

Operating and maintaining a water system is a complex challenge — one made even more difficult due to extreme natural and human forces seen throughout 2020.

Battling the effects of wildfires, climate change, power outages, mountainous terrain and an aging infrastructure, the San Lorenzo Valley Water District kept to its mission of providing 25,000 residents and all future generations with reliable, safe and high-quality water at an equitable price.

### Following are recently completed projects carried out by SLVWD:

**Generators:** In 2019 and 2020, the District purchased eight new generators, bringing its fleet to 26. Generators are used to power District infrastructure during PG&E's Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) and potential natural disasters. Generators allow for water delivery, treatment and system communications in times of emergency power outages.

**Probation Tank Replacement:** This project involved construction of a new 500,000-gallon welded steel water storage tank in the Probation Zone. The project included but was not limited to temporary water storage for customers, new water tank, SCADA control, fencing and environmental permitting. A 100,000-gallon redwood water storage tank provided service to approximately 460 connections in the area of Lockwood Lane and Whispering Pines Drive, in Scotts Valley. Approximately 50 years old, the original tank had reached its life expectancy and required ongoing leakage repair.

**Lompico PRV Replacement:** Six pressure reducing valves (PRVs) were

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## San Lorenzo Valley Water District

13060 Highway 9  
Boulder Creek, CA 95006

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aging and not functioning properly in Lompico. Completed in February of 2020, the project included traffic control, roadwork, removal of existing PRVs, and installation/connection of new PRV assemblies, including precast vault boxes, ladders, access hatches, piping, and drainage.

### Lompico Tank Replacement:

The District replaced six undersized and leaking redwood tanks in Lompico. The tanks provide the main water storage and service for Lompico and nearby areas, referred to as Madrone, Lewis, and Kaski tank sites. The Madrone tank site was completed in November and is now in use. The Lewis tank site has completed construction and is completing water quality sampling before being brought online for use. While the Kaski site is in the process of having its original tanks removed, and site grading began in early December.

**Five-Pipeline Replacement:** This project will replace 3.3 miles of pipeline that were deemed inefficient, ineffective (due to age and size), and undersized for fire flow in Ben Lomond and Boulder Creek. Much of this work has been completed, with final construction due to finish in the spring of 2021.

### SLVWD strives to be responsive and find creative solutions to the following key challenges:

**Climate Change Adaptation:** The Board passed a resolution in support of the Paris Climate Agreement, committing the District to establish a zero GHG emissions goal, as well as adopt policies and programs to reduce GHG emissions.

**Conjunctive Use:** SLVWD uses surface water from rivers and streams during wet periods, and groundwater from aquifers during dry periods. Using water conjunctively ensures that groundwater sources are managed sustainably and surface water sources are maintained at a level that supports fish habitat. After operating the north system conjunctively since the 1970s, the District is looking to expand conjunctive use into the south system in the future.

**Sustainable Groundwater Management Planning:** The District is working with neighboring water agencies and private well owners to sustainably manage groundwater sources via membership in the new Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency.

For more information, visit [www.smgwa.com](http://www.smgwa.com).



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



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