



AGENDA

Joint Meeting

**Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD)
and
Rancho California Water District (RCWD)
Tuesday, February 2, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.**

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://ranchowater.zoom.us/j/94597952131?pwd=RGQ2U1BsdDkwUno5UlcvQnhBZk9nZz09>

Meeting ID: 945 9795 2131

Passcode: 681689

Dial by your location:

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

Rancho Water

EMWD

Board Member	John Hoagland
Board Member	Bill Wilson
AGM-CFO/Treasurer	Rick Aragon
AGM Eng. & Operations	Eva Plajzer
Governmental Affairs Manager	Meggan Valencia

Board Member	Randy Record
Board Member	Stephen Corona
General Manager	Paul D. Jones II
Deputy General Manager	Nick Kanetis
Deputy General Manager	Laura Nomura
AGM Planning, Engineering, and Construction	Joe Mouawad
Executive Policy / Government Affairs Advisor	Jolene Walsh

1. Temecula Valley Recycled Water Pipeline Project (Mouawad/Plajzer)
2. MWD Items:
 - a. Delta Conveyance Project Planning and Pre-Construction Costs (Walsh)
 - b. Rate Refinement Process (Jones)
3. Proposed Legislation
 - a. SB 223 (Dodd) – Discontinuation of Residential Water Service (Jones)
4. COVID-19 – Financial Impacts (Walsh/Jones)
 - a. 1/22/21 Coalition Letter to Board of Supervisors / Federal Utility Relief Funding Opportunities
 - b. Extension of Shutoff Moratorium by CPUC to 6/30/21
5. Discuss Other Matters of Common Interest



6. Future Meeting Dates – 2021 Bi-monthly Meetings:

- Tuesday, April 6 at 2:00 p. (EMWD)
- Tuesday, June 1 at 2:00 p. (Rancho Water)
- Tuesday, August 3 at 2:00 p. (EMWD)
- Tuesday, October 5 at 2:00 p. (Rancho Water)
- Tuesday, December 7 at 2:00 p. (EMWD)

January 22, 2021

Chair Spiegel and Board of Supervisors
Riverside County
4080 Lemon St, 5th Floor
Riverside, CA 92501

RE: Inclusion of past-due water customers in Riverside County's COVID-19 renter relief distribution

Dear Chair Spiegel and Riverside County Board of Supervisors,

On behalf of nearly two million customers throughout western Riverside County, the undersigned water and wastewater service providers respectfully request that the Riverside County Board of Supervisors approve the use of federal COVID-19 relief package funds that the County will receive for residents who are unable to pay their water bills because of the pandemic.

As you are aware, water services are essential to the public health and safety of Riverside County residents and the region's economy. Our coalition of water service providers within Riverside County has a critical role in the daily lives of your constituents and communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to profoundly impact so many aspects of our communities, including our residential and business customers. On April 2, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-42-20 (EO), which prohibited water agencies from shutting-off the services of customers who become delinquent on their water bills due to COVID-19. Many of the undersigned providers implemented their own suspension of shutoffs prior to the Governor's EO. While the water industry supports the intent behind the Governor's moratorium on service shutoffs and understand the reliance customers have on their water service — especially during a pandemic — we are significantly concerned about the growing number of customers that are not paying their monthly water bills.

Since March of 2020, many of our customers have been increasingly unable to pay their water bills. To put the pandemic's impact in perspective, the combined total number of customers currently over 61 days past-due as of December 2020 within the undersigned agencies is 37,777, representing **nearly 114,000 residents**. In less than one year, we have seen a **167 percent increase** in past-due balances, which has resulted in customers being more than **\$17.8 million** in arrears, or roughly **\$500 per household**.

In support of our customers, water agencies have been advocating that the federal government include COVID-19 assistance specifically for our low-income and financially stressed customers to help them cover their water service bills. While we know the federal government has heard our request and has plans for including utility assistance in the next round of COVID-19 relief, we request your support to ensure low-income and financially stressed residential water service customers can access the federal renters' relief funding. Municipalities who will receive the renters' relief portion of the next COVID-19 relief package can use it towards rental assistance **and water utilities**.

Unlike rental property owners and investor-owned utility companies (Southern California Edison and SoCalGas), the undersigned water service providers are legally prohibited by voter-approved Proposition 218 (Prop 218) from subsidizing the water bills of low-income customers with revenue received from other paying customers or forgiveness of past-due balances. This State law, originally designed to enhance equity, means water customers will be obligated to

January 22, 2021

RE: Inclusion of past-due water customers in Riverside County's COVID-19 renter relief distribution

pay their past-due balance, which places long-term hardships on our low-income and financially stressed customers already struggling to pay their bills.

While we understand many details about this funding are still unfolding, our regional coalition of water agencies request the County of Riverside include water utility payment assistance in the funding allocations. Additionally, we request that you direct any community organizations that will distribute the funding on the County's behalf also work with water providers directly. We believe the Prop 218 challenge creates a unique circumstance unlike other utility service providers and are confident that by working together, residents of Riverside County will benefit greatly by being able to access relief funds to pay mounting water bill obligations.

If you or your staff need any further information or would like to discuss our request further, please do not hesitate to reach out to Craig D. Miller, General Manager of Western Municipal District, at cmiller@wmwd.com or 951.571.7242.

Very Respectfully,



Craig Miller
General Manager
**Western Municipal
Water District**



Rick Aragon
Interim Co-General Manager
**Rancho California
Water District**



Chris Berch
General Manager
**Jurupa Community
Services District**



Greg Thomas
General Manager
**Elsinore Valley Municipal
Water District**



Paul Jones, II
General Manager
**Eastern Municipal
Water District**



Jeff Sims
General Manager
**Rubidoux Community
Services District**



Todd Corbin
General Manager
Riverside Public Utilities



Tom Moody
General Manager
**Corona Department of
Water and Power**



Andy Okoro
City Manager
City of Norco



Jeff Pape
General Manager
**Temescal Valley
Water District**



Home Gardens
County Water District
3832 N. Grant St., Corona, Calif. 92879
(951) 737-4741

David Vigil
General Manager
**Home Gardens County
Water District**