

# THE Waterline

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF MPWD / SPRING 2026

## ABOUT MPWD

**Mid-Peninsula Water District**  
1075 Old County Road, Suite A  
Belmont, CA 94002  
650-591-8941  
www.MidPeninsulaWater.org

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Louis J. Vella** / President  
**Matthew P. Zucca** / Vice President  
**JoAnn Covington** / Director  
**Charles "Chuck" Cotten** / Director  
**Neela Patel, Ph.D.** / Director

The Board of Directors meets every month at 1075 Old County Road, Suite A, Belmont. The schedule of upcoming meetings can be found at [MidPeninsulaWater.org/calendar](http://MidPeninsulaWater.org/calendar)

## OFFICERS

**Kat Wuelfing**  
General Manager  
**Sarah Scheidt**  
Operations Manager  
**Alison Bell**  
Administrative Services Manager  
**Julie A. Sherman**  
District Counsel  
**Joubin Pakpour, PE**  
District Engineer  
**James Ramsey, CPA, CFE**  
District Treasurer

# Happy Hydrants Return to Belmont

*The MPWD and the City of Belmont are bringing back the popular community art program.*

Some of Belmont's most beloved pieces of public art are making a comeback! The Mid-Peninsula Water District is partnering with the City of Belmont to bring back the Happy Hydrant program, inviting the community to transform select fire hydrants into colorful works of art.



The original Happy Hydrants were painted in the 1970s to celebrate Belmont's 50th anniversary and the U.S. Bicentennial. For nearly five decades, these creative hydrants have added personality and charm to Belmont's streets. Many of the original Happy Hydrants still remain in our system, which you can see at [MidPeninsulaWater.org/happy-hydrants](http://MidPeninsulaWater.org/happy-hydrants). Now, as the City celebrates its centennial, the program has returned with new opportunities for community members to participate.

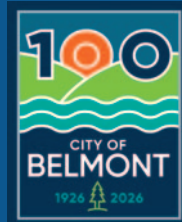
Through the program, artists, schools, and community groups can apply to paint selected hydrants located in visible areas around Belmont. While the artwork brings creativity to neighborhood streets, the hydrants remain a critical part of the District's water infrastructure and must stay fully visible and operational for emergency use.

The City of Belmont is coordinating applications and design approvals, and MPWD is preparing hydrants and ensuring all safety and operational requirements are met.

Community members interested leaving their mark on the City and the MPWD water system are encouraged to apply through the City at [Belmont.gov/100years](http://Belmont.gov/100years) ■

## City of Belmont Turns 100!

The City of Belmont is celebrating 100 years as an incorporated city! The MPWD, which has been an active part of the Belmont community for 97 years, is proud to be a partner and Centennial sponsor. Join us this year in celebrating Belmont's vibrant spirit through a series of events, public art, educational programs, and neighborhood activities. Learn more at [Belmont.gov/100years](http://Belmont.gov/100years)



## CUSTOMER SURVEY

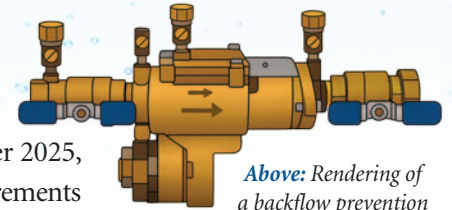
### How Are We Doing?

MPWD wants to hear from you! Go to [MidPeninsulaWater.org/survey](http://MidPeninsulaWater.org/survey) or scan the QR code below and complete a short 3-minute survey. Your input guides our goals for years to come and every response counts.

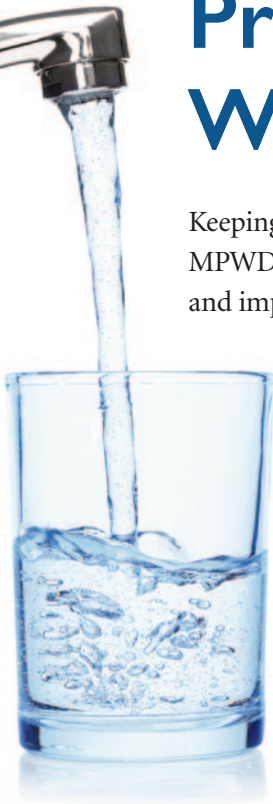


# Protecting Our Drinking Water Supply

Keeping your water safe is one of the District's top priorities. In September 2025, MPWD updated its *Cross-Connection Control Plan* to meet new state requirements and implement additional protections of our drinking water.



*Above: Rendering of a backflow prevention assembly.*



You may not have heard of “backflow” before, but it is something the District takes seriously. Backflow happens when water or other substances reverse direction and flow back into the public drinking water system, potentially introducing contaminants. A cross-connection is any point in the water system where drinking water could come into contact with a non-potable source. The revised plan is designed to identify and address risks posed by cross-connections before they become a problem.

Starting in Spring 2026, MPWD will begin reaching out to commercial, industrial, institutional, and multi-family properties as part of a hazard-based review of service connections. These properties will be asked to install a backflow prevention assembly—a device that acts as a safeguard against backflow contamination. If you are a single-family residential customer, no action is needed right now. In the meantime, the District encourages you to learn more about its *Cross-Connection Control Plan* at [MidPeninsulaWater.org/cross-connection-control](https://MidPeninsulaWater.org/cross-connection-control) ■

## Meet MPWD's Cross-Connection Control Specialist

In February, MPWD appointed **Trevor Morris** as its Cross-Connection Control Program Specialist after he received specialized training and certification. Previously a Water System Operator with the District, Trevor is implementing MPWD's Cross-Connection Control Plan by evaluating backflow and cross-connection hazards, technical and administrative reporting, and supporting regulatory compliance to help protect the community's drinking water supply.



## New Board Meeting Management Platform

**COMING SOON!**

The District will soon launch a new online platform for Board meeting materials management, powered by CivicPlus. The system will make it easier for customers to access meeting agendas, board packets, minutes, and supporting documents online. New features will include improved search tools, mobile-friendly viewing, and the ability to subscribe to agenda notifications—helping customers stay informed and up to date on Board meeting actions. ■



## Help Shape SMC's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

San Mateo County (SMC) is updating its Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) to identify risks such as earthquakes, wildfires, flooding, drought, and sea level rise. The MPWD is participating alongside other local agencies to reduce potential impacts from natural disasters, strengthen community resilience, and help protect critical services that residents rely on every day. In 2026, residents will have opportunities to share input through surveys and public meetings. Your feedback helps shape priorities and build a safer, more prepared community. Learn more about San Mateo County's Department of Emergency Management at [smcgov.org/dem](http://smcgov.org/dem) and you may provide input by emailing [MPWD@MidPeninsulaWater.org](mailto:MPWD@MidPeninsulaWater.org) ■



## Available Water Efficiency Rebates

MPWD currently offers the following rebate programs to help you save water.

- **Lawn Be Gone!** Earn \$4 per square foot when you replace your lawn with water efficient landscaping.
- **Rain Barrels:** Install a qualified rain barrel and get up to a \$200 rebate.
- **Irrigation Hardware Rebates:** Up to \$30 rebates on qualified water efficient sprinklers.



For more information on rebates and how to apply, go to [MidPeninsulaWater.org/rebates](http://MidPeninsulaWater.org/rebates)



## Water Supply Status

Thanks to a few good wet winters, the regional water supply is looking strong and the system's reservoirs are full. However, the snowpack that feeds into the system reservoirs is much lower than normal, but water managers are cautiously optimistic as they look at future conditions. As always, we encourage customers to be

responsible stewards of water by avoiding wasteful activities such as washing hard surfaces down with water, irrigating shortly after it rains, having poorly adjusted sprinklers that spray the sidewalk, and not promptly fixing leaks. Thank you for continuing to use water wisely and for taking advantage of MPWD's **Rebate Programs** and **Water Watch** tool! Learn more at [MidPeninsulaWater.org/waterconservation](http://MidPeninsulaWater.org/waterconservation) ■

## KID'S CORNER



Break out your art supplies and add your own color to these scenes of MPWD workers out in the community.



# MPWD CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM UPDATE

## PROJECTS COMPLETED



### DLNO Water Main Improvement Project

The MPWD has completed water main improvements in the area of Dekoven Ave., Lincoln Ave., Newlands Ave., and Oak Knoll Dr. (“DLNO project”). The project involved replacing aging cast iron and PVC water mains with modern ductile and cast iron pipe with cathodic protection and will increase the operational flexibility of the system in this area. Construction finished in December 2025. However, due to adverse weather conditions, MPWD’s contractors were unable to perform the slurry sealing and striping contract work. As a result, the slurry sealing and striping will be completed in Spring 2026. ■

## PROJECTS IN PROGRESS

### Exbourne / West Belmont Water Tanks

In March 2026, the District began recoating two of its water storage tanks at the Exbourne and West Belmont tank sites. These projects are necessary to maintain and extend the life of these critical pieces of the District’s water system infrastructure. MPWD conducted a condition assessment on Exbourne’s west tank and West Belmont’s north tank. The assessment concluded the coating

(special engineered paint) on Exbourne (W) is showing significant wear on the interior and exterior and the West Belmont (N) tank’s coating is wearing on the exterior. If the recoating is not completed, the steel tanks will continue degrading, and ultimately result in the need for substantially more costly and time-intensive repairs and/or full tank replacements. These projects were included in the August 2024 update of MPWD’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and prioritized by MPWD for completion in 2026.

These projects were designed by MPWD’s District Engineer and competitively bid on by qualified contractors. MPWD awarded the project to Euro Style Management at its January 2026 Board meeting by Resolution 2026-01. Get updated information on this project at [MidPeninsulaWater.org/water-tanks](https://MidPeninsulaWater.org/water-tanks) ■



## PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE

**The Work Always Continues!** The District is working hard to get these projects ready for construction:

- **SR101 Crossing at PAMF Hospital:** The first phase of this project was completed in 2021. The next phase will include replacing a major transmission main that runs beneath US 101, near the Palo Alto Medical Foundation facility. The District is proceeding with final design and anticipates construction starting in late summer 2026.
- **Dekoven Tanks Replacement:** These are the two oldest water tanks in the District’s system. In order to ensure they can operate at full capacity while meeting current seismic standards, both water storage tanks will be replaced. The project is under design, with an anticipated start date of winter 2026/2027.
- **Lower Notre Dame, Willow Lane, Oak Knoll Cross Country (LNDWO) Water Main Improvements:** Notre Dame Ave.

improvements include replacing 3,400 linear feet of water main which serve as the primary transmission line between the Hannibal Pump Station and the Hersom tank, which have experienced several leaks in recent years. Willow Lane improvements will replace an existing 4" water main with an 8" main and install additional fire hydrants, increasing potential fire flow in this area by more than 200%. The Oak Knoll Cross Country project will replace a section of aging cast iron pipe with new ductile iron pipe. Design is underway and construction is estimated to begin in winter 2026.

- **Dairy Lane Operations Rehabilitation:** Design is underway for the modernization of the District’s operations center, which was flooded during storms in 2023. Construction is estimated to begin in fall of 2027.



## Aiming for Excellence

MPWD's Operations team continues to expand their knowledge and skills to ensure the safe and reliable delivery of water to the community. Staff regularly pursue professional certifications through the State of California that demonstrate expertise in water system operations and regulatory compliance.

Congratulations to Trevor Morris and Chris Michaelis on their recent certifications. Trevor earned Backflow Tester,

Cross-Connection Control Specialist, and Water Distribution Operator Grade 2 certifications, which strengthen the District's ability to protect the drinking water system and maintain critical infrastructure. Chris Michaelis earned his T1 Water Treatment Operator certification, an important credential for the treatment and delivery of safe drinking water.

The pursuit of these certifications reflects MPWD's commitment to professional development, operational excellence, and protecting the quality and reliability of the community's water supply. ■

## Water Poster Contest Draws Out the Best from Local Students

At the February Board Meeting, the MPWD hosted the five winners of its 2025 Annual Water Awareness Poster Contest. Local 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students from schools in the MPWD's service community were invited to submit posters for this year's competition theme, *"The Great Water Trip to the Tap,"* focusing on how water travels from its source to the faucets in our homes. The theme was chosen to encourage students to create fun, visual ideas while thinking about the vital infrastructure that delivers clean water to their community.

MPWD staff had fun judging 122 competitive entries this year and awarded the following students: First Place Winner – Harrison (Belmont Oaks Academy); Runners Up – Ryan (Fox Elementary School), Alexa and Anika (Belmont Oaks Academy), and Anika (Nesbit

Elementary School). The winning students were presented by Board members with award certificates, goody bags, art supplies, and large posters of their artwork. At the conclusion of the ceremony, MPWD's Water Resources Coordinator, Drew Bost, unveiled one of MPWD's service trucks prominently displaying the winning entry's artwork on the sides of its cargo box. The artwork will travel throughout the community every time the service truck goes on calls and visits community events in 2026!

Matt Zucca, MPWD Board Vice President, expressed acclaim for the contest and ceremony, saying, "Handing out awards to these talented students is one of my favorite things to do each year at the Board Meetings. We were very impressed by the artistic

creativity and research of the students this year. Our hope is that the contest builds awareness of the effort it takes to bring water to a community while inspiring some of our youth to consider a future in public works. We look forward to this annual contest continuing to cultivate the District's partnership with local schools, teachers, parents, and students."

For more information on the Water Awareness Poster Contest, please contact Drew Bost at 650.591.8941 or visit [MidPeninsulaWater.org/schools](https://MidPeninsulaWater.org/schools) ■



# MPWD IN THE COMMUNITY!



## Celebrating Mother Earth



MPWD is a proud community participant in the City of Belmont's Annual Earth Day festivities, which took place this year on Saturday, April 18 at Twin Pines Park. Along with several community partners, MPWD was present to greet visitors, answer questions, hand out promo items, and show off its popular water distribution model. Visitors were also welcome to take photos with our new water mascot, who was very popular with kids and pets! Drew Bost, MPWD's Water Resources Coordinator, said, "It's always fun being out in the community and engaging with residents in such a positive way. Earth Day is a great opportunity for MPWD to share, be present, and get feedback on water-related topics. Plus, our new water mascot was a hit!" Look for the MPWD booth and staff at future community events and drop by to say "hello." ■



## National Public Works Week

This year's theme, "**Rooted in Service, Powered by Community,**" celebrates the people behind public works and the essential services they provide every day. From building roads and bridges to maintaining water and sewer systems, public works professionals help communities grow, stay safe, and thrive. Some of this work is easy to see, while much of it happens quietly behind the scenes. Together, these efforts form the foundation of healthy, resilient communities—reminding us that strong communities are built through service, dedication, and connection. Learn more about career opportunities in public works at [APWA.org](https://www.apwa.org) and join MPWD at **Belmont's Public Works Open House** on Thursday, May 21, 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. at 1 Twin Pines Lane and enjoy live demonstrations, games, giveaways, and free BBQ. ■



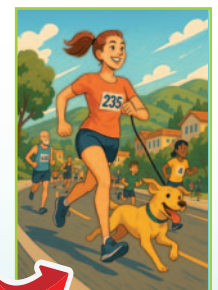
## Save the Dates!

The MPWD will be active this summer and fall as well! Please visit our booth at these upcoming community events and get more information about these worthy events from their websites.



**National Night Out**  
Tuesday, August 4, 2026  
5:30-7:30 pm  
[NATW.org](https://www.natw.org)

**Belmont Water Dog Run**  
Saturday, Sept. 26, 2026  
7:00-10:00 am  
[BelmontWaterDogRun.com](https://www.BelmontWaterDogRun.com)



For more info about the MPWD's involvement in the local community, please visit [MidPeninsulaWater.org/outreach](https://www.MidPeninsulaWater.org/outreach)

# SPOTLIGHT ON TEAM MPWD

## Retirement Alert!

In October 2025, the District celebrated the retirement of **Rene Ramirez**, MPWD's Operations Manager since 2015. Rene's committed career serving the public spanned more than 40 years, including his work with the cities of Coalinga and Fresno prior to MPWD. During the retirement luncheon, family and fellow staff honored Rene, his leadership, and his many accomplishments during his tenure. The Operations team presented Rene a special gift—a retired happy hydrant specially painted by District staff. Rene is looking forward to spending more time at home with his wife, Liz, and traveling more in the near future. ■



*Left: Rene (at left) presented with a retired Happy Hydrant during his retirement party by Michael Anderson. Below: Rene's parting thought as he hangs up his boots.*



*Well, it is time to hang up the boots.*

*Thank you all for letting me be a part of your life!  
Rene*

## New Faces at MPWD

The District is excited to announce our newest additions to the staff. If you have contacted MPWD over the phone, email, or in person recently, then you may have already met our new Administrative Specialist, **Avianna Swift** (left). Avianna specializes in customer service, accounts management, and billing systems. **Andy Villanueva** (middle) and **Keith Evans** (right) both joined the District in recent months as Maintenance Technicians. They are each responsible for customer service calls, new connections, disconnections, and meter adjustments in the field. To learn more about MPWD's staff, please visit [MidPeninsulaWater.org/staff](http://MidPeninsulaWater.org/staff) ■



## Meet MPWD's Operations Manager



The District welcomes **Sarah Scheidt** to the MPWD team. Sarah was appointed Operations Manager by the General Manager in August 2025. With more than 25 years of local government experience, she has worked extensively in environmental compliance, utility operations, and infrastructure programs. At MPWD, Sarah oversees the operation and maintenance of the District's water system and helps guide planning and delivery of key infrastructure and capital improvement projects. She is dedicated to ensuring reliable water service while supporting the District's commitment to sustainability, environmental stewardship, and service to the community. ■

## Board of Directors: Saying Hello and Goodbye

The MPWD is excited to have **Neela Patel, Ph.D** join the MPWD Board of Directors. Director Patel fills the role of representing Division 3, formerly held by outgoing Board member, **Kirk Wheeler**, who served as MPWD Director for seven years. The MPWD extends its appreciation to Kirk for his dedication and leadership, enabling MPWD to continue delivering safe, high-quality, reliable water for the community for generations to come.

Director Patel brings extensive experience in strategic planning, budgeting, and organizational leadership developed through more than two decades serving in executive and advisory roles across the life sciences industry and non-profit sector. She has served on governing and advisory boards with responsibility for long-term strategy, financial oversight, and operational planning, and is known for her thoughtful, data-driven approach to decision-making. She holds a Ph.D. in Molecular Biology from UCLA, B.S. in Biology, and B.A. in Humanities from Stanford. ■



## Keeping Customer Contacts Updated



The MPWD is updating customer contact information to better serve our community. Having your current phone number and email address on file allows us to reach you quickly in the event of urgent water issues, planned maintenance, or important service updates. Accurate customer information is essential for timely communication.

Please take a moment to easily update your contact details online at [MidPeninsulaWater.org/update](https://MidPeninsulaWater.org/update) or by scanning the QR code at right. Have your account number or service address ready. Your participation helps us keep you informed, prepared, and connected!



## Questions? Concerns? Contact Us!



MPWD is dedicated to providing outstanding customer service in a timely fashion. In order to efficiently address any questions or concerns you might have regarding your water service, please contact MPWD directly! As a California Special District, MPWD operates as a separate entity independent from other local government agencies to provide safe, quality water to our community.

You may reach MPWD Customer Service directly for assistance at:

- **Email:** [MPWD@MidPeninsulaWater.org](mailto:MPWD@MidPeninsulaWater.org)
- **Phone:** 650-591-8941
- **Online:** [MidPeninsulaWater.org/contact](https://MidPeninsulaWater.org/contact)
- **Office:** 1075 Old County Rd. Ste. A,  
Belmont, CA 94002  
Monday–Thursday, 8:00 am–4:30 pm  
Closed Fridays and holidays.

## Customer Connect Getting an Upgrade



The District is enhancing its **Customer Connect News Flash** notification service to continue providing timely and reliable updates to customers. Customer Connect delivers important information about service interruptions, emergencies, and other urgent water directly to you. These system improvements will expand the District's ability to share critical news quickly and efficiently when it matters most. Watch your mail for a postcard with simple instructions on how to stay informed and stay connected. Additional details are available at [MidPeninsulaWater.org/connect](https://MidPeninsulaWater.org/connect)

## Online Bill Pay

Xpress Bill Pay (XBP) is MPWD's most convenient way yet for customers to pay their water bills online. With XBP, you can pay your water bill quickly and securely with a more user-friendly experience. Sign up for paperless billing, manage your autopay settings, view more billing details and payment history, and pay with credit card, debit card, or bank account. **PLUS!** Download the free app and manage your account 24/7 on the go! Get on board today at [MidPeninsulaWater.org/billpay](https://MidPeninsulaWater.org/billpay)

