



Securing Your Water Supply

FAQS – RETAIL CUSTOMERS

Santa Ana Pipeline Leak/ Mills Water Treatment Plant Emergency Shutdown

Updated May 2, 2020

Why am I being asking to stop using water outdoors?

There is a leak on a state-operated pipeline northeast of the Mills Water Treatment Plant, which has restricted water that feeds from Northern California into Western's drinking water delivery system.

Western is asking all customers to immediately stop outdoor water use such as landscape irrigation, washing cars, filling pools, etc. because more than 60 percent of each household's water use is outdoors. This provides us the best opportunity to conserve supplies for essential indoor water use such as drinking, bathing, and washing hands.

Water for horses and other animals is considered a 'life and health' use, and customers should continue as they would normally.

Will this repair work affect my water quality? Can I still drink from my tap and take a shower?

Essential indoor water use for drinking, bathing, and washing is not affected. The emergency repair work and temporary request to stop outdoor water use will not affect the quality of your water.

Delivering safe drinking water to the residents and businesses in our community is the highest priority for Western Municipal Water District. Western conducts more than 4,500 water quality tests annually to ensure your water meets and exceeds state and federal drinking water standards, which are more stringent than the standards for bottled water. To learn more about Western's water quality, visit wmwd.com/waterquality.

When is the leak going to be repaired? When can I resume using water as I normally would?

A timeline for repairs is not yet available. The California Department of Water Resources has crews working around the clock to complete the repairs as quickly as possible. Work will be completed in several phases.

During the first phase of work, we are asking customers to immediately stop all outdoor water use so that a temporary solution to pump from a more local water supply can be implemented. Once the temporary solution is in place, continued outdoor water conservation will be important to make sure there is enough regional supply to keep water flowing for essential indoor water such as drinking, bathing, and washing.

Updates, when available, will be shared on wmwd.com/News.

What caused the leak?

A local contractor accidentally hit the pipeline while performing unrelated work in the area. The California Department of Water Resources is working around the clock on emergency repairs. Construction crews will be in the area providing traffic control and guidance.



Securing Your Water Supply

Where is the leak?

The leak is located in the city of Moreno Valley near the I-215/SR-60 interchange. Construction crews will be in the area providing traffic control and guidance.

Is my water being shutoff?

Water to Western's retail customers is not being shut off. Instead, we are asking customers to immediately stop using outdoor water so that we can keep water flowing for essential indoor water use such as drinking, bathing, and washing hands.

Western's high-volume water users, landscape meter only customers, and developers will have their supplies restricted. These customers have already been directly notified by Western staff.

What about my horses and outdoor pets?

Western is asking all customers to immediately stop outdoor water use as it relates to landscape irrigation, washing of cars, filling pools, etc. Water for horses and other animals is considered a 'life and health' use, and customers should continue as they would normally.

I'm noticing my water pressure is low. Is this because of the emergency work?

Usually, Western keeps its tanks and reservoirs filled to about 80 percent of their capacity. During times of emergency repair work or increase usage in the instance of fire flow, tanks and reservoirs may get as low as 40 percent of their capacity. When capacity is decreased, the pressure decreases—causing customers to experience low water pressure inside their homes.

Is this emergency related to COVID-19?

The emergency repairs in progress are related to a leak on a state-operated pipeline. There is no connection between these repairs and the COVID-10 pandemic.

Delivering safe drinking water to the residents and businesses in our community is the highest priority for Western Municipal Water District. Western conducts more than 4,500 water quality tests annually to ensure your water meets and exceeds state and federal drinking water standards, which are more stringent than the standards for bottled water. To learn more about Western's water quality, visit wmwd.com/waterquality.
(continued on next page.)

Does our water supply rely on a single pipeline?

While Western receives most of its water from Northern California, which travels through more than 700 miles of aqueducts and pipelines to reach our customers' homes and businesses, we are working to diversify our water supply so that it isn't solely reliant on imported water, which is costlier and can be prone to service interruptions.

Commented [MA1]: We did some research on this. The distance from Oroville to mills is about 444 miles. When you add in Western's pipeline system, that's where we get the more than 700 miles.



Securing Your Water Supply

Western recently invested \$36 million in the La Sierra Pipeline project, a five-mile pipeline that will deliver local groundwater to customers. Expected to be online this year, the new local system will secure and deliver more local water to our customers by connecting the drops across the region.

Commented [MA2]: Do we know the diameter of this pipeline?

Providing reliable drinking water to our customers on a daily basis is fundamental to what we do. Western works to secure your water supply for the future as well as today. It takes engineering, infrastructure, responsible management and strategic governance to ensure the roughly 28 billion gallons of water we provide to our customers in western Riverside County is safe and reliable 365 days a year.

Don't these repairs happen every year?

While Western does support annual system improvements led by the California Department of Water Resources and The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California to maintain the integrity of the water supply delivery system, we are asking customers to stop all outdoor water use temporarily because there is an unanticipated leak on a state-operated pipeline.

A local contractor accidentally hit the line while performing unrelated work in the area. Emergency repairs by the [California Department of Water Resources](#) are underway. For the latest information, visit wmwd.com/News.

How will this work affect my bill? Will my rates be increased because of the emergency repair work?

There is no direct connection between this emergency work by the California Department of Water Resources and any potential for rate adjustments.

Aren't we supposed to save water all the time?

Water-wise is the new California way of life and Western offers many resources and programs to help customers save water. However, during this emergency work, we are asking customers to immediately stop using outdoor water so that we can keep water flowing for essential indoor water use such as drinking, bathing, and washing hands.

For more water-saving tips, visit wmwd.com/Water-Savings.

How are you notifying customers about the emergency repair work?

We view our customers as essential partners in ensuring long-term water security for our region and are dedicated to providing you with timely, transparent and responsive communication—especially during emergencies.

To keep customers informed and updated during the emergency repair work, information will be shared on Western's website, wmwd.com, and shared in the following ways:

- E-mail alerts
- Social media
- Automated customer phone calls



Securing Your Water Supply

- Electronic message boards placed throughout the community
- Direct calls to industrial and irrigation customers
- Joint information sharing with the City of Riverside, local elected officials, and neighboring water districts

I did not receive a phone call. How can I get more information?

Western called nearly 20,000 customers on Friday, May 1 urging residents to immediately stop using water outdoors to provide us the best opportunity to keep water flowing for essential indoor use. The California Department of Water Resources crews are working around the clock to complete the emergency repairs as quickly as possible.

When available, Western will post updates to our website, wmwd.com/News. Customers can also get the latest updates by signing up for email alerts at wmwd.com and click, "notify me." You can also follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#). For more information about what you can do to save water and be more water-wise, visit www.wmwd.com/Water-Savings.

If you feel you should have received a call, please email us at outreach@wmwd.com.

Where can I find more information or get the latest updates?

For more information about the emergency work, visit wmwd.com/News, email outreach@wmwd.com or call Western at 951.571.7104. Customers can also get the latest updates by signing up for email alerts at wmwd.com and click, "notify me." You can also follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#). For more information about what you can do to save water and be more water-wise, visit www.wmwd.com/Water-Savings.