



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON THE EAST COUNTY ADVANCED WATER PURIFICATION PROGRAM

You are invited to attend a public hearing on the East County Advanced Water Purification Program, which will create a new, local, sustainable and drought-proof drinking water supply by using state-of-the-art technology to purify East San Diego County's recycled water to augment water supplies in the Lake Jennings Reservoir. The Program will produce up to 30 percent of East County's drinking water supply.

There are two purposes of the public hearing: (1) to provide you with information about this new source of water that will become part of your public drinking water system starting in 2026 and (2) provide public testimony on the proposed use of Lake Jennings Reservoir where purified water would be blended with water in the Lake Jennings Reservoir. The water would then be withdrawn and treated again prior to being distributed as drinking water.

BACKGROUND

East San Diego County imports nearly all its drinking water supply from Northern California and the Colorado River - hundreds of miles away. Our economy, livelihood and well-being depend on a reliable source of water. Cyclical droughts, increasing imported water costs and supply challenges continue to highlight the need to identify new, local water sources. Innovative water recycling technology makes it possible for East County to create and control its water supply.

The East County Advanced Water Purification Program and Surface Water Augmentation Project (the Project) is a partnership between Helix Water District and the East County Advanced Water Purification Joint Powers Authority (East County AWP JPA), formed by the Padre Dam Municipal Water District (MWD), County of San Diego and the City of El Cajon, for the purpose of creating a new local, sustainable and drought-proof water supply. Padre Dam MWD, the County of San Diego and El Cajon collect wastewater which will be recycled as part of the Project. Helix Water District owns and operates the Lake Jennings Reservoir and the R.M. Levy Water Treatment Plant, which treats water for East County, and as the purchaser of the purified Project water, is the Public Water System (PWS) for the Project.

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), which regulates public drinking water systems, adopted regulations on March 6, 2018, to ensure the safe use of purified recycled water when used to augment reservoir supplies. The East County AWP JPA and Helix Water District, as the PWS, must meet the requirements of these regulations which allows SWRCB approval of the project after the SWRCB: (1) has completed an engineering evaluation that evaluates the proposed treatment technology and finds the proposed technology will ensure the recycled water meets all applicable drinking water standards and poses no significant threat to public health and (2) holds at least three public hearings in the area where the recycled water is to be used or supplied for human consumption. The East County AWP JPA and Helix Water District are proposing to meet the requirements of the Surface Water Augmentation regulations.

For the public hearings, the regulations require the PWS develop information to be provided online and at the public hearings and include a description of the project; identify the municipal wastewater source; and describe the treatment processes, monitoring, contingency plans and the anticipated SWRCB and Regional Water Quality Control Board permit provisions applicable to the project.

For more information, visit www.EastCountyAWP.com



PLANNED PROJECT

The East County Advanced Water Purification program consists of the following: (1) expanded water recycling facility at Santee Lakes that will treat wastewater in preparation for purification; (2) new East County Advanced Water Purification Plant that will purify the recycled water to drinking water standards using a four-step innovative process that removes pharmaceuticals, chemicals, bacteria and viruses; (3) a new pipeline to transport the purified water to Lake Jennings, which will provide a minimum detention time of 120 days and a minimum dilution of 100: 1. It will then be withdrawn from the lake and mixed with imported water before being treated again at the existing Helix Water District R.M. Levy Water Treatment Plant. From there the water will be delivered to the Helix Water District service area, which includes El Cajon, La Mesa, Lemon Grove and portions of unincorporated East County including Spring Valley; Padre Dam MWD service area, which includes Santee and Alpine; Lakeside Water District’s service area which serves the community of Lakeside; and the northern portion of Otay Water District’s service area. The Program has started construction and will produce an average of 11.5 million gallons per day of purified water starting in 2026.

AVAILABLE INFORMATION

A copy of the Title 22 Engineering Report, which describes the East County AWP Program will be available for viewing online at hwd.fyi/EastCountyAWP no later than January 3, 2023, and at Helix Water District’s Administration Office, located at 7811 University Avenue in La Mesa, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, from January 3, 2023, to February 17, 2023.

All written comments on this project and the SWRCB permit provisions must be received no later than 5 p.m., February 17, 2023, via email to publicaffairs@helixwater.org or mailed to Helix Water District, East County AWP Comments, 7811 University Ave, La Mesa CA 91942.

PUBLIC HEARING

The SWRCB will conduct the public hearings. These hearings will begin with a brief presentation about the project followed by an opportunity for questions and public comments. Staff will be available to record public comments submitted verbally, and/or the public may submit written comments at the hearings. To ensure all attendees have an opportunity to participate, public comments will be limited to two minutes per person or at the discretion of the hearing officer.

HEARING #1

Feb. 2, 2023, 5 to 7 p.m.
Helix Water District
Boardroom
7811 University Ave
La Mesa, CA 91942

HEARING #2

Feb. 7, 2023, 5 to 7 p.m.
Padre Dam Municipal
Water District Boardroom
9300 Fanita Parkway
Santee, CA 92071

HEARING #3

Feb. 8, 2023, 1 to 3 p.m.
Helix Water District
Boardroom
7811 University Ave
La Mesa, CA 91942

For questions about the public hearings, please contact Michelle Curtis at (619) 667-6261.

Este es un aviso importante acerca de una audición pública sobre el proyecto de East County Advanced Water Purification, un nuevo proyecto de suministro de agua que va implementar las agencias Padre Dam Municipal Water District, Helix Municipal Water District, el Condado de San Diego y la Ciudad de El Cajon. Personas que requieren una traducción en Español del aviso, por favor póngase en contacto con Yolanda Art at (619) 375-2146.

To obtain assisted services or an alternate format/language please contact (619) 375-2146 three weeks prior to the hearing. These services include requesting translation in other languages, sign-language interpretation or any other stated needs.