

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (AKA drone) pilot program

The Santa Clara Valley Water District is proposing to implement a pilot project to utilize Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (otherwise known as “drones”) in land surveying and mapping activities of locations within Santa Clara County. The district has many potential uses of drones including inspecting our construction sites and designing flood protection projects. Over the last few years, drone technology has become more cost effective than the traditional use of piloted aircraft. Because drones fly at lower altitudes than airplanes, the images and data produced can be more precise.

The Federal Aviation Administration regulates the operation of drones for non-hobbyists. These regulations ensure that commercial drone operators (or pilots) are trained and certified and that they follow strict safety requirements. The water district has certified drone pilots who will fly our drones during the pilot project.

After the proposed pilot project is concluded, district staff will evaluate its effectiveness to determine if the program should continue. More information on the pilot program, including examples of how we would use drones, is available at **www.valleywater.org/learning-center/aerial-drone-pilot-program**.

How can I provide input on this?

We welcome your input. Please send your comments or questions to Land Surveying and Mapping Unit Manager Kris Puthoff at **kputhoff@valleywater.org** or (408) 630-3718.

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