

Office of Civic Engagement

September 2020 Activities Update



YOUTH COMMISSION

Staff has been working with the Youth Commission Chair and Vice Chair to organize the Annual Youth Commission Retreat, which will take place on October 10, 2020. The retreat will be an opportunity for the Youth Commissioners to get to know each other better, learn more about Valley Water and their role, develop their workplan for the new school year, and finalize this year's working groups and assignments.

Recruitment and outreach for the vacant seat in District 7 continues. Staff reached out to teachers from high schools located in District 7 to help spread the word. Social media and Nextdoor posts have gone out and staff shared the posts with our networks, including current Youth Commissioners to reshare on their own social media pages. The application closes on October 2, 2020.

CREEK STEWARDSHIP

Valley Water hosted its very first socially distanced California Coastal Cleanup month in September and received a lot of positive feedback on the event this year. Volunteers were asked to clean-up around their own neighborhoods to prevent neighborhood trash from making its way into the local waterways. Supplies were distributed to volunteers who requested it. Every Saturday in September was designated as Coastal Cleanup Day. The preliminary results for the month-long event are as follows:

DATE	# VOLUNTEERS	# LBS OF TRASH	# MILES
September 5	164	2,179.5	96.5
September 12*	82	1,188	49.5
September 19	262	3,788	114
September 26	299	11,727	68
TOTAL**	807	18,882.50	328

*9/12 numbers were impacted by the poor air quality due to statewide wildfires

**Data are still coming in from volunteers, therefore, these numbers are preliminary and subject to change.

Here are a few quotes from our volunteers:

"It was an easy way to help the community while also getting to catch up with my friends"
- Branda Wipatothai

"So satisfying! In two hours, we cleaned up a very dirty part near a creek and the paths to get to it"
- Christine Walravas

"Great experience. We'll be doing it again next weekend"
- Josh, Emily, and Elizabeth Ross

"It was a great experience and it felt good because I was helping my community. People also thanked us as we walked around"
- Sarah Pham

"I didn't expect to collect so much trash close to our neighborhood. Overall, it was a great experience"
- Adarsh Nallapa

"Was great to get around the neighborhood. My friend and I might make it a weekly or bi monthly thing on our socially distanced walks"
- Sharon Gloster

"Thank you all so much for this wonderful opportunity, I enjoyed doing this even more the second time, especially with the cleanup supplies! There was less trash, but I'm still disappointed by the amount"
- Adarsh Nallapa



On September 19, the Cardenas Family geared up to save the day by cleaning up in San Jose! William and Samuel collected 4 full bags of trash around their high school on September 12. Water Ambassador Shari Carlet, Cub Scout Pack 611, and friends rolled up their sleeves on September 19 to clean Upper Penitencia Creek.



PUBLIC ARTS & SIGNAGE

Adopt-A-Bench Project with Youth Commission: Staff continues to work with the cities of Gilroy (District 1) and Santa Clara (District 2) on their review processes for the benches in their city boundaries. Paul J. Gonzalez, local artist, continues to finish painting the tiles for the benches that have been approved. Next, staff will work with a vendor to begin installation of the artwork, which may be dependent on weather conditions. However, staff anticipates all artwork to be installed by summer next year.

Signage Inventory with Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC): Due to the poor air quality from the Bay Area wildfires, the Great Sign Hunt 2020 was extended by two weeks and will run through October 29. As of September 23, more than 340 participants are registered and more than 7,300 signs have been submitted, of which approximately 3,500 are unique signs (not duplicated). SVBC and Valley Water staff continue to promote the scavenger hunt by highlighting different watershed areas through blog posts and the event website, announcing monthly prize winners and boosting social media posts.



Participants of the Great Sign Hunt have submitted 7000 Valley Water signs found across Santa Clara County.

SAFE, CLEAN WATER GRANTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

2021 Grant Cycle Open for Applications from Sept. 28 to Dec. 1:

This year, more than \$900,000 in grant funding is available for B7: Volunteer Cleanup Efforts & Education (\$200,000 total funding) and D3: Access to Trails and Open Space (\$571,000 total funding). The mini-grant opportunities continue to be available for A2: Water Conservation (\$100,000 total funding) and D3: Restore Wildlife Habitat (\$200,000 total funding). The grant cycle is being announced via Nextdoor, social media, media advisory, stakeholder outreach, promo video, eblasts, and more. Staff is hosting virtual grant cycle informational workshops on Oct. 14 and Oct. 22.

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The 2021 grant cycle is open now through December 1.

EDUCATION OUTREACH

In the month of September, Education Outreach (EO) virtually reached 107 students and three teachers from two classrooms and one virtual presentation to City of San Jose Public Library. EO also presented to 118 members of the public through four Wonders of Water Wednesdays engagements.

- The Education Outreach Program kicked off the 2020-2021 school year with virtual presentations of Watershed Maps to Stevens Creek's 4th and 5th grade classrooms. 66 students learned about watersheds and created their own 3D watershed map. Students enthusiastically engaged in learning how to protect local watersheds.
- The Education Outreach Program continues its relationship with the San Jose Public Library, providing hands-on educational activities for their "Science for Kids", an after-school program series for the 2020-21 school year. The first presentation piloted "Plastic Voyages," the newest addition to EO's virtual, distance learning programs. During "Plastic Voyages" students discovered the negative impact of single-use plastic on our environment while also engaging their critical thinking skills to come up with solution-oriented approaches to help reduce ocean pollution.

MONTH	STUDENTS AND EDUCATORS	PUBLIC ATTENDEES	YEAR TO DATE
July to August	555	69	671
September	110	118	228
TOTAL	665	187	899

FY21 Goal: Reach at least 10,000 students and 1,500 members of the public

WATER SUPPLY OUTREACH

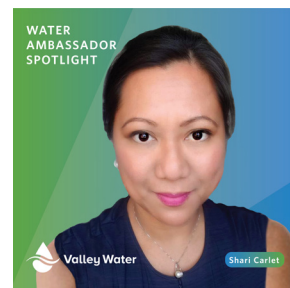
In September, the Water Supply Outreach team launched the Water Infrastructure Virtual Tour series, which includes four individual stops with content highlighting each of the agency's mission pillars -- safe, clean water; flood protection, and environmental stewardship. Each stop also highlights one or more current projects and a Q&A panel with subject matter experts. The team also hosted two private tours of the Silicon Valley Advanced Water Purification Center, with a third that will be rescheduled at another time for a larger audience.

DATE	PURIFICATION CENTER TOURS	FY 21 TOTAL ATTENDEES
July - August		215
September 3	SVAWPC with SJ Public Library (Public)	26
September 8	SVAWPC -- Sunny View Retirement Community (Private)	8
September 10	Water Infrastructure Tour (Public)	14
September 15	WIT - Water Supply (Public)	12
September 17	WIT - Water Treatment & Water Quality (Public)	9
September 22	WIT - Flood Protection & SCW (Public)	7
September 23	SVAWPC - West Valley College (Private)	28
September 24	WIT - Purified Water & Water Reuse (Public)	7
TOTALS		327

FY 21 Goal: Conduct public/private tours of the SVAWPC for at least 750 attendees

YEAR-ROUND VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

In preparation for the second issue of the quarterly Water Ambassador newsletter, Newsplash, staff published the second Water Ambassador Spotlight featuring Shari Carlet, District 3. Shari is a graduate of the first Water 101 Academy cohort and is passionate about conservation and creek stewardship. The team is also working on updating promotional materials and the website for Water 101 Academy to launch the application period next month.



Shari Carlet, a graduate of the first Water 101 Academy, was featured on Valley Water's blog and social media channels.

COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM

Staff continue to work on the 2020 Santa Clara County Multi-Jurisdictional Program for Public Information (PPI). Staff are working on scheduling a CRS Users Group meeting with all CRS community members (cities) to review and discuss the PPI.

Staff have finalized plans for California Flood Preparedness Week scheduled for October 17-24th. This year's Flood Preparedness Week theme is "Federal, State, and Local Community Partnership in Flood Risk Reduction" and includes the slogan, "Be Aware, Be Prepared, Take Action". The week's activities for staff include, a lunch and learn with the National Weather Service, distribution of a 1-person emergency bag to all permanent staff before the end of the year, and discounts on additional family emergency bags.

Staff have also partnered with Second Harvest Food Bank in distributing 4,600 emergency totes in the community starting October 17th.

LOOKING AHEAD

- Wonders of Water Wednesday Afterschool Science Enrichment Series
 - 10/7-Plastic Voyage
 - 10/14-H2O On the Go
 - 10/21- Imagine a Day Without Water
 - 10/28- The 3 Little Pigs and the Bad Weather Wolf
- New Water Infrastructure Virtual Bus Tour series:
 - 10/6 & 10/20 - Water Supply
 - 10/8 & 10/22 - Water Treatment & Water Quality
 - 10/13 & 10/27 - Flood Protection & Safe, Clean Water
 - 10/15 & 10/29 - Purified Water & Water Reuse
- Private tours of the SVAWPC:
 - 10/9 - MAES Program
 - 10/20 - San Jose City College class
 - 10/23 - SJSU MESA Engineering Program
 - 10/29 - American Chemical Society
- Applications for Spring 2021 Water 101 Academy open - **Oct. 6**
- Water Educator Committee Water & Wellness Conference - **Oct. 8 & Oct. 13**
- Youth Commission Retreat - **Oct. 10**
- Bench artwork presentation to the Gilroy Arts & Culture Commission - **Oct. 13**
- 2021 Grant cycle informational workshops - **Oct. 14 & Oct. 22**
- California Flood Preparedness Week - **Oct 17-24**
- Imagine a Day Without Water - **Oct. 21**
- The Great Sign Hunt 2020 signage inventory scavenger hunt - extended through - **Oct. 29**
- 2021 Grant applications being accepted - **closes Dec. 1**