



Montara Water & Sanitary District

Serving the Communities of Montara and Moss Beach

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MWSD – Firefighting and MWSD Statement
8/25/20

As fires burn to our south, I want to assure the Montara and Moss Beach communities that Montara Water and Sanitary District (MWSD) is fully prepared to deliver drinking and firefighting water for our communities. MWSD operates and maintains Montara and Moss Beach's community-owned public drinking water – and firefighting – system. The system is designed and operated to supply adequate water to address house and property fires in our local community. Recent articles have circulated information about our water system that is not accurate. We have more than 4 days of reserve water storage on hand – that means 4 times what our community uses in a day (on average). We meet and exceed the industry standard. Our local firefighters know and confirm that we are prepared.

Unlike our neighbors to the south (Coastside County Water District) or even over the hills (Purissima Hills Water District), MWSD is an independent system with our own secure sources of water, which guarantee quick recovery after an emergency. As customers of the Hetch Hetchy Regional Water System, some of our neighboring districts rely on outside supplies and must have extensive local water storage to sustain service to their customers in the event of an interruption in the Hetch Hetchy supply.

In 2003, our Board of Directors adopted stringent criteria for emergency storage, above and beyond the single firefighting storage required by the Fire Code. The emergency storage amounts to 2 full days of the District's daily demand. This means that this very significant amount of storage can be utilized in case of a disaster to supply water to fight multiple fires and supply the District's customer homes with drinking water. The amount of emergency storage is nearly three times the single "design" fire storage and is available to the District to serve its customers.

We can't stop a wildland fire. No water system is designed to stop the wildfires that are raging across Northern California. There simply is not enough water storage – nor would this type of water storage be cost effective – to combat wildland fires. Our water system is prepared to serve the firefighting needs of our community and your water bill payments are paying to keep the system in good health. Any changes or additions to our system that are required to serve future development(s) will be paid by the project developer(s).

Clemens Heldmaier
General Manager
Montara Water and Sanitary District