



External Affairs

- **Monthly Activity Report for November 2025**

Summary

This report provides a summary of External Affairs activities for October 22, 2025, through November 13, 2025.

Purpose

Informational

Attachments

Detailed Report – External Affairs Group’s Monthly Activities for October 22, 2025, through November 13, 2025

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Activities Supporting the General Manager’s Business Plan Goals

Execute CAMP4W Implementation Strategy to Integrate Climate Adaptation District-Wide

- Integrate climate considerations and implement adaptation strategies**
 Member Services and Public Outreach staff presented an update on CAMP4W and the development of community engagement standards in a webinar organized by LA Waterkeeper.

Develop Post-2026 Guidelines and Negotiate Implementation Agreements

- Educate legislators so they will champion the District’s interests**
 Federal Legislative staff provided updates to congressional staff on the status of discussions on post-2026 Colorado River operations and what is at risk for Metropolitan.

The Press Office issued a statement from General Manager Upadhyay regarding the seven Colorado River Basin states’ continued efforts to reach consensus on post-2026 rules governing operation of the Colorado River.

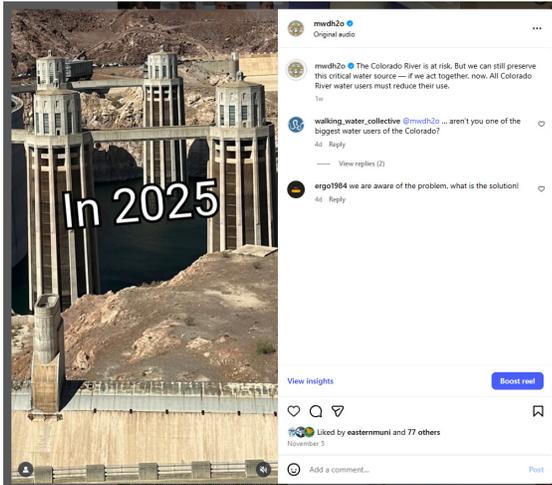
Member Services and Public Outreach staff coordinated a multi-site visit for members of the Colorado River Salinity Control Forum, highlighting sustainability and water management efforts across Southern California—from Intuit Dome’s water reuse and waste diversion systems to Pure Water Southern California’s advanced purification facility in Carson. The itinerary also included Pasadena’s Arroyo Seco Spreading Ground, Monk Hill, and Altadena areas affected by the Eaton Fire, emphasizing the importance of interagency coordination in wildfire recovery, imported water reliability, and water quality protection.



mwdh2o
 32 likes, 3 comments
 mwdh2o Members of the Colorado River Salinity Control Forum toured Southern California sites this week to see sustainability and water... more
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Media Services created two Colorado River social media assets to emphasize the importance of this critical water source to Southern California. One video focused on Lake Mead, comparing 1984 to 2025 levels, while another animation highlighted the impact the river has on Metropolitan’s service area.

Complete EIR and Planning, for Board to Consider Pure Water Southern California

- **Complete EIR analyses and public process**

Over the past month, the Pure Water Southern California outreach team was involved in several key engagement efforts. They participated in a regulatory meeting to support program development, providing updates on the public outreach and engagement efforts, which is important to the regulators. The team also provided an outreach overview for the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion’s community partners and presented to students in a wastewater technology course at LA Trade Tech. The team also participated in community events to engage the public and share information about the program, including the Strength-based Community Change Harvest Festival, West Basin Municipal Water District’s Water Harvest Festival and Heal the Bay’s Harmful Algal Bloom Summit.

The team continued to host a high volume of tours at the Grace F. Napolitano Innovation Center, welcoming groups from the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Cal Poly Pomona, Whittier College, Occidental College, the WELL UnTapped Fellowship Program, and the Colorado River Salinity Control Forum. These visits provided opportunities to share program updates and strengthen partnerships across the region. These tours were coordinated in collaboration with Member Services and Public Outreach, the Education Team, and DEI.

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Pure Water Southern California outreach team at a community event and leading a tour of the Napolitano Innovation Center.

Improve the Workplace and Promote START Values

- Promote START values (Safety, Trust, Accountability, Respect, Teamwork)**

The Creative Design team assisted Safety, Regulatory and Technical Training in creating the first issue of “Safety Forum Rundown”, a twice-annual flyer summarizing the district-wide safety team recommendations and insights. The team also created two video introductions for Safety Culture Leadership Training by Assistant General Manager John Bednarski and Chief Safety, Security, and Protection Officer Gonzalo Barriga.

OCTOBER 2025

Safety Forum Rundown

Safety Showcase

On October 1, 2025, members of the local safety committees came together to provide updates on the great work being done to improve safety across Metropolitan. Each committee provided a presentation that highlighted completed and future Safety Review Request (SRR) projects for the year. Click here to review the presentations.

Grip Pro Spikeless Traction Boot Chains

A new stock item for Anti-Slip Spikeless boot chains that can be worn inside of gaiters with epoxy coatings was unveiled after several months of internal testing and feedback from stakeholders.

- Small/Medium - SKU# 45-019-01022
- Large/Large - SKU# 45-019-01023
- 2X-Large - SKU# 45-019-01024

Safety, Regulatory and Training section will be partnering with Fleet to complete other top priorities:

- 4 • Finalize pintle hitch on trailers

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Media Services highlighted two Metropolitan employees for the Water Champions series on social media. One of the posts featured Patrick Heichert, an O&M Tech IV who works on the Conveyance & Distribution team in La Verne and played a critical part during the Eaton Fires in January. The other employee featured was Bill Byers, an O&M Tech IV at Intake Pumping Plant.



Patrick Heichert
O&M Tech IV

Water Champions
Protecting and Repairing
Critical Infrastructure



Provide Organizational Stability and Deliver Operational Excellence

- **Support a smooth and efficient transition to the next GM**

Media Services assisted GM Upadhyay with a memo to all staff welcoming General Manager-Designate Deshmukh to Metropolitan on his first day.

The Creative Design team is assisting Conveyance and Distribution, Integrated Operations Planning and Support Services, and Treatment and Water Quality with the creation of a series of fact sheets on district facilities. These fact sheets provide an overview of the facilities, staff responsibilities and background information to assist General Manager-Designate Deshmukh as he visits district facilities.

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Other Activities Supporting the General Manager’s Strategic Priorities

Empower the workforce and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion

For Veterans Day, Media Services collaborated with MVet, the veterans employee resource group, to pay tribute to many of our veterans through a social media video. The video featured 21 Metropolitan employees from across the district who have served in the military. We are proud to count so many veterans among our colleagues.

In honor of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, Media Services collaborated with employee resource group VOICE to share a message in celebration of the month, with an emphasis on the group’s commitment to fostering awareness, accessibility and advocacy for employees with disabilities.

Media Services supported GM Upadhyay and DEI with a memo to all staff recognizing Native American Heritage Month.



Protect public health, the regional economy, and Metropolitan’s assets

On November 19, 2025, the Legislative Analyst’s Office released its fiscal outlook for the next fiscal year. The LAO is projecting an \$18 billion deficit for the 2026-27 budget. This is due to constitutional spending requirements that mostly offset revenue gains and higher-than-expected program costs at about \$6 billion over budget.

While income taxes for 2025-26 are currently \$8.5 billion above projections, LAO believes that the stock market boom related to AI presents significant uncertainty for the future and expects a major pullback in stock prices, which will have a big impact on capital gains tax collections for 2026-27.

In addition, LAO is projecting the state will have to wrestle with an ongoing structural deficit of \$35billion beginning in 2027-28. The Department of Finance has yet to release its own budget estimates, but in the meantime, LAO is recommending that the Legislature focus on spending reductions and new revenues. Given this is the fourth consecutive year the state has had to deal with

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a budget deficit, reserves and other budget resilience tools have been put under significant pressure, meaning the Legislature will be faced with tough decisions on possible spending cuts.

Governor Newsom will release his first budget proposal for the 2026-27 fiscal year by January 10, 2026.

Legislative staff in Sacramento are closely monitoring this and its potential implications for Metropolitan's legislative priorities, programs and funding needs.

Partner with interested parties and the communities we serve

Legislative Services

Legislative Services staff coordinated the participation of the Chief Sustainability, Resilience and Innovation Officer, Elizabeth Crosson, on a sustainability panel at the Valley Industry & Commerce Association's Business Forecast Conference.

The first Water Matters event of FY 2025/26 was held in Long Beach with Director Cordero. Legislative Services planned and conducted the event in collaboration with Long Beach Utilities. Approximately 73 community leaders attended, including Long Beach Mayor Rex Richardson. The event included a panel discussion on water issues with Assemblymember Josh Lowenthal, Chair Ortega and Long Beach Utilities General Manager Anatole Falagan.

The Government Affairs Representatives presented, monitored, and/or participated in 55 webinars, meetings, and events with community groups, business organizations, and trade associations on Metropolitan activities and other related topics.

Media Services

The Creative Design team's videographers filmed and photographed the board of directors' annual Engineering, Operations and Technology tour of desert facilities. A highlight reel documenting the 2-day tour was created.

A special "mockumentary" social media piece was conceived and filmed featuring Water Resource Management's Gary Tilkian speaking as a water-efficient sprinkler head, which received tremendous engagement online. The posting of the video coincided with Halloween. Also, during the Halloween season, the Creative Design team created a "RIP Lawns, Grass is Dead" animation as part of the Goodbye Grass campaign.



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Member Services and Public Outreach

Member Services and Public Outreach staff collaborated with the Yorba Linda Water District to host the dedication of a new helicopter hydrant at the Robert B. Diemer Water Treatment Plant. Three helicopters from the Orange County Fire Authority and CalFire demonstrated how the heli-hydrant will be used. The Creative Design team's videographers and photographers captured the Diemer heli-hydrant dedication and created a video of the event and demonstration. The Press Office issued a press release with media coverage by CBS News. The event, attended by more than 100 community stakeholders and dignitaries, underscored a shared commitment to wildfire preparedness, public safety, and regional resilience.



Additionally, Member Services and Public Outreach staff hosted several professional groups at the Weymouth Treatment Plant and Water Quality Laboratory, including members of the Urban Water Institute, Inc., the Southern California Municipal Lab, and the City of La Verne. With support from our operations and water quality teams, guests received a behind-the-scenes look at how Metropolitan treats and tests Southern California's drinking water—from the flavor profile room to microbiology, chemistry, and beyond. These visits strengthened professional relationships, shared best practices, and highlighted Metropolitan's commitment to transparency, collaboration, and public service.

Education Programs

The Education Team conducted several student engagement activities emphasizing career awareness, water literacy, and strategic partnerships with K–16 education.

The Future Green Leaders' Summit, co-sponsored by Metropolitan, engaged San Bernardino students in sustainability, water careers, and environmental leadership to inspire the next generation of environmentally conscious professionals. At the University of La Verne STEM Career Fair, the Education team partnered with Water Quality Lab staff to showcase water testing technologies and highlight internship opportunities that connect STEM learning to real-world applications.

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Students from Cal Poly Pomona visited the Grace F. Napolitano Pure Water Southern California Innovation Center and later created a social media post highlighting the advanced purification processes they observed during the tour, reinforcing the connection between classroom learning and career pathways in water innovation. As part of a Career Awareness Pilot Program, Whittier College students toured Pure Water Southern California, where they explored how their academic majors in business, chemistry, and environmental justice relate to water careers and sustainability fields.



Staff participated in the California Department of Water Resources Statewide Water Education Coordinators meeting at Eastern Municipal Water District to join statewide discussions on strengthening K–16 water education alignment and collaboration.

The California Environmental Education Foundation 2025 Teacher Institute, co-sponsored by Metropolitan, concluded with its final session, where teachers presented lesson plans aligned with next-generation science standards and shared strategies for integrating water education into classroom instruction.

Several Diamond Valley Lake field trips were conducted this month, giving students hands-on experiences in watershed studies, local ecology, and water conservation practices.

At Menifee Wildlife Day, staff provided family-friendly conservation outreach and interactive activities at the Santa Rosa Plateau, encouraging community engagement in environmental stewardship.



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Community Partnering Program

The Community Partnering Program sponsored three water education and conservation partnerships this month. The City of Rosemead’s *Collaboration on Water Wise Rain Garden Events* project involves hosting a series of community water-wise educational garden events aimed at promoting best management practices in water conservation. The Walnut Valley Water District’s *H2O for HOAs* provides a community workshop in collaboration with HOA board members, property managers, and landscapers to educate and inspire the benefits of utilizing native and California-friendly water conservation landscaping. Finally, Food Exploration and Discovery’s *Water Wise Garden Discovery* will develop and install outdoor water education gardens to inspire environmental and water stewardship in communities.

Inspection Trips Program

The Inspection Trips Team led inspection trips to Hoover Dam and the Colorado River Aqueduct for Directors Jay, Seckel, and Armstrong. They conducted a State Water Project inspection trip for Director McMillan in collaboration with Santa Clarita Valley Water. The team also led a pilot inspection trip to the Upper Feather River Watershed and State Water Project for Chair Ortega and Director Shepherd Romey.



Visit to the museum at Gene Camp and HayDay Farms on the Hoover Dam - Colorado River Aqueduct inspection trip with Directors Armstrong and Seckel..