



External Affairs

- **Monthly Activity Report for October 2025**

Summary

This report provides a summary of External Affairs activities for September 20, 2025 through October 22, 2025.

Purpose

Informational

Attachments

Detailed Report – External Affairs Group’s Monthly Activities for September 20, 2025 through October 22, 2025

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Monthly Activity Report

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**

External Affairs participated in a tour with Council for Watershed Health, Active SGV, and other community-based organizations to learn about the Merced Ave. Greenway Project, community climate-resiliency efforts, and engagement strategies.

Member Services and Public Outreach organized an internal workshop to assess Metropolitan's community engagement activities and methods and begin the process of developing community engagement standards for implementation of CAMP4W. These standards are identified in the policy framework in the CAMP4W Implementation Strategy. More than 25 staff from External Affairs, Sustainability, Resilience and Innovation, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion participated. An environmental listening session with interested organizations is planned for early December.

- **Monitor and report progress**

External Affairs arranged for Chief SRI Officer Liz Crosson to provide a keynote address to the Pacific Institute's California Water Resilience Forum with business leaders.

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.

In collaboration with Water Treatment and Water Quality, Member Services and Public Outreach welcomed the Colorado River Board of California to the Weymouth Treatment Plant on October 15. The visit included a tour of the facility, followed by the group's monthly meeting focused on river collaboration and management.



EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Monthly Activity Report

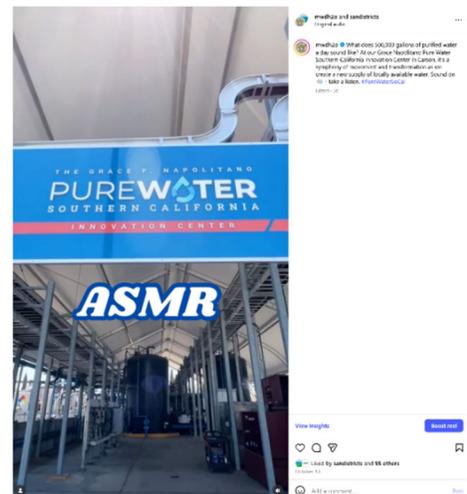
The Press Office coordinated an interview with CalMatters reporter Rachel Becker and Bill Hasencamp regarding the status of Colorado River negotiations and how a deal – or no deal – will affect Metropolitan and its customers.

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

- **Complete EIR analyses and public process**

Over the past month, the Community Relations team continued advancing engagement and collaboration efforts to build awareness and understanding of Pure Water Southern California. The team provided presentations to the city of Carson and the Legislative and Communications Committee, highlighting project updates and the development of a proposed community benefits framework.

In addition to these meetings, the team hosted several tours at the Napolitano Innovation Center, welcoming groups from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Saudi Arabia Water Authority, Australia, and multiple local water agencies, including Suburban Water Systems, Glendale Water & Power, and Long Beach Utilities. These visits provided valuable opportunities to exchange ideas and strengthen partnerships around regional water reuse.



Media services featured an ASMR (autonomous sensory meridian response) reel of the Pure Water facility on social media to highlight the symphony of movement and transformation taking place as we work toward developing a potential new supply of locally available water. A Pure Water Southern California e-newsletter shared an update on the project scope and updated cost estimate ahead of board consideration as well as our community outreach efforts.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Monthly Activity Report

Improve the Workplace and Promote START Values

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

Media services highlighted two Metropolitan employees for the Water Champions series on social media. One of the posts featured Ryan Jordan, a water treatment plant operator at Mills Water Treatment Plant and a legacy employee, whose father, grandfather and uncle all worked for the district. The other employee featured was Engineer Mauricio Santos, who works on source water protection at our Water Quality Laboratory.



Water Champions
Treatment Plant Operator

The Creative Design Team edited and produced the third in a series of “Safety Matters” videos spotlighting innovation in the field at Lake Mathews. The third HQ Safety newsletter was designed and edited as well as a new Safety Forum roundup newsletter for publication twice yearly.

Traveling to Other Work Locations/Sites

Employees may be required to travel to different work locations for a project or other job-related function. Before visiting other site locations, employees should be mindful of the following:

- **Research the location** – Be sure you have the correct coordinates, directions and appropriate vehicle. Depending on the terrain, a truck may be preferred/required over a sedan or electric vehicle. To check out a vehicle, click [here](#). Be aware that many locations may have more than one entrance. Confirm with the facility which entrance to use.
- **Secure approvals** – Obtain the necessary permissions before traveling to a worksite. A Facility Access Request E-form can be filed out [here](#).
- **Communicate and coordinate with local resources** – Be sure to let staff know you are coming and what your purpose is to ensure safety protocols are in place and you will not disrupt ongoing operations. Ask for an escort if unfamiliar with the location.

In This Issue

- A LOOK BACK: 2025 INJURY & ILLNESS INCIDENTS SUMMARY
- ACCIDENT TYPE TRACKING
- SAFETY TALKS
- SAFETY SHOUTOUT
- SECURITY NEWS
- EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
- FACILITY MANAGEMENT
- IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Why Safety Matters

Provide Organizational Stability and Deliver Operational Excellence

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

Media Services developed a communications plan for the General Manager transition outlining an immediate and long-term strategy to effectively communicate the appointment of and introduce the new General Manager internally and externally and to build support among stakeholders, employees, and the public.

The Press Office issued a press release on October 14 formally announcing that the Metropolitan board appointed Shivaji Deshmukh as the agency’s next general manager and has been coordinating subsequent media inquiries and interviews.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Monthly Activity Report

A social media post announcing Deshmukh as Metropolitan’s next GM on LinkedIn outperformed – receiving the most organic engagement to date with more than 3,500 engagements (more than 1,140 reactions) and more than 35,000 impressions.



Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

28,931 followers

6d •

Metropolitan’s Board of Directors appointed Shivaji Deshmukh as our next general manager. He will start Nov. 3, 2025, as general manager-designate and assume the role of General Manager Jan. 1, 2026. He has served as general manager of [Ir](#) ...more

Welcome New General Manager Shivaji Deshmukh

Metropolitan is pleased to announce his appointment as the next GM of Metropolitan, effective Jan. 1, 2026.



Kenneth Ashford and 1,141 others

195 comments • 26 reposts

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

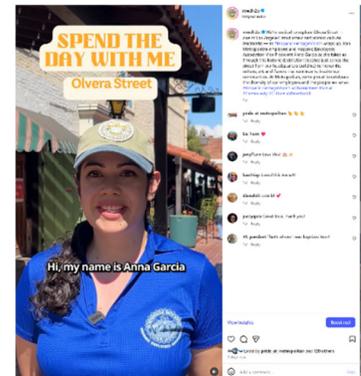
Monthly Activity Report

Other Activities Supporting the General Manager’s Strategic Priorities

Empower the workforce and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion



To celebrate Water Professionals Appreciation Week, Media Services turned the spotlight on Metropolitan’s workforce on social media—with a video featuring employees proudly showing their Metropolitan spirit. We also recognized our professionals certified in T5 Water Treatment and D5 Water Distribution. Metropolitan is proud to have over 30 team members who hold these prestigious certifications from the California State Water Resources Control Board—achievements that require significant experience, rigorous training, and successful completion of state exams.



During Hispanic Heritage Month, Media Services followed Hispanic Employees Association Vice President and Water Resources Management Engineer Anna Garcia to Olvera Street where she talked about her heritage and the importance of the month in a short reel posted on social media.

Adapt to changing climate and water resources

The Press Office coordinated an interview with PPIC Water Policy Center’s Sarah Bardeen and GM Upadhyay regarding a variety of topics, including water infrastructure, climate change, rates and affordability, for a post on their blog.

The Creative Design Team continued the advertising flight for conservation outreach with new creative materials for the “Goodbye Grass” campaign and placement on multi-language, multi-media platforms that included Dodger radio spots, including the World Series.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Monthly Activity Report

A new campaign promoting the Turf Replacement Program was created in house. This campaign addresses a mandate to ban irrigation on non-functional turf starting January 1, 2027 for commercial, industrial and institutional customers. This was enacted through AB 1572 (Friedman, 2023), a bill Metropolitan co-sponsored. Campaign materials were workshopped with member agencies, water use efficiency and other state stakeholders to arrive at messaging that can be utilized regionwide. This responds to requests for creative leadership by Metropolitan in this area.



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

AB 580 (Wallis) to extend Metropolitan's alternate authority under the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act was signed by the Governor.

Metropolitan is in support of the following bills signed by the Governor: SB 31 (McNerney) to enhance California's water sustainability by increasing the use of recycled water in non-potable applications; SB 72 (Caballero) to improve future planning of California water supplies; and SB 394 (Allen) increasing penalties for fire hydrant water theft. Metropolitan is in support of SB 454 (McNerney) establishing a PFAS Mitigation Fund to address PFAS contamination in California's drinking water and wastewater systems; it was vetoed by the Governor.

Metropolitan supported AB 259 (Rubio) to extend the sunset on existing law authorizing public agency boards to participate in board meetings via teleconference. This bill did not move out of the legislature, but the sunset extension provisions were added into SB 707 (Durazo), which was signed by the Governor.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Monthly Activity Report

Metropolitan is opposed to AB 1319 (Schultz), which would amend the California Endangered Species Act to authorize the Department of Fish and Wildlife to adopt an emergency regulation that adds a federally listed species that is native to California to the list of endangered or threatened species on an emergency basis under certain conditions. It was signed by the Governor.

During Source Water Protection Week, Media Services created two short social media videos highlighting our ongoing investments in safeguarding our watersheds – one highlighting our investments in keeping contaminants out of our imported water sources and another on how we’re staying vigilant against invasive species, like golden mussels, as told by Water Quality Laboratory Manager Paul Rochelle.

Media Services showcased Metropolitan’s Business Outreach program for Imagine a Day Without Water on social media. For more than 20 years the program has fueled economic growth and empowered small business in our region.

For the annual Great Shakeout, Media Services posted on social media about our commitment to being prepared as we safeguard our water supply. On October 16, we also featured some photos and videos of member agency conservation coordinators participating in the drill.

The Press Office coordinated an interview between reporter Katie Licari of AfroLA, a nonprofit newsroom dedicated to reporting on marginalized communities in Los Angeles, and John Bednarski about Diamond Valley Lake and Metropolitan’s earthquake preparedness. Licari also visited DVL, learned more about the reservoir, and toured the Inlet/Outlet Tower with Conveyance and Distribution Unit Manager Scott Reierson.



Partner with interested parties and the communities we serve

Legislative Services

Senator Kelly Seyarto was welcomed to the Henry J. Mills Water Treatment Plant on October 17, where Director Brenda Dennstedt, Treatment & Water Quality Group Manager Chaudhuri, Water Treatment Section Manager Collins, and the Operations team, supported by Legislative Services and Member Services and Public Outreach, provided insights into the work behind ensuring high-quality, reliable water for Southern California.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Monthly Activity Report



State Senator Kelly Seyarto (R-Murrieta) and his staff joined Metropolitan Director Brenda Dennstedt, Treatment & Water Quality Group Manager Mickey Chaudhuri, and Eastern Municipal Water District Pacal Cornejo-Reynoso, Senior Policy & Governmental Affairs Manager for a tour of the Henry J. Mills Water Treatment Plant.

Assemblymember Jeff Gonzalez and his staff toured Diamond Valley Lake with Director Kurtz and Assistant General Manager Zinke.

Staff from the Office of Assemblymember John Harabedian toured the Grace F. Napolitano Pure Water Southern California Innovation Center with Director Bryant.

Long Beach Mayor Rex Richardson and City Councilmember Suely Saro toured the Grace F. Napolitano Pure Water Southern California Innovation Center with Chair Ortega.

Legislative Services provided briefings on Metropolitan's legislative priorities and local programs to district office staff for Representative Luz Rivas, Representative Julia Brownley, and Ventura County Supervisor Vianey Lopez.

Metropolitan sponsored the League of California Cities Annual Conference, Los Angeles Business Council Sustainability Summit, and Ventura Council of Governments Annual Dinner.

The Government Affairs Representatives presented, monitored, and/or participated in 66 webinars, meetings, and events with community groups, business organizations, and trade associations on Metropolitan activities and other related topics.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Monthly Activity Report

Media Services

Media Services released the latest e-newsletter on September 29 highlighting our Innovative Conservation Program, Pure Water Southern California scope and cost estimate update, Golden Mussels information, and San Diego County Water Authority General Manager Dan Denham's appointment to the Metropolitan's board of directors.

The Press Office issued a media release regarding San Diego County Water Authority General Manager Dan Denham joining Metropolitan's Board of Directors.

Media Services organized a special event to rename the Diamond Valley Lake inlet/outlet tower in honor of former Metropolitan General Counsel Greg Taylor, who played a key role in ensuring the reservoir was developed to provide a clean and reliable water supply for future generations. Taylor's family attended. Chair Ortega, Director Anthony Fellow (chair of the Facilities Naming Committee), General Counsel Scully, and former general managers Kightlinger and Gastelum provided remarks.



Member Services and Public Outreach

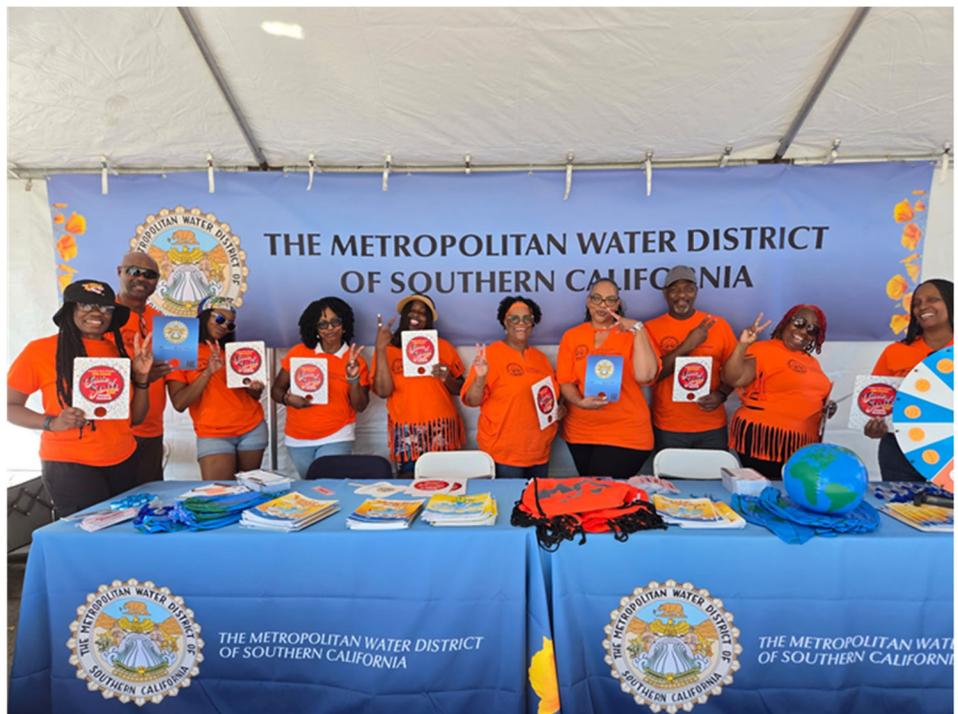
Member Services and Public Outreach coordinated a visit from executives of the Saudi Water Authority to the Diemer Treatment Plant on October 1. The delegation was welcomed by Chair Ortega, General Manager Upadhyay, and executive management, and learned about Metropolitan's challenges, financial practices, and water resource management strategies.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Monthly Activity Report



Metropolitan sponsored the 20th Annual Taste of Soul Festival with a booth to connect to the community. Staff from External Affairs, DEI, and the Black Employees Association volunteered their time, sharing information about water conservation, jobs in the water industry, and other Metropolitan initiatives. In addition, they hosted a kids' area with water activities for children.



The Community Relations team continued proactive coordination with local jurisdictions and communities to support upcoming infrastructure projects. Outreach included advance notifications to residents and businesses regarding maintenance work on the Upper Feeder in Ontario and patrol road preparation for the West Valley Feeder shutdown. The team also provided project briefings to

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Monthly Activity Report

Los Angeles City Council Districts 5 and 11 on the Sepulveda Feeder Pump Station Projects, ensuring local representatives remain informed and engaged ahead of construction.

The Inspection Trips team led inspection trips to the Colorado River Aqueduct for Directors Ramos, Sutley, Phan, Bryant, Kurtz, Faessel and Denstedt. The team also hosted Directors DeJesus and Crawford and their guests on a trip to the State Water Project and led a one-day infrastructure trip for Directors Dick and Seckel.



Education Program

The Education team launched Diamond Valley Lake field trips for the 2025–26 school year. The 2024-25 Being Water Wise traveling art gallery made its final stops at Inland Empire Utilities Agency and Walnut Valley Water District. Over the past year, the students’ artwork was exhibited at 21 member and retail agencies across five counties.

The Education team participated in career and community events including Milliken High, Sanchez Elementary, West Los Angeles College, Taste of Soul, California Science Center, Cal Poly Pomona, Whittier College, and the Pando Days Sustainability Competition at Caltech.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Monthly Activity Report

Community Partnering Program

The Community Partnering Program sponsored three water education and conservation partnerships this month. The Greater West Covina Business Association hosted a diverse “Community Resource Event” to close out Hispanic Heritage Month at the West Covina Plaza. Metropolitan was an in-person exhibitor showcasing all things Be Water Wise with over 200 engagements. Metropolitan also sponsored, exhibited and participated at The Friends of the Los Angeles River’s 35th Annual Great LA River Cleanup at the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. Finally, the CPP sponsored the San Pasqual High School’s project, “For the Love of Water Wise Gardening.” This partnership supports the installation of a water wise educational school garden that will feature water supply and conservation educational signage.

