



External Affairs

- **Monthly Activity Report for December 2025**

Summary

This report provides a summary of External Affairs activities for November 14, 2025, through December 18, 2025.

Purpose

Informational

Attachments

Detailed Report – External Affairs Group's Monthly Activities for November 14, 2025, through December 18, 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 partnered with the Office of Sustainability, Resilience and Innovation on a listening session where representatives of environmental organizations provided their input on the development of community engagement standards to include in CAMP4W.

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.

External Affairs supported Metropolitan's strong participation in the 2025 Colorado River Water Users Association conference. Community Relations staff began working with the Colorado River Resources Manager early in the year to plan and arrange facilities for Metropolitan's meetings and events at the conference, including the well-attended reception co-hosted with the Southern Nevada Water Authority and Central Arizona Project. The Press Office led communications planning, actively coordinating with the California Colorado River Board, Arizona and Nevada on messaging and the Lower Basin states press event. The Press Officer arranged interviews with Metropolitan

leadership leading up to and during the conference. The Creative Design Team created a new exhibit booth and a year-end video that was shared by Director Gloria Cordero, Metropolitan's representation to the CRB. Media Services created a new fact sheet to help inform Basin agencies and leaders of Metropolitan's achievements and priorities for post-2026. The fact sheet will be shared with federal, state and local legislators in the weeks ahead. New assets on the importance of the Colorado River were created and shared on social media.



What's at Stake

The Colorado River:

- Provides half of Metropolitan's imported water
- When California is in drought, most of the region's imported water comes from the Colorado River, preventing drought from becoming worse.
- Generates clean hydroelectric power for communities across the Southwest, including in California

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Decide on Sites Reservoir and Protect our Bay-Delta Interests

- **Maintain and advocate for Metropolitan's interests in Regional Water Supply Reliability**

External Affairs coordinated Metropolitan's input on the State Water Contractors' draft 2026 policy platform.

External Affairs assisted with the development of the State Water Contractors' media statement following the release of another draft update to the State Water Board's Bay-Delta Water Quality Plan. The statement supports the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program as the best approach for California.

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 continued advancing key engagement and coordination efforts to support program development. The team coordinated support for a program presentation at the Association of California Water Agencies conference, helping reinforce regional awareness of the project's progress. Staff also met with Long Beach Utilities to discuss Reach 2 and Los Angeles River crossing components and met with the PWSC Outreach Workgroup to continue refining the program's communications strategy.

The team supported internal and external collaboration through multiple meetings and tours, including hosting two employee inspection trip tours at the Grace F. Napolitano Pure Water Innovation Center and participating in the quarterly coordination meeting with the Division of Drinking Water. Staff also attended the WateReuse Communications Collaborative Group meeting



Tours at the Napolitano Pure Water Innovation Center

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and the Recycled Water Communications and Engagement Working Group meeting to align messaging with regional partners.

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: Jim Skistimas, a senior system operator at Eagle Rock OCC and Martin Pozzatto, an O&M Tech at Weymouth.

- **Accelerate recruitments to reduce the vacancy rate**

Media Services supported Human Resources by promoting hard-to-fill positions—hydroelectric and IT cloud system administrator—on social media.

Provide Organizational Stability and Deliver Operational Excellence

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

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. Fact sheets for the following facilities were completed this month: Jensen, Weymouth and Mills Water Treatment Plants, Conveyance & Distribution Western and Desert Regions, and Eagle Rock OCC.

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Other Activities Supporting the General Manager's Strategic Priorities

Empower the workforce and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion

Media Services created a video celebrating Metropolitan's Employee Resource Groups by incorporating photos of activities coordinated by each group throughout 2025 and thanking them for their dedication to improving Metropolitan's culture. The video was posted in the rotunda and will be included in the GM's holiday memo to the workforce.



Media Services developed a video to thank field employees who work over the holidays, including on Thanksgiving, and posted the asset on social media and linked to it in the GM's Thanksgiving memo to the workforce.

The Media Team made two visits to desert facilities – Gene, Iron Mountain and Hinds – to present and gather input on the new newsletter for employees, while also collecting photos, stories and content for the newsletter and social media.

Media Services launched a newsletter naming contest, open to all of Metropolitan's workforce, to foster a sense of collaboration and inclusion as External Affairs prepares to launch its new newsletter for employees in January.



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Adapt to changing climate and water resources

Sacramento Legislative Services staff monitored the following meetings:

- Select Committee on Climate Innovation and Infrastructure: Discussion Around Emerging Climate and Clean Energy Technologies, Emphasizing How These Innovations Advance California's Climate Goals
- State Water Board: Public Workshop on Urban Stormwater Capture and Use

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

Washington, DC, Legislative Services staff monitored the following meetings:

- Senate Environment and Public Works Committee hearing to examine the future of PFAS cleanup and disposal policy
- House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife, and Fisheries hearing on MWD-supported bill, H.R. 388, Every Drop Counts. The bill expands the definition of small storage projects from 200 acre-feet to 30,000 acre-feet.

Sacramento Legislative Services staff monitored the following meetings:

- Assembly Select Committee on Electric Vehicle and Charging Infrastructure: How to Continue California's Progress on Zero-Emission Vehicles & Infrastructure Despite Federal Headwinds
- State Water Board: Consideration of a proposed Resolution adopting a regulation to adjust Water Right Civil Penalties for inflation under AB 460 (Bauer-Kahan, 2024)
- Joint Informational Hearing of the Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee and Senate Environmental Quality Committee on Monitoring Impacts and Progress in The Tijuana River Valley

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.

The Press Office issued a statement on the California Department of Water Resources' initial State Water Project allocation of 10%.

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Partner with interested parties and the communities we serve

Legislative Services

External Affairs supported a congressional meeting on immigration reform hosted in Metropolitan's boardroom at the request of Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass.

Legislative Services staff attended the Valley Industry and Commerce Association Leaders Forum with Los Angeles Mayor Bass. Metropolitan sponsored and attended VICA's 76th Annual Meeting.

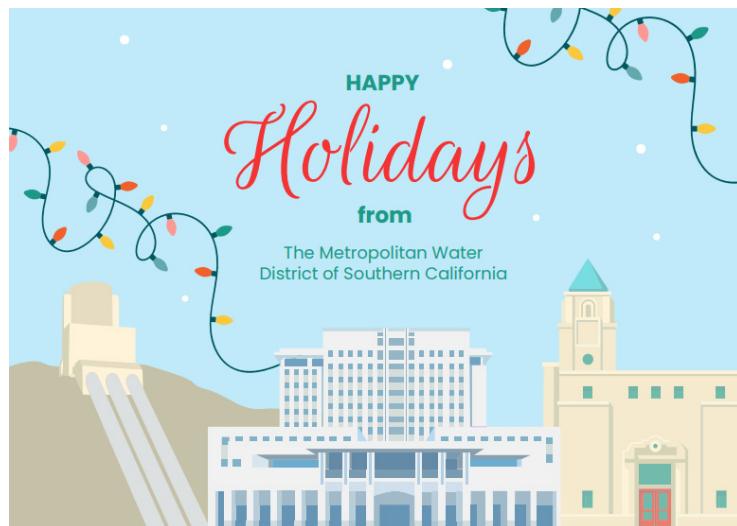
Legislative Services staff attended a town hall with Assemblymember Robert Garcia at the Fontana Community Senior Center.

Legislative Services staff participated in the Riverside County Water Task Force tour of Lee Lake, Elsinore Lake, and Canyon Lake to learn how these key Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District facilities support regional water supply and recreation.

Legislative Services staff attended the Corona Chamber of Commerce's Legislative Committee meeting featuring newly elected Assemblymember Natasha Johnson (AD-63), sworn in after a special election in August 2025. Assemblymember Johnson's district includes Metropolitan's Lake Mathews and Mills Treatment Plant facilities.

Media Services

The Creative Design Team designed and animated Metropolitan's 2025 Holiday Card, allowing Metropolitan's leaders and staff to reach out to their partners and communities to provide a holiday greeting – both in print and digital formats. The digital card will also be shared with the public on social media.



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Member Services and Public Outreach

Member Services and Public Outreach staff coordinated a tour of the Henry J. Mills Water Treatment Plant for the Inland Empire Economic Partnership's Regional Leadership Academy, providing participants with an overview of Metropolitan's regional role and a guided tour of the facility. The visit offered emerging regional leaders a firsthand look at large-scale water treatment operations and reinforced the importance of reliable water infrastructure, collaboration, and long-term planning in supporting economic vitality across Southern California.

Member Services and Public Outreach staff collaborated with the City of Rolling Hills Estates and the Los Angeles County Fire Department to host a dedication of a new helicopter dip tank at the Palos Verdes Reservoir. Approximately 75 people attended the event, which included remarks from Chair Ortega, directors, and local dignitaries. Los Angeles County Fire provided a helicopter demonstration.



Helicopter Demonstration at Palos Verdes Reservoir

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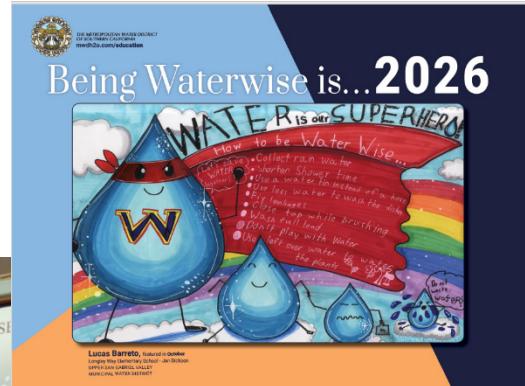
Education Program

The Education Team inspired and engaged students, teachers, and parents through creative programs, career awareness events, field trip experiences, and community partnerships.

The Calendar Art Recognition Event welcomed 150 students, teachers, parents, member agency representatives, and directors to Metropolitan's headquarters. Student artists were recognized; they inspired the audience as they shared how they promote being water wise at home, in school, and in their communities. The 2026 Student Art Calendar was distributed.



2026 Calendar Art Recognition Event



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The Education Team supported Paramount Unified School District's Careers Outside the Classroom event at Compton College, informing students about career opportunities in the water industry. Several Diamond Valley Lake field trips were conducted, providing hands-on water education experiences for students. The team participated in Cal Poly Pomona's Fall in the Farm, engaging students in environmental and water-focused learning activities.



Careers Outside the Classroom at Compton College, Field Trip at Diamond Valley Lake

In partnership with the Water Quality Lab, the Education Team supported the STEM Career Fair at the University of La Verne, sharing water industry and sustainability career pathways with students. An Art Gallery installation at the Vista Del Lago Visitors Center showcased 2025 student artwork promoting water conservation and environmental stewardship.

Community Partnering Program

The Community Partnering Program sponsored four water education and conservation partnerships this month. The City of Oxnard's *Water Wise Student Art Contest* project involves collaboration with an after-school program where students will create artwork with water awareness inspiration. Students in grades 1 through 8 submit their original artwork and slogan. The winning art selections will be displayed on nine of the City's Certified Natural Gas recycling trucks to spread water wise messaging throughout the community.



The City of Oxnard's Water Wise Student Art Contest

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Other Community Partnering Program sponsorships included the following:

- Breathe Southern California's *BlueSky LA Native Planting at Park Avenue Elementary*. The project will include water education topics such as conservation through a water wise garden and watershed health. Attendees will also be able to take home a California Native Plant and water educational resources.
- Rivers & Lands Conservancy's *Planting California Native Plants at Sycamore Highlands Park*. The primary goal of this partnership is to continue the restoration of native plant habitat and create a public outdoor water conservation educational experience to all that visit the park.
- 48th District Agricultural Association's Schools' *Agriculture and Nutrition Fair*. This project will encompass hands-on learning workshops that include a water conservation garden installation that will serve as outdoor classrooms for a City of Pomona public school and the surrounding communities.

Inspection Trips Program

The Inspection Trips Team led Metropolitan employee tours sponsored by Human Resources to Diamond Valley Lake and the Grace F. Napolitano Pure Water Southern California Innovation Center. The team also led a trip for the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Metropolitan Employee Resource Group leaders to the Colorado River Aqueduct.



Employee trip to Diamond Valley Lake



ERG Leaders with GM Upadhyay

Construction Outreach

Over the past month, the construction outreach team continued coordinating closely with local jurisdictions to support upcoming infrastructure work and ongoing shutdown activities. Staff met with the City of Los Angeles Council District 4 to provide an overview of the Hollywood Tunnel Pressure

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Control Structure rehabilitation project and discuss potential community impacts and communication needs. The team also supported outreach for the Box Springs Feeder shutdown, ensuring nearby stakeholders were informed of planned work and anticipated conditions. In addition, staff met with the Los Angeles City Council District 12 to discuss the upcoming rehabilitation of Metropolitan's Sepulveda Feeder and to begin planning for community engagement as the project advances.