



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Board Report

External Affairs

- External Affairs Monthly Activities Report for June 2025

Summary

This report provides a summary of External Affairs' group activities for June 2025.

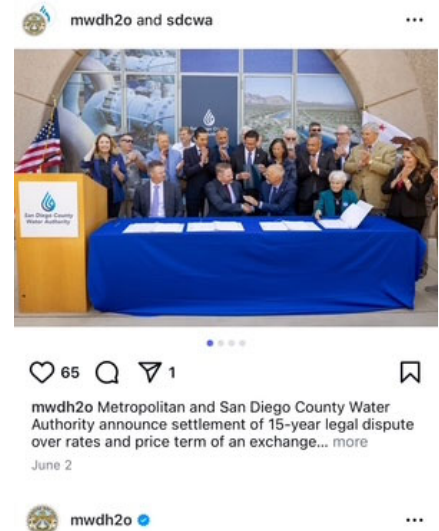
Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Highlights

Metropolitan's Press Office worked with the San Diego County Water Authority to organize a media event at the Water Authority's headquarters announcing and signing the settlement agreement between the two agencies. A joint press release was issued. The event was well-attended by media and livestreamed, with interviews regarding the settlement with Chair Ortega and GM Upadhyay and Voice of San Diego, San Diego Union-Tribune, and KPBS. (June 2)



Metropolitan collaborated with member agencies and the State Water Contractors to advocate for Gov. Newsom's legislative proposal to streamline administrative processes for the Delta Conveyance Project. Directors, member agencies, and staff participated in a Sacramento advocacy day on June 11, visiting Southern California representatives to share information about the State Water Project and seek support for the Governor's proposal. By the end of June, 31 legislators had signed on to a support letter and a dozen more legislators have expressed their support. In addition, 127 business, labor, community organizations, and water agencies had signed on to a coalition letter.

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External Affairs supported Safety Awareness Month, collaborating with the Office of Safety, Security and Protection to create a new safety video, digital posters for display at facilities and design for the quarterly Headquarters Safety newsletter.



Legislative Services

Federal

Congress continues to work on a budget reconciliation bill that contains \$500M for “construction and associated activities to restore or increase the capacity of existing Reclamation conveyance facilities.” The FY26 appropriations process started with budget hearings in both chambers where lawmakers indicated they will provide more funding for water programs than is included in the President’s budget.

State

AB 580 (Wallis) to extend Metropolitan’s alternate authority under the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act moved to the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee.

Metropolitan staff worked to advance the following bills: AB 259 (Rubio) eliminating the sunset provision in the Brown Act for teleconferencing; AB 532 (Ransom) for local water agencies to establish low-income rate assistance programs; SB 31 (McNerney) increasing the use of recycled water in non-potable applications; SB 72 (Caballero) to improve future planning of California water supplies; SB 394 (Allen) increasing penalties for fire hydrant water theft; and SB 454 (McNerney) establishing a PFAS Mitigation Fund to address PFAS contamination in California's drinking water and wastewater systems. Metropolitan maintains an oppose unless amended position on AB 794 (Gabriel) which would allow for an emergency regulatory process for the State Water Board’s PFAS regulations on drinking water standards; this bill was moved to the Assembly Inactive File. Metropolitan also maintains an oppose unless amended on AB 1319 (Schultz) which would amend the California Endangered Species Act to authorize the California Fish and Game Commission 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. Metropolitan maintains an oppose position on AB 1146 (Papan) which would authorize the State Water Resources Control Board to issue an interim relief order to prohibit release of stored water if the release is done under false pretenses, and on SB 601 (Allen) increasing the State Water Board authority to regulate wastewater discharges. Staff is working with the bills’ authors to address concerns.

Date of Report: 7/7/2025

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Local

Vice Chair Garza, Legislation and Communications committee Vice Chair Kassakhian, Director Ramos and AGM Zinke met with Rep. Laura Friedman (CA-30-D) at her district office to discuss the district's federal legislative priorities and local issues. (June 17)

Provided briefings on Metropolitan's legislative priorities and local programs to district office staff for the following elected officials: Representative George Whitesides (CA-27-D), Senator Maria Elena Durazo (D-Los Angeles), Senator Henry Stern (D-Los Angeles), Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel (D-Encino), Assemblymember Sharon Quirk-Silva (D-Fullerton), Assemblymember Celeste Rodriguez (D-San Fernando), Assemblymember Michelle Rodriguez (D-Ontario), Assemblymember Nick Schultz (D-Burbank), and Assemblymember Rick Zbur (D-Hollywood).

Sponsored the Central City Association's Treasures of Los Angeles event (June 4), Western Riverside Council of Governments General Assembly Annual Meeting (June 12), San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership's Legislative Networking Reception (June 20), and Municipal Water District of Orange County's Water Policy Dinner (June 26).

Presented, monitored, and/or participated in 62 webinars, meetings, and events with community groups, business organizations, and trade associations on Metropolitan activities and other related topics.

Media and Communications

Press Releases

- Earning excellent credit ratings from top rating agencies
- New board director representing Torrance, Director Raymond Jay

Coordinated media event and interviews with Metropolitan executive management:

- Provided responses to Politico reporter Annie Snider regarding Metropolitan's history with the Cadiz project
- Interview between water quality manager Paul Rochelle and Rachel Becker of CalMatters regarding golden mussels

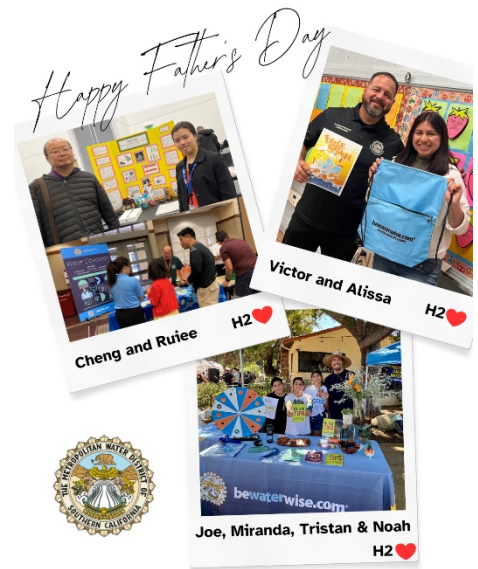
Continued to post about the public comment period for the Pure Water Southern California Draft EIR and amplified media posts to help with outreach. The DEIR posts have received some of the most shares compared to our other posts during this time period.

Honored Juneteenth with an audio post from Black Employees' Association President Tuannee Holmes emphasizing the importance of the holiday. In celebration of Pride Month, posted photos from Pride@Metropolitan events and featured a post on the evolution of the organization.

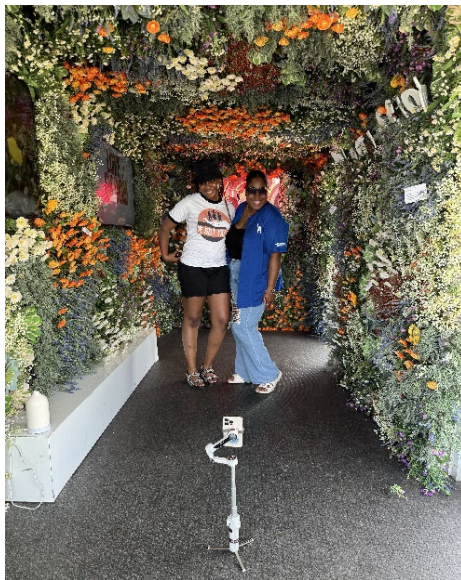
For Father's Day highlighted three Metropolitan dads and their kids as they volunteered their time to educate the community about Southern California's water resources.

A social media short video on using reusable water bottles in celebration of World Environment Day received the strongest organic engagement in June, with the most views on Instagram and attracting non-followers.

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The Bloom Box, Metropolitan's immersive experience to showcase the beauty of water-wise California Friendly® and native plants, was at the Long Beach Juneteenth celebration on June 14 and Fuel Fest in Pomona on June 28. Community outreach and education through the Bloom Box is part of the campaign to encourage Southern Californians to say, "Goodbye Grass."



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Community Outreach

Pure Water Southern California

Held two virtual public meetings for the Draft EIR (June 12 and 14)

Meetings, presentations, community events:

- South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce (June 3)
- City of Carson (June 3)
- San Gabriel Valley of Governments, Energy, Environment and Natural Resources (June 4)
- West Basin Caucus (June 4)
- Green LA (June 5)
- Information booth at the Long Beach Aquarium of the Pacific (June 7)
- San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, Water Working Group (June 10)
- Information booth at 2025 City of Torrance Yard Open House (June 21)
- Warren Facility Citizen's Advisory Committee (June 25)
- East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice – Long Beach Group (June 25)
- Los Angeles Business Council – Energy & Environment Committee (June 26)
- Sierra Club Water Committee (June 26)

Tours

- Burbank Water & Power (June 17)
- Rotary Club Carson-Gardena-Dominguez (June 25)

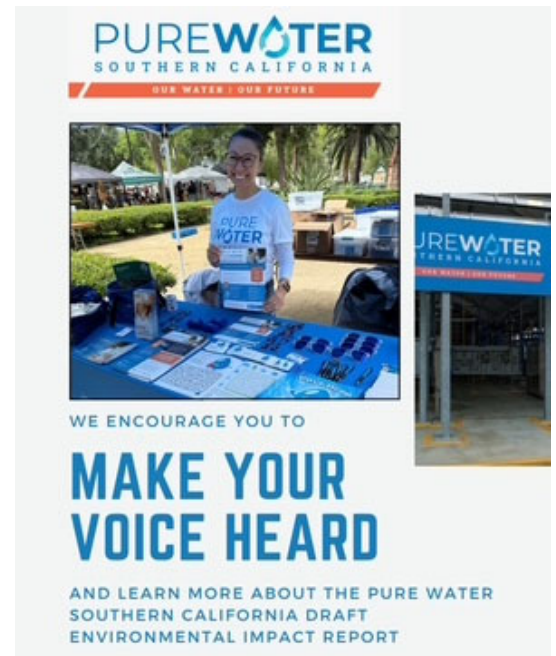
Community Partnering Program

Three CPP water conservation and education projects and/or events were supported this month:

- Discovery Cube Los Angeles Park Clean Up & Water Wise Resource Fairs (June 21)
- Mrs. B's Table – Bee Rooted: Growing Native Roots in Our Community
- Los Plebes Theater Troupe Community Water Justice

Inspection Trips

- Desert Employees Inspection Trip to in-region facilities (June 3-4)
- SWP Inspection Trip for San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (June 6-8)
- Hoover/CRA Inspection Trip with Directors Crawford and Alvarez (June 20-22)
- Infrastructure Inspection Trip with Directors Lewitt and Luna (June 25)
- DVL Inspection Trip with Directors Gray and McCoy (June 27)



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Education

Supported youth engagement and water career awareness at the following events and programs:

- Educational booths at the Lake Skinner Summer NatureFest (June 7), Tree People Teacher Institute at College of the Canyons (June 23-24), and Lake Mathews Safety Fair (June 26).
- Partnered with University of LaVerne to host a facility tour at Three Valleys MWD for first generation college REACH students. During lunch, employees discussed their careers and provided internship fact sheets (June 26).
- Provided career and water reuse brochures to USC Black STEM Collective for high school tech summer camp for St. Bernard's High School.

