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California Water Service Infrastructure Upgrades Underway to Improve Water Supply Reliability and Fire Protection in Visalia

VISALIA, Calif.—California Water Service (Cal Water) is working on major infrastructure upgrades, with more planned in coming months and years, to the water system that provides safe, clean, reliable drinking water to about 145,000 people in Visalia. The utility hosted media at a few of its project sites today to provide a more in-depth view.

Currently, construction of a fifth water storage tank and booster station, along with installation of 3,350 feet of new 12-inch and 16-inch water main to support the project, are underway just east of downtown Visalia. In coming weeks, Visalia customers will experience the benefits of the 975,000-gallon water tank and booster station, which is a major expansion of the system’s capacity to provide water amid the peak demands of summer.

“Infrastructure improvements like these ensure that Cal Water maintains a reliable water supply for both everyday and emergency needs,” said Stephen Johnson, Cal Water Visalia District Manager. “We continually modernize and upgrade our water system so that we can provide safe, clean, and reliable tap water to our customers and community—any time they need it.”

The storage tank and booster station are expected to be fully operational in September, which is also when Cal Water is set to begin construction to install granular-activated carbon treatment on two wells to address the state’s new water quality standard for two manmade compounds, PFOS (perfluorooctane sulfonate) and PFOA (perfluorooctanoic acid).

In October, Cal Water will begin work on another main replacement project in downtown Visalia, which will include the installation of about 2,600 feet of new 8-inch and 4-inch main on Acequia Avenue, from Clarke to Bridge streets, and on Santa Fe Street, from Willow to Main streets.

The projects are part of Cal Water’s efforts to continually modernize and upgrade its water system for customers. Cal Water’s investment in infrastructure is spelled out in its Infrastructure Improvement Plan (IIP), which it is required to file every three years with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). Cal Water filed its most recent IIP on July 8, beginning an approximately 18-month review process by the CPUC, an independent state agency. The CPUC will analyze the plans to establish water rates for 2026-2028 that reflect the actual cost of providing safe, reliable water service. Associated rates set by the CPUC would become effective no sooner than January 2026.

In Visalia, Cal Water proposes to make future upgrades that will strengthen reliability, safety, and supply through projects such as:

-Replacing 48,965 feet of water main to prevent failure of aging and high-risk pipelines.

-Installing new treatment sites and enhancing existing facilities to expand capacity to deliver safe, clean water.

-Rehabilitating existing wells to improve water supply and reliability.

-Identifying locations for new wells and groundwater recharge locations.

For these important upgrades and costs to maintain and operate this system, under this proposal, the typical customer using 8,228 gallons of water per month would have an increase of 25 cents per day beginning in 2026, followed by 10 cents per day in 2027, and 12 cents per day in 2028.

“Rate adjustments help fund critical water infrastructure projects such as new pipes, treatment facilities, pumps, and fire hydrants, along with improving water supply and storage,” Johnson said. “Even with our strong record of system upgrades, our delivery of safe, clean tap water, and our commitment to exceptional customer service, our customers pay about a penny per gallon.”

About California Water Service

California Water Service provides high-quality, reliable water utility services to about 145,000 people in Visalia through approximately 53,000 service connections in Visalia, and more than 2 million people through 496,400 service connections statewide. Cal Water’s purpose is to enhance the quality of life for customers and communities. To do so, it invests responsibly in water and wastewater infrastructure, sustainability initiatives, and community well-being. The company’s employees live by a set of strong core values and share a commitment to protecting the planet, caring for people, and operating with the utmost integrity. The utility has been named one of “America’s Most Responsible Companies” and the “World’s Most Trustworthy Companies” by *Newsweek* and a Great Place to Work®. More information is available at www.calwater.com.

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