

Mission Statement: To provide, protect, and maintain Joshua Tree's water - our vital community resource.

*Conserve water like a tortoise~
not a hare...*

And stay hydrated and carry water with you—everywhere.

Remember: **WATER IS LIFE!**



Brought to you by your water providers: Joshua Basin Water District, HI-Desert Water District, Bighorn Desert-View Water Agency, 29 Palms Water District, and the Mojave Water Agency.

Monthly Water Use

**January 2024
60.23 GPCD**

The unit of measure for water conservation reporting is called Gallons per Capita per Day (GPCD). The GPCD listed here represents water usage from three months prior. CA's goal for is to reach 42 GPCD by 2030!

Keep saving, Joshua Tree!

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Special Articles:

- A new Newsletter debuts in May!
- Water for Emergencies Guide
- Customer Service Update & Trends
- Preparing your Home for Summer Class
- Wildcrafting Course (May)
- MBCA Landscape Tours (May)
- Help yourself, Help your neighbor event

APRIL MEETINGS

Board of Directors Regular Meetings

- Wednesday, April 3, 5:30PM
- Wednesday, April 17
CANCELLED

Committee Meetings

- Finance Committee: Wednesday, April 10, **CANCELLED**
- Water Resources & Ops: Wednesday, April 10, **CANCELLED**

"Save Water for Summer" Class

- Tuesday, April 2, 6pm

Visit www.jbwd.com for agendas, Zoom links, and other info.

COMING TO YOU IN MAY: "THE METER READER" NEWSLETTER!

That's right--the District is "retiring" the *Tier Drop Newsletter* to bring you a fresh and new reformatted newsletter with a brand new name, "**The Meter Reader.**"



There's nothing you need to do differently to get our latest and greatest updates on water-centric news. Just watch for *The Meter Reader* coming to your email inbox early May 2024! Know a friend or neighbor who'd like to receive JBWD's newsletter? Have them simply sign-up at www.jbwd.com. From the home page, the newsletter sign-up link is at the bottom right corner of the page.



APRIL WATER SAVING TIP:

Being "Earthquake Preparedness Month", this water saving tip may be life saving in a water emergency just by protecting your water tank's water!

Hot water tanks (when properly maintained) can be a big source of emergency water in the event of a disaster. However, if not well secured, the rocking of the earth can break the water feed line to the tank when in motion, resulting in the loss of ALL of the tank's water.

Be sure that your water heater is well strapped/anchored so that there would be minimal movement with ground shaking. Saving your water heater is equal to saving gallons of water, and may be critical at a time when the tap water may stop flowing!



CURIOUS MINDS WANT TO KNOW:

Often, at our Farmers' Market booth or on social media, we get good questions that others may be asking. Here's an example:

Q: *If our community's power goes out for an extended time and we can't get info from the media, how will we know if or when our water is safe to drink?*

A: In all emergency cases (power black-outs, earthquake disruptions, etc.) err on the side of extreme caution: if your tap water continues to flow after a catastrophic event, do not *assume* your water is safe--plan to treat your tap water before using it (see guide sheet in this newsletter on how to do this). Wait until you receive credible notice --from the District or via local media--that the water is safe to drink before using it directly from the tap in the event of a community disaster.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Native Plant Sale: the time

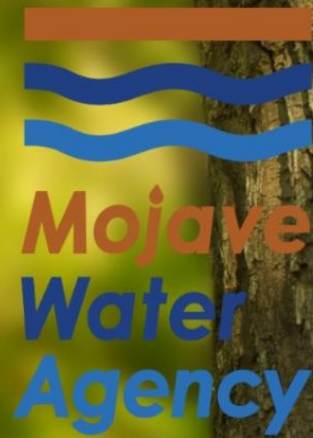
to plant is now! □

Whether you are planting native plants or water wise plants, the time to plant is now. Summer heat is right around the corner whereby, our local topsoil heats up intensely. Young plants need to get their tap roots down deep, to avoid having them "cook" in the hot soil.

Photo caption: Morongo Basin gardeners came in support of the 2024 Annual Native Plant Sale where double the inventory (over 600+ plants) was touted from past years, along with free plants and seed offerings, mulch, compost and garden tours . The Sale occurs every year in late March. Proceeds benefit JBWD and Joshua Tree National Park's Wildcrafting and Invasive Plant educational programs.



SAVE WATER



by preparing your home for Summer

Join the Mojave Water Agency for a seasonal workshop on how to save water (and energy) throughout the warm summer months. This online course is FREE and open to the public.



This course will cover:

- ✓ Water-saving tips and benefits
- ✓ How to protect your landscape
- ✓ Water meter monitoring
- ✓ Methods to conserve energy
- ✓ Swamp cooler tips

April 2 at 6:00 p.m.

Register Now



www.mojavewater.org

760-218-2822

April is California's "Earthquake Preparedness Month". Print out this life saving information below on how to maintain safe drinking water in the event of a water emergency.



Water for Emergencies

Tape this sheet to the inside of a closet or cupboard door for when you need it!

Take the time NOW to review and restock your emergency water supply. Store a minimum of one gallon per person per day for 3 days. Store more if possible. You'll need water for drinking, for preparing food, for hygiene, and for your pets.

- ▶ For emergency supply, commercially bottled water is recommended.
- ▶ If you are preparing your own containers, you can purchase food-grade water containers from camping supply stores.
- ▶ If you want to re-use containers, two-liter plastic soft drink bottles are a good choice.
- ▶ Don't use containers that have been used for milk or fruit juice.
- ▶ Don't use glass containers—they are heavy and may break.
- ▶ Clean the plastic containers with dishwashing soap and water and rinse well.
- ▶ Then sanitize the bottles with a mix of 1 teaspoon unscented regular liquid household bleach to 1 quart of water; swish the bottles, then rinse thoroughly.
- ▶ Fill to the top with tap water and tightly twist on the original cap—avoid touching the inside of the cap before putting it on.
- ▶ Write the date on the container. Store in a cool dark place. Do not store directly on concrete (leaching chemicals destroy plastic).
- ▶ The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recommends replacing water every six months (if not using commercially bottled water.) Observe / disinfect water in commercial ly packaged bottles if past their expiration date.
- ▶ If stored water is warm, cloudy, or has debris floating within, disinfect the stored water to prevent illness.

Extra Water Sources:

Use: Water heater water, water in water pipes, or ice cubes in freezer.

Don't Use: Water from toilet tanks or bowls, swimming pools or spas, or water beds.

Remember: If you don't know if your tap water is safe in a disaster, play it safe and disinfect it automatically until you've been reassured it is safe to drink by the authorities.

HOW TO DISINFECT WATER

- ▶ **#1 Boil water to make it safe.**
This is the preferred method to assure that the water is safe to drink. Boiling water will kill most types of disease-causing organisms that may be present. First, boil the water for one minute. Let it cool, then store in clean containers with covers.
- ▶ **#2 Disinfect with bleach** (use *fresh*, unscented, regular household bleach from a new bottle). Add 1/8 teaspoonful (8 drops) for each gallon of clear water, or 1/4 teaspoonful (16 drops) per gallon of cloudy water. Stir well. Let it stand for 30 minutes before you use it. A chlorine-like taste and odor will result *at first*, indicating disinfection has taken place.
- ▶ **#3. Water Disinfection tablets** may be used by following the manufacturer's instructions.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TRENDS AND NEWS

DID YOU KNOW...

A recent study during the period of October 1, 2023 through December 23, 2023 revealed:

- Our District office received 3,303 phone calls.

- These calls averaged 196 seconds in length, however the talk time with staff averaged 154 seconds.

- This means that customers' average wait time to speak with someone was 42 seconds. Much of this time is navigating the phone tree system.

- We return phone calls to customers within one business day.

- In 2023, we averaged 47 successful water service applications monthly.

- During that same period of time, Customer Service completed 1,141 initial emails (this does not include the back-and-forth threads of the conversations), which are typically responded to (upon receipt) within minutes during regular District work hours.



Desert-Wise Living 

LANDSCAPE TOUR

13TH ANNUAL

SUNDAY, APRIL 21

Many New Sites | 9am - 4pm

In-Person & YouTube Videos
#mbconservation



MORONGO BASIN CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION
mbconservation.org

Spring 2024 Desert Wildcrafting

Join us and learn along the way!

A four-part training seminar helping you to grow native plants—FREE!

PART ONE:

***Wildcrafting Overview: A Comprehensive class on seed types, seed harvesting, and seed cleaning : Friday May 3, 2024, 9:00AM to 11:30AM at the Joshua Basin Water District Office (61750 Chollita Rd., Joshua Tree)**

*Learn to identify “viable” seeds to be harvested, wild crafting harvesting tips, storing of seeds, seasons to collect various seeds in the Morongo Basin, and more! ***This first class is a pre requisite for Part Two.***

PART TWO:

***Seed Harvesting Class Field Excursion: Friday, May 10, 2024, 7AM-9:00AM**

**Participants are to first meet at the Joshua Basin Water District and will thereafter caravan to a local undeveloped area to identify and harvest local native plant seeds . Seeds collected in this exercise are used for the JBWD/ JTNP Native Plant Sale program. Follow the tips below:*

PART THREE:

***Invasive Plant Module + Seed Propagation: May 17, 2024, 9AM to 11:30AM, at the Joshua Basin Water District Office**

Are invasive plants just weeds? This module helps clarify what is an invasive plant to our area; why it is detrimental to the health of your native plant garden, as well as, the entire desert ecosystem; and how to mitigate the spread of invasive seeds and plants within your landscape.

PART FOUR:

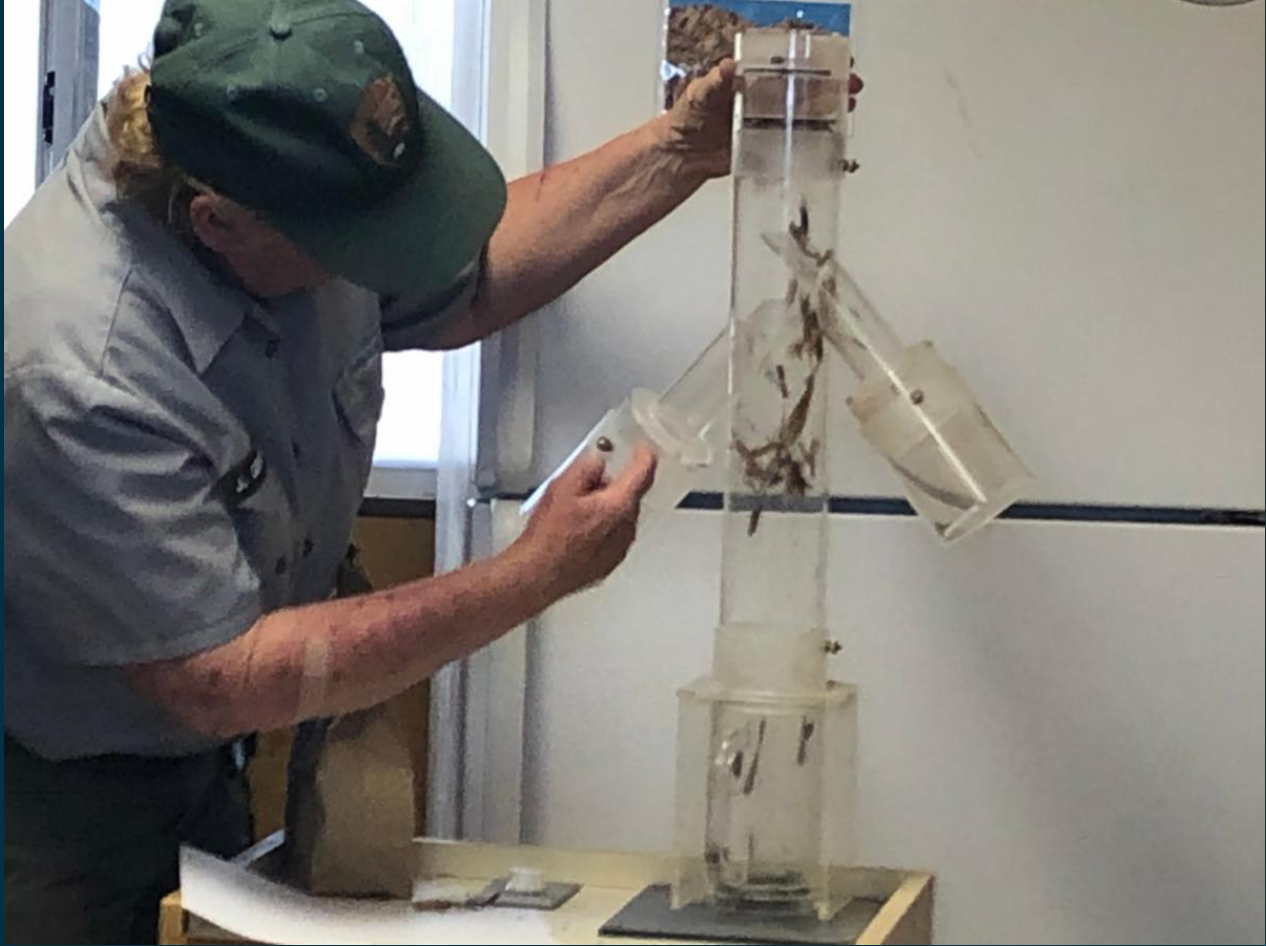
**(NOTE: Participants must have attended at least one of the sessions above to participate in this tour)*

JTNP Private Nursery Tour: Friday, May 24, 2024, 9AM-10:30AM JTNP Nursery (at their Visitor Center), 29 Palms, CA. See techniques that are being used by the pros!

**Class size is limited. For more information or to RSVP your participation, contact Kathleen Radnich at kjradnich@gmail.com:
Registration is required on or before Monday, April 29, 2024**

Sponsored by the Joshua Basin Water District and the Joshua Tree National Park.

Photo Caption Below: 2023-JTNP representative, Jean Graham, demonstrates (during Part 4 of the Wildcrafting course) the "seed cleaning/separation device" . This is used when working with volumes of collected seeds.



**MARK YOUR CALENDAR:
HELP YOURSELF--
HELP YOUR NEIGHBOR
EVENT**

May 11, 2024 9AM-1PM
at the Yucca Valley Wal Mart Parking Lot



This huge public event is family friendly--with tips, demonstrations and "how to survive skills" wrapped up all in one location. Best of all--it's FREE! See our May newsletter for a complete description of this life-saving event, and don't forget to stop by at the JBWD booth. We'll see you there!

**April 2024
FARMERS MARKET BOOTH
"Water for Emergencies"**

We all have different lifestyles:

Some of us are home bodies, some of us work in an office, have outdoor jobs, or are often on the road, or at school or a combination of any one of these. The solution to storing emergency water is not a "one shoe fits all" answer. We have ideas for options to fit just about any lifestyle for when the tap water stops.





YOUR LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

Recent Board Action Items of Note:

During the March 20th Board meeting, JBWD's Director of Administration, David Shook and General Manager, Sarah Johnson presented a renewal contract proposal with Southwest Networks. The Board voted 5-0 authorizing the General Manager to execute the Southwest Networks-"Guardian IT Peace of Mind" master service agreement.

Background:

After evaluating various IT support options, including a proposal from Visual Edge IT, the District staff recommended renewing a three-year contract with Southwest Networks. Price comparisons for similar contract details show minimal differences, and transitioning to a new technology company entails a substantial project involving months of implementation, leaving the District in a vulnerable period with zero protection.



Photo caption: This is a sample of one of the old analog water meters being replaced by a new digital version

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND REPLACEMENT PROGRAM: "C.I.R.P." UPDATE:

DID YOU KNOW...

One of the projects within the CIRP budget calls for replacing old water meters that age out and under perform. When this happens, they no longer accurately read water use--in fact, they are no longer as sensitive and often miss reading gallons of water that flow through it. This creates a discrepancy in our monthly reports to the Department of Water Resources (DWR).

DWR compares the number of gallons of water we pump out of our wells to the amount of water our customer's meters register every month. If the numbers don't match, they want to know why. They also want to know what are we doing to fix it.* This is one good reason why water providers *must* replace old water meters. Independent and manufacturer's field studies show that water meters start failing after nine years. Many of JBWD'S analog meters are now 20 years and older!

**Note: In regards to other ways of tracking water loss: even when there is a pipe break, heavy math skills are employed to calculate the volumes of water lost as this also must be reported to the State. All water counts must add up in the end!*

For the record, our Operations Department reports for 2024 January and February that our CIRP crews have replaced a total of 220 old water meters over eight weeks.

To learn more about our new water meters, or how to read them, visit: [How to read your meter.](#) You can also see one on display in the District Office Customer Service Lobby. Our Support Specialists will be happy to show you how they work, how to read them, and how to lock them off from the customer's side.

APRIL

DESERT-SMART GARDENING TIPS

April Watering Schedule: 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Test run your irrigation system to check for leaks and drip irrigation emitters that are broken or out of adjustment.

THIS MONTH IN YOUR DESERT-SMART LANDSCAPE: Color season is reaching its peak--spend time outside enjoying it!

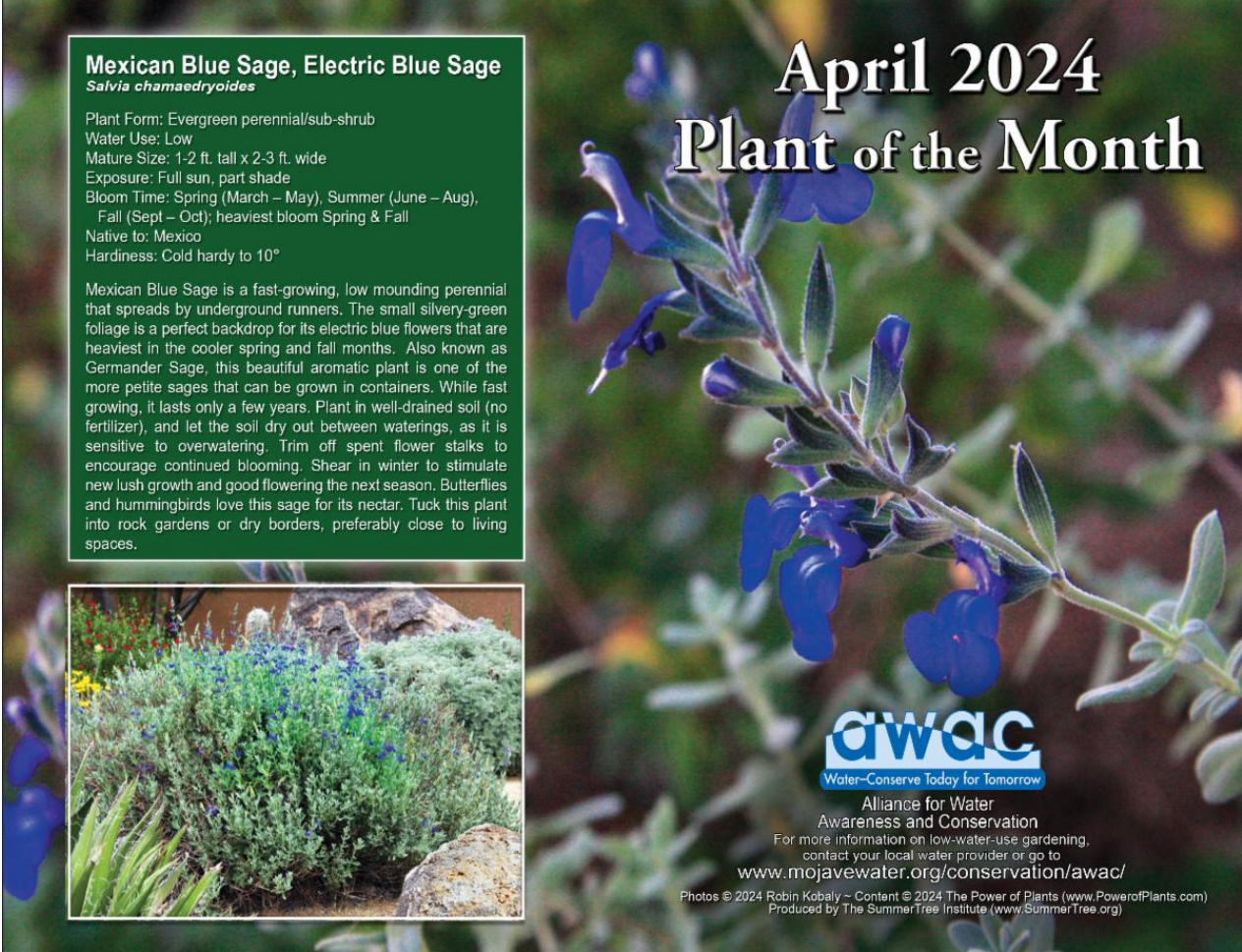
- Reset irrigation schedules and increase watering time as temperatures rise
- Work compost or soil amendments into planting beds to improve moisture retention as summer approaches
- Plant cold-tender perennials, preferably in pots so winter protection is easier
- Keep mulch on the soil to temper the drying and heating effect of the sun; irrigation will be more effective with less frequency and quantity
- Continuing pulling weeds before they form seed heads (if weeds are brown, you waited too long); you'll have fewer weed problems later

HISTORIC USES OF: MEXICAN BLUE SAGE

*Salvia
chamaedryoides*

The Mexican Blue Sage, or *Electric Blue Sage* (*Salvia chamaedryoides*), is used as an ornamental plant in gardens.


It is also known for its properties as a medicinal plant for treating headaches, fever, and digestive issues.




Mexican Blue Sage, Electric Blue Sage
Salvia chamaedryoides

Plant Form: Evergreen perennial/sub-shrub
Water Use: Low
Mature Size: 1-2 ft. tall x 2-3 ft. wide
Exposure: Full sun, part shade
Bloom Time: Spring (March – May), Summer (June – Aug),
Fall (Sept – Oct); heaviest bloom Spring & Fall
Native to: Mexico
Hardiness: Cold hardy to 10°

Mexican Blue Sage is a fast-growing, low mounding perennial that spreads by underground runners. The small silvery-green foliage is a perfect backdrop for its electric blue flowers that are heaviest in the cooler spring and fall months. Also known as Germander Sage, this beautiful aromatic plant is one of the more petite sages that can be grown in containers. While fast growing, it lasts only a few years. Plant in well-drained soil (no fertilizer), and let the soil dry out between waterings, as it is sensitive to overwatering. Trim off spent flower stalks to encourage continued blooming. Shear in winter to stimulate new lush growth and good flowering the next season. Butterflies and hummingbirds love this sage for its nectar. Tuck this plant into rock gardens or dry borders, preferably close to living spaces.



April 2024 Plant of the Month



Water-Conserve Today for Tomorrow

Alliance for Water
Awareness and Conservation
For more information on low-water-use gardening,
contact your local water provider or go to
www.mojavewater.org/conservation/awac/

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