JOSHUA BASIN WATER DISTRICT

Proudly providing water from an ancient source...well into the future

THE METER READER

NOVEMBER 2026

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

CONTENTS

>>> In This Issue — Pages 2-5

- Water Savings Tips
- Curious Minds Want to Know
- In Case You Missed It
- Holiday Closures
- Farmer's Market Booth
- Your Leadership in Action
- Plant of the Month
- Gardening Tips

>>> Special Articles — Pages 6-7

- Quick "Winterizing" Tips
- Kitchen Water Savers



Monthly Water Use

AUGUST: 118.38 GPCD

The measure used for reporting water conservation is called Gallons per Capita per Day (GPCD). The GPCD value reported here reflects water usage from three months earlier. California aims to achieve 42 GPCD by the year 2030.

Keep saving, Joshua Tree!



agenda

Board Meetings:

- Regular Board Meeting - 11.04.26 @ 5:00PM
- Regular Board Meeting - 11.18.26 @ 5:00PM

Other Meetings, Classes & Events:

- Citizen's Advisory Council: 11.10.26 @ 5PM



IN THIS ISSUE

WATER SAVING TIPS: NOVEMBER

As friends and family gather for the Thanksgiving holiday, it goes without saying that the “season of feasting” is the main attraction! Water saving tips are numerous this time of year, especially when working in the kitchen. For example, use the “slow thaw” method by placing frozen items ahead of time in the refrigerator instead of running copious amounts of hot tap water over them. For more ideas, see this edition’s feature article on tips to save water in the kitchen on page 7.



Curious Minds Want to Know

Enjoy the question of the month.

Q: Is it still recommended to leave outdoor faucets dripping when freezing temperatures are anticipated to deter frozen pipes?



A: Many sources do recommend you leave an exterior faucet on (slightly) when freezing temperatures threaten, however, if it is not running significantly, it too, could freeze. If you run it too much or too long, your precious water is wasted! If you insist on using this method, try to capture the water in a bucket. Better yet, spend a few cents and externally wrap the faucet with insulation so that it is not exposed to the freezing elements, saving water!



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Volunteers spent a perfect morning enjoying native plant gardening at the Joshua Tree National Park Nursery prepping plants for the annual spring native plant sale. Keep watch! Don’t miss our next workshop in January, 2027!



Photo caption: Volunteer Barry Blum transplants seedlings from flats to “newspaper pots” where seedlings will grow until ready for their deep root pots.

HOLIDAY CLOSURES



VETERANS DAY
NOVEMBER 11, WEDNESDAY



THANKSGIVING DAY
NOVEMBER 26, THURSDAY

In the event of a water emergency during these holiday closures, call the District at 760.366.8438 and speak with our after-hours representatives. They are there 24/7, as are our field crews, working hard to save our water!

>>> FARMERS MARKET



Water pipes age, and even if you've gone years without an issue, freezing temperatures can bring unexpected problems. Imagine getting ready for guests on a chilly winter day, turning on the faucet, and discovering… no water!

A frozen pipe can be more than just an inconvenience. If a pipe bursts, it can lead to costly plumbing repairs and significant water damage to your home. The good news? A little preparation goes a long way!

Take steps to winterize your home before freezing temperatures arrive and help protect your plumbing, your property, and your wallet.

At the Farmers Market booth in November, we have preventative solutions, guidelines and more to help you avoid this unwelcome nightmare. Join us Saturday mornings from 8AM-1PM!

NOTE: JBWD will be absent from the market Dec. 5th.



YOUR LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

For the October 7th Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting, the San Bernardino County Supervisor asked the JBWD Board of Directors to declare a *Resolution* to either "support" or "not support" the County's "Joshua Tree Septic-to-Sewer Initiative".

While the District was not involved in setting the parameters of the proposed Sewer study, the study might have helped determined if (and or when) Joshua Tree may need to consider building a sewer treatment plant for the area and where sewer lines would be most needed.

The Board deliberated at length, and decided instead, on a third option. This third option of writing a letter to the County would have supported the County's efforts, but with significant requests to include JBWD being part of the study process and provide routine updates. The decision to write a letter instead was reached by Board consensus, in lieu of adopting a Resolution "for" or "against" support for this County proposed initiative.

As the County did not offer a "third" option, the County shortly thereafter accepted the Board's decision as one of "no support" and notified the Board that they would move in a different direction and conclude the Initiative. However, the County described itself to be a "supportive partner" for potential "future collaboration."

Note: An entire Special Board Meeting was held on September 28th discussing the pros and cons of this topic at length and can be viewed by clicking on:

https://www.jbwd.com/2026-09-28-board-of-directors-special-meeting-at-10-00-am

At a Special Board Meeting, held on October 15th at 2PM Thursday, the Board of Directors met to discuss "disciplinary action or removal of" JBWD's current Legal Counsel. The vote was 3-2 in favor of said removal.

Thereafter, the Board voted 3-2 in favor of hiring an interim legal firm on a trial basis.

This, and other Agenda items were covered. To learn more, you can view all meetings by visiting the District's website.



November 2026 Plant of the Month

California Barrel Cactus, Compass Barrel Cactus

Ferocactus cylindraceus

Plant Form: Cactus
Water Use: Very low
Mature Size: 4-5 ft. tall x 1.5-2 ft. wide
Exposure: Full sun, reflected sun
Bloom Time: Spring (Mar – May), Summer (June – July),
Native to: Mojave and Sonoran Deserts in California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona (between 80 - 5600 feet)
Hardiness: Cold hardy to 10°F

California Barrel Cactus is an iconic symbol of southwestern deserts, popular in art, literature, and cartoons. The slow-growing, barrel-shaped stem has 18-31 ribs from top to bottom, and long, reddish, flattened spines, the longest being curved. Shorter, straight spines surround the curved spines, with even shorter spines around them, all contributing to a dense latticework that almost obscures the green ribs. Yellow flowers form in a ring around the top of the stem. Plants tend to lean south in age, giving them one of their common names. Cells on the hot, sunny side of the plant contain less moisture, are smaller, and grow slower, while the cells on the cooler, shady north side contain more water and grow larger, causing the stem to curve toward the south. This leaning actually results in the plant receiving less drying sun overall. Water infrequently, no more than once a month. Desert rodents & birds eat the fruit and tiny black seeds. Native tribes roasted and ate the seeds.



awac
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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Produced by The SummerTree Institute (www.SummerTree.org)

GARDENING TIPS

Watering Schedule: 9AM - 6PM.

- "Winterize" your irrigation system to prevent damage from incoming freezing temperatures
- Plant seeds for spring and sumer blooms; choose mix of western wild flowers with annuals and perennials for long lasting color
- Irrigate frequently during Santa Ana winds, which pull moisture from both plants and soil
- Give one last deep watering to deciduous trees and grapevines, but discontinue feeding to harden them off
- Irrigate fall-planted trees and shrubs deeply once or twice a moth to ensure good root formation prior to cold-weather dormancy
- You can still plant in cooler (not freezing) temperatures but roots will grow slower than in earlier fall

HISTORIC USES OF CALIFORNIA BARREL CACTUS

Compass Barrel Cactus

The pulp of the California barrel cactus was used by countless Southwestern Native American tribes for skin ailments & wound care, as an analgesic, for swelling & inflammation, and as a digestive aid. The spines were also treated and used as needles for suturing.

WINTERIZING

TIPS AND TRICKS

Help save your water pipes, prevent home damage, and save water!



AVOID FROZEN PIPES THIS WINTER

BE READY FOR WINTER:

- Check sprinkler systems and hoses. Make sure these items are turned off and drained.
- Eliminate sources of cold air near water lines. Fix drafty windows, eliminate drafts around doors, and close off crawlspaces.
- Wrap exposed pipes with insulation.
- Know how to shut off your water.

DURING FREEZING TEMPS:

- Open doors to under-sink cabinets to let warmer room temperatures flow around pipes.
- Keep water moving through pipes by allowing a small trickle of cold water to run.
- Keep the thermostat in your home above 55 degrees.



IF YOUR PIPES FREEZE:

- Shut water off as soon as water stops flowing.
- Thaw pipes with warm air, using a hair dryer or space heater. Do not leave space heaters unattended, and do not use electricity in spaces that may flood if water flow resumes.
- Once pipes are thawed, slowly turn the water back on and check pipes and joints for any cracks.

Kitchen Water Savers

You can save significant amounts of water in your kitchen with a few simple habits and fixture upgrades.

DISHWASHING HABITS

- **Run full dishwasher loads:** A fully loaded dishwasher uses less water than washing the same number of dishes by hand. Check out guidelines from the US EPA WaterSense Program
- **Skip the pre-rinse:** Scrape food scraps directly into the trash or compost instead of rinsing plates under a running tap before loading the dishwasher.
- **Plug the sink:** If washing dishes by hand, fill a basin or stopper the sink with soapy water rather than letting the faucet run continuously for rinsing.
- **Soak pots and pans:** Let stubborn, baked-on food soak in a pan of water instead of scrubbing under a streaming faucet.

Food Prep & Defrosting

- **Wash produce in a bowl:** Fill a bowl or pan with water to clean fruits and vegetables instead of keeping the faucet open.
- **Reuse vegetable or cooking water:** Let unseasoned water from boiling pasta or steaming vegetables cool, then use it to water houseplants or your garden.
- **Defrost in the fridge:** Thaw frozen meat and meals in the refrigerator overnight instead of running hot tap water over them, which can waste up to two gallons per minute.
- **Keep a cold water pitcher:** Store a filled pitcher of drinking water in the refrigerator so you don't have to let the tap run until it gets cold.

Fixtures & Maintenance

- **Fix leaks immediately:** A dripping faucet or leaking pipe wastes gallons around the clock; a simple washer replacement often fixes the issue.
- **Install a low-flow aerator:** Upgrade your sink with a WaterSense-labeled aerator to cut flow rates while maintaining strong water pressure.
- **Limit the garbage disposal:** Minimize running the garbage disposal—which requires heavy water flow—by composting organic food waste instead.







