



February 2023

**November 2022 Residential Gallons Per Capita
Water Use: 56.22 Gallons**

*Note: Water savings data reflects water use three months in the past. Also, "gallons per capita" is the standard of "measure" for tracking water conservation efforts. **The State has determined our water use per person per day is 47 gallons by 2025, and 42 gallons by 2030. Keep saving, Joshua Tree!***



OUR MISSION STATEMENT:
To provide, protect, and maintain
Joshua Tree's water - our vital
community resource.

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FEBRUARY 2023 DISTRICT HOLIDAYS

In honor of the President's Day Holiday, the District Office will be closed for all customer services
February 20, 2023 -- Monday

Please note: in the event of a water emergency, please contact the District Office at (760) 366-8438--our crews are always on standby 24/7!

Upcoming Events and Meetings:

Regular Board of Directors meetings:

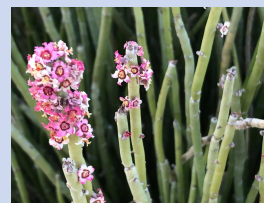
- Wednesday- February 1, 5:30 PM
- Wednesday- February 15, 5:30 PM

Volunteer/Docent Meeting:

- Thursday- February 23, 5PM
at the District Office (in person)
- * See more in this newsletter

Refer to our website for meeting status related to being in person vs. virtual.

For Agendas, Zoom links, and other



UPDATE: NATURE SCAPES CONTEST

Believe it or not, entries for this contest to help inspire native plant gardening did not materialize by December 31, 2022.

Make 2023 the year to discover the beauty of native plant gardening. Start your nature scape this spring! Visit our annual Minerva Hoyt Native Plant Sale next month, Sunday, March 26th. See



Photo caption: Attendance at the 2018 Public Hearing.

Time is of Essence...

Since August of last year, 25 opportunities have been availed to allow our community-owned Water District customers a chance to gain insights and/ or information about the proposed water rate increase under consideration.

If you missed any or all of these (see below), you still have one more opportunity to voice your opinion at the final meeting, being held on February 15, 2023.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR PROPOSED WATER RATE INCREASE: February 15, 2023 @ 5:30PM Joshua Basin Water District Office

The District wants to hear from you. We have engaged in a variety of outreach methods regarding the rate study, including but not limited to the following:

Public Meetings on the proposed rate increase held since August 2022 (all meetings were agendized and open to the public per the Brown Act)

1. 08/31/22 – Board Meeting – introduce rate study & preliminary findings
2. 09/13/22 – Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) Meeting – introduce rate study
3. 10/12/22 – Joint Finance / CAC Meeting – discuss rate study & recommendations
4. 11/08/22 – CAC Meeting – discuss rate study & continue honing in recommendations
5. 11/09/22 – Finance Committee (CAC invited) - continues honing in recommendations
6. 12/14/22 – Special Board Meeting – review recommendations, seek board direction for notices
7. 01/10/23 – Board/CAC Meeting – Rate Study Workshop asking for public participation

District Issued Mailing/Publishing

1. 12/23/22 – Prop 218 notices were mailed to each parcel owner with current addresses on file
2. 12/31/22 – Water Bill Special Message included Community Workshop Notice
3. 01/31/23 – Water Bill Special Message includes information on the upcoming Public Hearing
4. 02/01/23 – District published prop 218 notices in the Hi-Desert Star
5. A Prop 218 Notice about the proposed rate increase has been posted outside the district office
6. The District's website has posted and emailed all meeting Agendas, including those with rate study topics
7. The District's website includes rate study materials under the "District News" section

District Issued Monthly Newsletter with articles or references on the rate study

1. November 2022
2. December 2022
3. January 2023
4. February 2023

One-on-One Meetings: Board, Staff, Consultants

1. Market - Every Saturday, a board member & our public outreach consultant have been available at

the Joshua Tree Farmer's Market to discuss the rate study or any District concerns (excluding Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve Saturday--that's 24 Saturdays at 5 hours each day since Aug. 2022)

2. Board Members – President Tom Floen has made himself available to meet with any member of the public at our District Office (and he has stated his willingness to do so at most all public Board Meetings)
3. Staff -- The General Manager also offered to meet with any member of the public at our District Office and verbalized said invitation at most all public Board Meetings

News Articles Regarding the Rate Increase

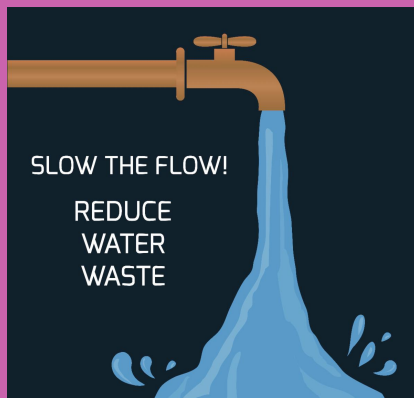
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1. 12/13/22 - article regarding rate study
2. 01/09/23 – article regarding the workshop

HI Desert Star

1. 09/12/22 – article discussing rate study and public hearing date
2. 09/16/22 – article discussing CAC meeting to discuss rates, and public hearing date
3. 12/14/22 – article discussing rate study, workshop date, & public hearing date
4. 01/04/23 – article announcing the workshop
5. 01/18/23 – article discussing rate study workshop

Note: Letters in support or against this rate increase must contain your name and service address, and be received at the District Office by close of business by Tuesday, February 14th, 2023.



FEBRUARY WATER SAVING TIPS:

While we work to "Slow the Flow" using our tap water, there is another application of slowing the flow when it comes to Mother Nature: creating faux river beds (or similar with rocks and plants) on your property--especially where water run-off occurs during our seasonal rains.

Slowing down property water run-off allows the rain a chance to seep into the ground where it can nourish plant roots more readily. This saves your tap water from being used for landscape irrigation. By controlling water erosion on your property, you are efficiently saving water--and that can really add up!

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

The Rate Study Workshop

Staff, consultants, and local residents attended the public workshop on January 10th, at the Joshua Tree Community Center.



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 more of a sample:

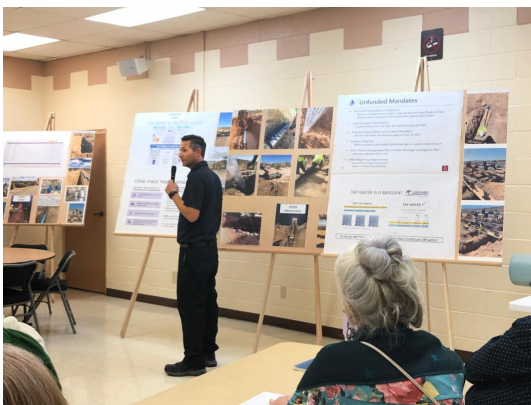
Q: "Why aren't short term vacation rentals, or STRs (i.e., AirBnbs) not



Photo captions:

(Above) Break-out session groups worked to analyze the customer rate increases being proposed.

(Below) Director of Operations, Jeremiah Nazario, explains progress made in maintaining our infrastructure along with challenges ahead. Photos and charts were made available to emphasize points of progress and areas of need.



charged commercial water rates? After all, they are running a commercial business while in a residential area.

A: The State of California currently *does not* define STRs as "commercial" structures, but defines them as a residential dwelling or a portion of a residential dwelling that is rented out for 30 consecutive days or less. A residential dwelling, in turn, refers to a private structure that has been designed and is available for use and occupancy as a residence by one or more individuals.

This definition excludes commercially operated hotels, motels, bed and breakfast inns, and timeshare properties.

Until the State of California changes their definition for residential dwellings operating as Short Term Rentals, JBWD can only charge "residential" water rates for the STR dwellings--unless they already fall in the exempt category listed above as commercial properties.

2023 Water Wise Gardening Calendars...

are now available for free at our Farmers' Market booth on Saturdays in Joshua Tree. Stop by and check us out!



Photo Caption: *Our native plant seedlings are grown using a "deep rooting" potting system to give them a jump-start before our desert summer heat takes over.*

OUR NATIVE PLANT SEEDLING SALE IS SUNDAY, MARCH 26

It's back! Our "TRUE NATIVE PLANT SALE"--with more

Native Plant Seedling SALE

Specimens offered:

- Rayless goldenhead
- Cheesebush
- Whitestem milkweed
- Parish's goldeneye or cat's tongue
- Wooly brickelbush
- Desert willow
- Desert lavender
- Acton's brittlebush
- Mojave buckwheat
- Galleta grass
- Creosote
- desert alyssum
- Bladderpod

variety of seedling specimens than ever! Seedlings sell for \$9.00 each, or 3/\$25.00. Cash or local checks will only be accepted at this annual sale.

We'll also be offering our "Free Seed and Plant Swap" booth, where we welcome contributions of water wise plants and seeds, as well as garden edibles and household wonders. All are welcome to *take some, leave some, or both!*

Learn more in our March Tier Drop Newsletter!

Smoketree
Fragrant sumac
Paperbag bush
Catclaw acacia
Jojoba
Desert globemallow
Mojave cottonthorn
American threefold
Mojave aster
Mojave yucca

VOLUNTEER / DOCENT MEETING:

February 23, Thursday @ 5PM
at the District Office

Join us for a one-hour meeting where we'll cover the upcoming March Native Plant sale, the new "Seed to Salad" gardening class, and more. New and returning Docents/volunteers are welcome, so bring a friend--training and participation is FREE! RSVP: kjradnich@gmail.com by February 22, Wednesday.

From SEED to SALAD: A comprehensive 12 session Desert Edible Gardening Course



 **FROM SEED TO SALAD!**

**A COMPREHENSIVE 12-SESSION WATER WISE
DESERT EDIBLE GARDENING COURSE!**

**A FREE On-line
Virtual Course!**

- 12 weekly, one-hour classes take you from step one to step "yum" as you begin to harvest your garden at the end of 3 months! Successful course completion is MWA Certificated. All are welcome to attend and learn.
- Designed for the beginner gardener, this course walks you through each step at a weekly, comfortable pace—virtually, on line— in the comfort of your home.
- Perfect for residents with small yard space or even just concrete patios—we'll show you how to grow your own fresh fruits and vegetables in 12 easy lessons!

COURSE DATES:	Tuesdays, March 7-May 23, 2023 @ 6-7PM
REGISTRATION:	By Friday, March 3, 2023 (an application will be sent to you): kjradnich@gmail.com
INSTRUCTOR:	Tony Walters, Program Manager Mojave Desert Resource Conservation District





YOUR LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

Recent Board Action Items of Note:

Aside from reviewing and receiving the first quarter financial report, and directing staff to solicit a new contract proposal from the current Audit Consulting firm, the Board adopted a Resolution on behalf of Jim Ventura.

Background:


Ventura, once a Director on the JBWD's Board, was presented the Resolution with appreciation and recognition for his 22 years as a Director at the Mojave Water Agency. Jim Ventura's scope of responsibility and representation included Joshua Basin Water District, Hi-Desert Water District, and Bighorn Desert-View Water Agency.

FEBRUARY FARMERS' MARKET BOOTH:

"Tap Water Is A Bargain!"

We'll be looking at the cost of water delivered to your door--on demand (especially in comparison to bottled water).


TAP WATER IS A BARGAIN!



BOTTLED WATER

748 gallons (1 unit of tap water) = \$1,234*

16.9 oz bottle x 7.5 bottles = 1 gallon = \$1.65*



*At Walmart's mid-range prices (Aquafina), NOT delivered

TAP WATER ✓

1 unit (748 gallons), Delivered
at Proposed Scenario A rate

	2023	2027
1 unit (748 gal)	\$ 7.80	\$ 13.50
Basic fee/month	\$ 43.40	\$ 52.70
Cost - 1st unit**	\$51.20	\$66.20
Cost per gallon**	\$ 0.07	\$ 0.09

** 3/4" or 1" meters

\$1.65 per BOTTLED gallon vs. \$0.0684 (less than 7 cents) per TAP gallon!

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND REPLACEMENT PROGRAM (C.I.R.P.)

Meet Brandon Warner. He is



JBWD's C.I.R.P. Supervisor. Amongst many other responsibilities, his team works hard to replace old rusty pipes with new, clean (PVC- type) waterlines.

Brandon stands six feet six inches tall (in his work boots--pictured).

He is standing next to a display that is an equally sided *cube*, and depicts visually what one "unit" of clean fresh safe tap water would represent delivered--on demand--to your property 24/7, 365 days of the year.

DESERT-SMART GARDENING TIPS FOR FEBRUARY

February Watering Schedule: Between 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM

Avoid running sprinklers on windy days--you'll think your plants have received water, but most moisture may have gone into the air

THIS MONTH IN YOUR DESERT-SMART LANDSCAPE:

This is a good month to control winter weeds before they flower and spread more seeds

- Plant ground covers, bulbs, low-water-use plants, and natives if you missed the fall planting season
- Plant bare-root trees and shrubs through early March
- Prune evergreens now, but not later in spring or summer
- Prune the rest of your summer-blooming, deciduous fruit and nut trees, roses, and dormant shrubs
- Fertilize perennials and trees with slow-release plant food (most natives and drought-adapted plants don't need fertilizer)
- Water trees deeply to prepare for spring growth surge (deep roots protect trees from blowing over)
- Turn off irrigation timers if it rains

HISTORIC USES OF: Red Valerian/ Jupiter's Beard

Historic uses, or "ethnobotany" is a new feature added to the Tier Drop "Plant of the Month" 2023 segment when possible. Did you know...

EDIBLE USES: Young leaves have been used either raw or cooked, as greens. Some claim they are exceedingly good, either in salads or cooked as a vegetable. Others have noted that whilst the

leaves can be added to salads they are rather bitter and rather less than desirable. Roots can be cooked and/or used in soups.

MEDICINAL USES: Red valerian is sometimes confused in herbals and folk tradition with the true valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*). Whilst true valerian has a very strong action on the nervous system, this species has no known medical properties. The plant is nervine. This report possibly confuses this plant with the true valerian, *Valeriana officinalis*, which is a very effective nervine. A caution was listed for pregnant and lactating mothers to avoid this plant completely.

Red Valerian Jupiter's Beard

Centranthus ruber

Plant Form: Perennial sub-shrub
Water Use: Very low/low
Mature Size: 2-3 ft. tall x 1-2 ft. wide
Exposure: Full sun, light shade
Bloom Time: Spring (March – May), Summer (June – Aug),
Fall (Sept – Nov)
Native to: Mediterranean region, North Africa
Hardiness: Cold hardy to -10°F

Red Valerian, also known as Jupiter's Beard, is a moderately fast-growing, erect sub-shrub that is not fussy about its growing conditions. Showy, rose-red flowers appear continuously from late spring through summer and even into fall. The cultivar 'occineus' is especially long-blooming. This tough, drought-tolerant plant tolerates poor soils and thrives with minimal water and care once established. Reasons to love this woody-based, evergreen perennial include its resistance to rabbits and deer, fragrant flowers and foliage, its almost nonstop blooming, its attraction for butterflies, its use for cut flowers, and erosion control because it can naturalize when happy on a site. Its brilliant flowers are small but profuse. Provide deep but infrequent watering, but don't overwater established plants. Cut plants back in mid-spring. Valued in cottage gardens, over stone walls, on slopes or banks to prevent erosion, in borders, or as a colorful groundcover. Good for cut flower bouquets.



February 2023 Plant of the Month



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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Joshua Basin Water District |
www.jbwd.com



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