

Rainbow MWD Wins Statewide Award for Rapid Aerial Water Supply (RAWS)



On August 23, 2022, the California Special Districts Association (CSDA), a statewide organization of Special Districts in California, recognized Rainbow Municipal Water District (the District) with the 2022 CSDA Innovative Project of the Year Award for our Rapid Aerial Water Supply (RAWS) Project - also known as a Heli-Hydrant. In a presentation at CSDA's Annual Conference in Palm Desert, members of the Rainbow MWD board and staff were presented the award and several thousand in attendance were shown a video describing the project. The video can be seen on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/wVh1b7f7r08>.



This system allows immediate access to a clean source of water for firefighting helicopters controlled by the helicopter pilot firsthand. This project is a partnership between Rainbow, North County Fire Protection District, and CalFire - a great example of collaboration between the agencies that provide fire protection services in our region.

“We are honored to receive this recognition from CSDA for this project. As with other areas of the state, wildfires have impacted our community tremendously and we wanted to do what we could to help protect lives and property in our region” said Hayden Hamilton, President of the Rainbow MWD Board of Directors.

The criteria for this award include originality of the project, tangible and positive results produced and a demonstrated improvement in the district's quality of service without significantly increasing costs. Additionally, the project should be easily adaptable and serve as an example for other districts.

RAWS AWARD CONTINUED

The RAWS is a 5,000-gallon tank that can be filled in minutes allowing helicopters to fill their tanks rapidly to attack a fire for a quick-strike response. This collaborative project between the District, North County Fire Protection District, and Cal Fire San Diego Unit included the installation of a five-thousand open-top steel tank, pilot control of inlet and drain valves, windsock, shore power, battery power, and solar power.



The RAWS located at the District's Pala Mesa tank site located off Wilt Road now provides access to aircrews of potable water, eliminating unnecessary time in looking for water sources, and is the first of its kind in San Diego County.

The District plays an important role in the protection of life and property in our service area through our water system which provides fire suppression support for our customers through a network of pipelines, fire hydrants, and now a special hydrant designed for helicopters. With the ever-expanding range of fire season in our region, providing enhanced access to water for firefighting helicopters to protect the homes and properties of our customers is a crucial element of customer service.

Caring for Your Plants in Extreme Heat

During extremely hot weather plants lose water quickly as they try to cool off their leaves and stems by transferring water to their surface. Even if you planted drought-tolerant plants and native plants that are suited to the heat in your climate, taking special precautions is still necessary when the temperatures rise.

Helpful tips:

1. Water plants in the morning so more water will go into the soil rather than evaporate in the hot air. Morning watering also allows leaves, stems, and flowers to dry out quickly, making them less susceptible to fungal growth.
2. Irrigate slowly to decrease runoff and allow the water to soak into the soil. Deep watering encourages deep root systems that will protect your plants against drought and hot weather. Consider installing a soaker hose or drip-irrigation system instead of watering with an overhead sprinkler or with a hose.
3. Container plants may need watering every day during extremely hot weather because they lose more water than plants with their roots in the ground.
4. Protect your plants during periods of extreme heat by providing shade. Use a temporary shade-cloth awning or wrap the trunks of young trees or shrubs with burlap or bamboo mats.