

Over the past three decades, the San Diego County Water Authority and the region's water ratepayers have invested in a diversified "portfolio approach" to water security that protects the region's economy and quality of life from droughts and other water supply shortages. The strategy includes increasing locally controlled water supplies, expanding water storage capacity, and improving water-use efficiency.

The result is enhanced water supply reliability that provides a safety net for San Diego County. The Water Authority's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan highlights how the region's strategy to supply management and a sustained emphasis on water-use efficiency mean the region will continue to have sufficient water supplies through the 2045 planning horizon even during multiple dry years.



Claude "Bud" Lewis Carlsbad Desalination Plant produces up to 50 million gallons of water per day, making it a reliable drought-proof local supply.

MEETING THE REGION'S NEEDS

California is a large state, with many diverse regions that have unique water profiles based on their topography and geology. The San Diego region differs greatly in its water resources, even compared to Orange and Los Angeles counties which have access to vast amounts of groundwater.

In contrast, San Diego County's groundwater reserves are relatively small and brackish. To meet the unique needs of the San Diego region, the Water Authority and its member agencies have invested in a portfolio of water supplies and projects to develop, transport and store water. These projects and supplies work together to ensure that the region's water needs are met, even in times of shortage and emergencies.

In the early 1990s, the San Diego region was 95% dependent on a single source of imported water. When a multi-year drought brought severe cutbacks and hammered the local economy, water agencies and civic leaders joined together to support a package of initiatives and actions that would build a secure water future for San Diegans. Thirty years later, those initiatives have resulted in a portfolio of water supplies, storage facilities and conservation actions that work together to ensure the region is protected from inevitable drought and other water supply emergencies.

WATER SECURITY AT A REASONABLE COST

There's no getting around it: Investments in water supply security come at a cost – but they also power the region's economy and quality of life. In the end, ratepayers in San Diego County spend less than a penny for a gallon of safe, reliable water supplies from the Water Authority. Local water retailers add fees and charges to pay for their parts of the delivery and treatment system that brings the water directly to ratepayers homes, schools, or businesses.



MORE INFO

AN ECONOMIC SAFETY NET

Locally Controlled Supplies

- Local supplies mean decisions are made for San Diegans by San Diegans.
- Long-term contracts for high-priority Colorado River water provide reliable, conserved supplies.
- Desalinated seawater, groundwater and recycled water provide additional security.
- Potable water reuse is the next source of supply.

Water Storage

- Investments have created more than 190,000 acre-feet of emergency and drought response storage capacity that shield the region from potential supply cuts during multiple consecutive dry years.
- Regional water storage capacity totals approximately 723,000 acre-feet, a 30 percent increase since 2003.
- San Diego County ratepayers have invested in reservoirs owned by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.
- The Water Authority is seeking a storage account in Lake Mead as a low-cost way to increase reserves and to facilitate new supply management strategies to bolster the river during drought conditions.

Water-Use Efficiency

- Per capita water use in the San Diego region has declined by more than 50% since 1990.
- San Diego County ratepayers have conserved more than 1 million acre-feet of water over 30 years.
- The Water Authority has been a leader since the 1980s in requiring and supporting conversions to water efficient devices like low-flow showerheads and toilets.

Framing Affordability Avg. Monthly Expenses (U.S.)

\$1,468 – Rent	\$155 – Clothing & Shoes
\$660 – Groceries & Dining	\$119 – Car Insurance
\$414 – Healthcare	\$94 – Cell Phone
\$391 – Used Car Payment	\$77 – Water Service
\$237 – Subscription Services	\$59 – Sewer Service
\$176 – Gasoline & Fuel	\$58 – Gym Membership

Source: What Are Average Household Monthly Expenses in the US? (bankofamerica.com)

WATER AUTHORITY SERVICE AREA FISCAL YEAR 2023 DEMAND AND SUPPLY

Total Demand = 444 TAF (TAF=Thousand Acre-Feet)

