



Paso Talks – WATER

Frequently Asked Questions

WATER

Q: Do we have enough water to support current needs and future growth? Please explain.

A: Yes. The City of Paso Robles has worked diligently for over 25 years to provide reliable and sustainable water sources to support the planned buildout approved in the General Plan. There are currently three sources for water, soon to be four – basin groundwater wells, river wells and the Nacimiento Pipeline. Infrastructure to filter non-potable recycled water for irrigation is under construction and expected to be complete in early 2019 with the “purple pipe” to be completed in 2020.

Q: How is the quality of water in Paso Robles compared to the past? How does that compare to other communities in the area?

A: The water quality is good and getting better. The Lake Nacimiento supply has lower salt levels, and our water treatment plant turns out excellent quality drinking water.

Q: What do my water rates pay for and how does that compare to other communities in the area?

A: Water rates pay for the operation and maintenance of the drinking water treatment and distribution systems, for water capital projects, for the costs associated with the water supplies, including the debt service for the Lake Nacimiento supply. Water rates have a fixed cost component since about 80% of the cost of the water system are fixed costs, and variable costs based on the amount of water used. Water rates are designed to only recover costs – no profit – according to State law. Also, water rate revenues can only be used for water purposes. Water rates are established so that development pays their full fair share of costs. Paso Robles rates are comparable to other cities in SLO County. See slide #24 in the [Water presentation](#) for the local rate comparison. (Please note that Templeton just recently approved a rate increase but the new rates have not been determined and are not reflected in the presentation.)

WASTEWATER

Q: What should Paso Robles residents know about our wastewater program?

A: We have a great wastewater treatment plant. We have a high tech plant that is largely based on a biological nutrient removal process, making sure that the treatment plant effluent (the water discharged to the river) meets all health and safety standards. There is also a crew designated to take care of any operation and maintenance issues in the collection system – the pipes and pumps.

Q: Are there any changes coming up that Paso Robles residents should be aware of?

A: Yes, the treatment plant has a project to do some additional treatment so that the effluent meets a full Recycled Water standard, so that it is fully safe for irrigation purposes (clean enough to be used on turf at schools). This water will be used at parks, landscaped areas in subdivisions, and for irrigation water that could be beneficial to the Paso Robles groundwater basin.

STORMWATER

Q: What is stormwater?

A: Stormwater is rain that falls on the landscape, collects in our storm drain system (i.e., pipes, culverts, ditches), and drains to the Salinas River. Stormwater also collects pollutants such as sediment, bacteria, and metals as it flows across paved surfaces. Localized flooding and water pollution can become a problem if stormwater is not managed correctly.

Q: Are there state or federal regulations the City of Paso Robles is required to follow for stormwater?

A: Yes. The City is required to develop a stormwater program that achieves minimum federal standards. Local state water agencies ensure that the City of Paso Robles is adequately achieving the minimum standards on an annual basis. The stormwater program evolves as new state policies are adopted.

Q: How do I report a stormwater concern?

A: Thank you for helping keep our water supplies clean! To report a concern and track, click here: <http://www.prcity.com/454/Report-a-Stormwater-Concern>

WATER CONSERVATION

Q: If we “have plenty of water” why are we still asking Paso Robles residents to conserve water?

A: Despite having sufficient water supply available, it is important that water customers use water efficiently and reduce water waste to comply with state-mandated conservation requirements, avoid expenses associated with costly upgrades, and contribute to sustainable use of the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin (one of the City’s three sources of potable water). Recently, our water customers’ commitment to conserving water during the proclaimed drought emergency in 2015 allowed the City to meet state-mandated conservation requirements, avoid expensive penalties for non-compliance, and reduce use of groundwater from the basin.

Q: Anything else residents should know about water conservation?

A: By using water wisely and eliminating water waste the City has made progress toward state-mandated long-term conservation requirements and will be better able to meet new long-term conservation standards that are being developed by the State. Additionally, if there is ever a

need to reduce water use in response to a true water shortage, short-term adaptive conservation measures can reduce impacts on water service and the City's water customers.