



Water Currents

FAIR OAKS WATER DISTRICT
Fall 2024



FOWD: More Than Just Water – Investing in the Heart of Fair Oaks Village

For over a century, the Fair Oaks Water District (FOWD) has been integral to the Fair Oaks Village area. Our mission is to provide reliable, high-quality water at the lowest reasonable rate. However, FOWD also has a long-standing commitment to investing in our community, especially Fair Oaks Village, where we have housed FOWD operations for over 107 years. Our central location in Fair Oaks Village allows us to provide prompt and positive service to all FOWD ratepayers.

Over the years, the board and staff have taken great pride in the district's contributions and improvements to Fair Oaks

Village, particularly during economic downturns when others stayed away.

In 2010, FOWD moved into a new Administration and Customer Service Center across from our old office in Fair Oaks Village. This LEED-certified building was completed without increasing rates or borrowing money. Our former office now supports field operations, and FOWD owns all facilities and land without debt.

That year, FOWD purchased the property at 10340 Fair Oaks Boulevard. Instead of leaving it vacant, FOWD partnered with the Fair Oaks Historical Society, allowing them to use the facility and making significant improvements.

Our groundwater facility in Fair Oaks Village, operational since 1939, is one of the highest-yielding in the Sacramento region. In 2007, we invested \$2 million to improve this facility, partly funded by a state grant, enhancing both its functionality and appearance.

We have been a member of the Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce for over 45 years, actively supporting community events. FOWD has contributed to local projects such as the Triangle Enhancement and Save the Bluffs initiatives. Most recently, FOWD agreed to contribute over a quarter of a million dollars in labor and materials to the FORPD Fair Oaks Village Enhancement Project.

At FOWD, we're not just your water provider; we're your neighbors, invested in the past, present, and future of our community.

FOWD Awarded for Financial Transparency

In 2023 the FOWD was again named a Government Finance Officers Association Award Recipient. The Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Program (ACFR program) was established by the Government Finance Officers Association to encourage government entities to go beyond the minimum requirements of generally accepted accounting principles and to prepare ACFR reports that provide transparency and full disclosure. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting. The FOWD has been awarded for financial transparency for over 23 consecutive years. Learn more at fowd.com/finance.

The Fair Oaks Water District was honored for its 45-year membership with the Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce, marking it as the chamber's longest-serving member. This recognition was awarded in June 2024 by the Chamber along with Congressman Ami Bera, California State Senator Roger Niello, and Sacramento County Supervisor Rich Desmond.



FOWD Maintains Lowest Water Rates in Region and invites Participation in Budget Process

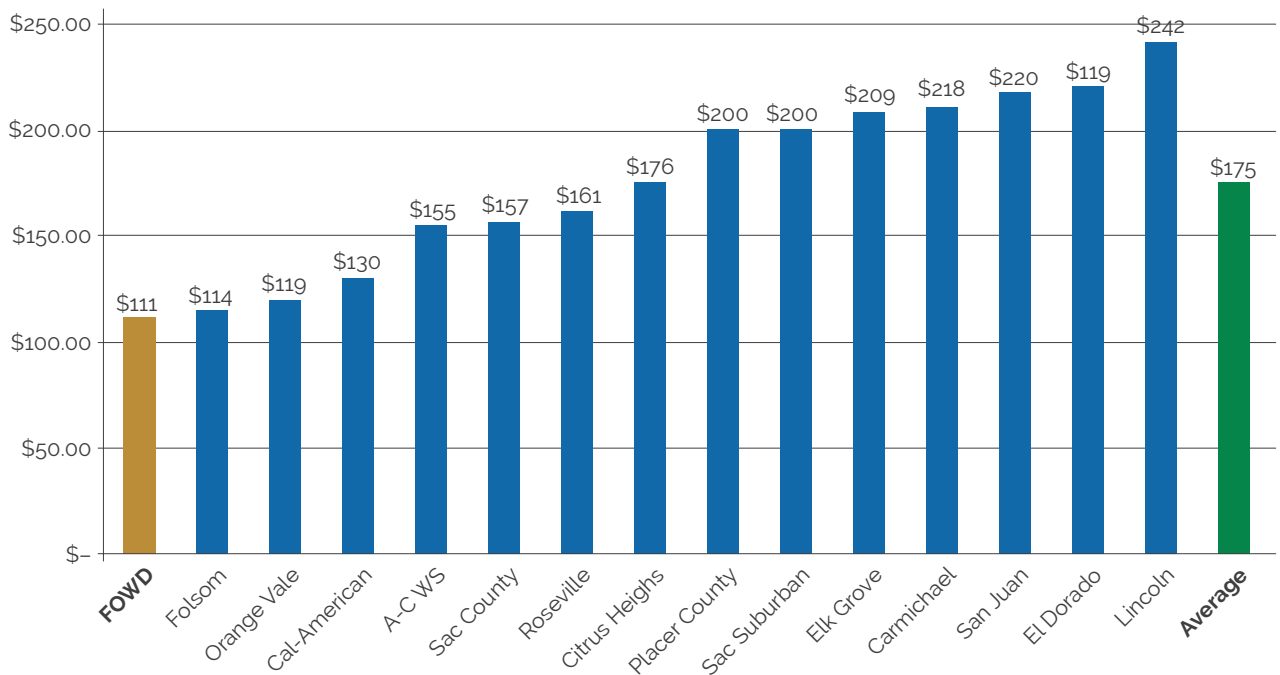
The Fair Oaks Water District (FOWD) is proud to announce that after implementing Board-approved rate adjustments in 2023 and 2024, our water rates remain the lowest in the Sacramento Region. Our rates are 57% of the regional average, underscoring our commitment to providing affordable, high-quality water to our community.

In addition to maintaining low water rates, FOWD is dedicated to

an open and transparent budget process, reflecting our commitment to transparency and community engagement. We invite our customers to participate and stay informed about how we manage resources to keep water rates low and service quality high by attending FOWD Board meetings.

Customers are encouraged to attend a public workshop on the FOWD 2025 Budget on October 21, 2024.

2024 Bi-monthly Metered Charges for 1" Services Based on 40 CCF for 2 Months Period



*Rates are averaged between the East Area and Planned Area

Curious About the Quality of Your Drinking Water?



Our annual Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) provides detailed information on FOWD's drinking water quality, compliance with standards, and the water sources used to serve you. We are proud to report that this year's CCR confirms that your drinking water meets all federal and state standards.

Scan the QR code to learn more.



"High-quality, reliable water supply at a low cost, and completing projects on a pay-as-you-go basis — this is what all public water agencies seek to achieve. Fair Oaks Water District ratepayers should be proud."

JAMES PEIFER - Executive Director, Sacramento Regional Water Authority



Transforming our Water Future, Preserving the American River Environment

Project Spotlight: Northridge Replacement Well

- Project Cost: \$3,200,000
- Grant award: \$2,470,000

FOWD is replacing and equipping an existing active groundwater production facility at Northridge Elementary School. By leveraging existing infrastructure, FOWD aims to minimize costs and construction time. The new groundwater supply well will improve FOWD's ability to rely on groundwater during very dry years, preserving more surface water for the Lower American River environment and boosting water supply reliability. This project also fosters collaboration between FOWD, the local school district, and the park district, making meaningful improvements for community use.

The project received a nearly \$2.5 million grant from the California Natural Resources Agency and Department of Water Resources as part of a larger regional effort that provides \$55 million to support 21 projects that enhance local water supply reliability and protect the Lower American River during droughts.

Important Information for FOWD Customers: Merger of Local Water Districts Proposed

The San Juan Water District (SJWD) is exploring a potential merger with the Sacramento Suburban Water District. This merger, involving two agencies located approximately 20 miles apart, may soon be proposed to local regulators.

Originally founded by FOWD, Citrus Heights Water District (CHWD), and Orange Vale Water Company (OVWC), the SJWD was established to manage and maintain surface water for a specific service area. Currently, SJWD serves customers in FOWD, CHWD, OVWC, as well as Granite Bay and some areas within the City of Folsom.

The proposed merger would effectively double the SJWD's service area using surface water facilities funded by existing customers. Given this significant change, the FOWD Board of Directors believes it is crucial to keep customers informed about the merger, provide access to relevant information, and offer a way to express your views on the proposal.

While the FOWD Board of Directors is concerned, it has not yet taken a formal position for or against the merger, pending further details. Key issues for FOWD customers to consider include:

- Availability of Water Supply
- Cost of Water Supply
- Surface Water Rights
- Elected Representation
- Shared Debt

The Board is actively seeking additional information and will continue to update customers as the situation develops.



Fair Oaks Water District

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Your FOWD Board of Directors

Chris Petersen, *President (Division 1)*

Mark Dolby, *Vice President (Division 3)*

Michael McRae *(Division 2)*

Randy Marx *(Division 4)*

Misha Sarkovich *(Division 5)*

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From Challenge to Success — A Message from General Manager Tom Gray After Nearly 20 Years

STATE OF THE FAIR OAKS WATER DISTRICT

In October 2004, when I began my role as General Manager of the Fair Oaks Water District (FOWD), the District was facing significant challenges, including high water rates, substantial debt, and a Sacramento Grand Jury investigation. Since then, FOWD has made remarkable progress. Today, we have the lowest water rates in the Sacramento region, operate with no debt, and maintain over \$10 million in reserves for Board-approved capital projects.

Over the past 20 years, FOWD has seen substantial growth and improvement. Our net worth has doubled from \$24 million to \$48 million, and the value of our capital assets has increased from \$14 million to \$41 million. We have invested over 40% of ratepayer revenue into capital improvements and secured

more than \$18 million from non-rate sources.

We successfully transitioned from flat rate to metered billing, drilled and equipped five groundwater wells, developed a new Administration Center, neutralized a major cyber-attack, managed the COVID crisis with resilience, and represented FOWD on many regional and state water organizations.

The FOWD team remains dedicated to providing high-quality water at the most reasonable rates, balancing budgetary responsibility, positive customer service, and effective resource management. We value your trust and support as we continue to serve the Fair Oaks community with excellence and integrity.

GREAT WATER, GREAT SERVICE, AND LOWEST RATES.

Learn more about the Fair Oaks Water District at fowd.com.