CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
DESAL PLANT AND WATER SUPPLY – QUICK FACTS

Charles E. Meyer Desalination Plant:

- Is an important part of the City's water supply portfolio, which includes surface water from Cachuma and Gibraltar reservoirs, groundwater, State water, purchased water, recycled water, and conservation.
- Produces nearly three million gallons of water per day, or about 30 percent of the City's demand.
- Uses state-of-the-art technology and design practices to reduce electrical demands and environmental impacts.
- Uses 40 percent less energy than the original plant, greatly reducing its carbon footprint.
- Uses ocean intake pipes equipped with wedge wire screens recognized by the State Water Resources Control Board as a best available technology for screened open ocean intakes.

City of Santa Barbara Water Supply:

- The City is in a Stage One Water Supply Condition. Our water supplies have improved this winter, however, conservation remains important to fully recover from the cumulative impacts of the drought and to preserve water supplies for future dry years.
- Cachuma Reservoir: Storage as of 10/14/19 – 143,076 Acre Feet (74 percent of capacity). It is a shared resource with stored water belonging to other agencies, including downstream water rights.
- Gibraltar Reservoir: Storage as of 10/14/19 – 1,956 Acre Feet (45 percent of capacity). Use of water from the reservoir has been limited due to water quality concerns as a result of the Thomas Fire.
- Groundwater: The City relies on groundwater during droughts when surface water supplies are limited. In 2016, the City's groundwater basins reached historically low levels similar to 1992 (the last major drought). The City has been resting the groundwater basins to let them recover; however, it could take 5-10 years before the basins are completely replenished.
- State Water: The 2019 allocation from the State is currently 70 percent of the maximum annual amount. During the drought, the City contracted for supplemental water exchanges from other water agencies in the state that require that some water be returned over a 10-year period. The City's current water debt is equivalent to one-third of the City's annual water demands, and the City plans to return the water in the next few years.
- Recycled Water: The City's recycled water is used at over 50 sites throughout the City, primarily for irrigation. The annual demand for recycled water can be as high as 1,100 acre feet.

Usage and Projections:

- City of Santa Barbara water demand: Approximately 9,000 acre feet per year. Pre-drought demand was approximately 14,000 acre feet per year.
- Long term water efficiency measures dating back to the 1980s have resulted in water usage today that matches water usage in the 1950s, when we had less than half the population we have today.
- Usage by customer type: Single-Family Residential 44 percent , Multi-Unit Residential 26 percent , Commercial/ Industrial 21 percent, Recycled Water six percent , Agriculture two percent , Irrigation of Parks/Schools one percent.
- Historical demand from new development is 27 acre feet per year, which is approximately 0.3 percent of current demand.

For more information on water supplies, drought planning, desal, and more please visit **www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov/Water** or call **(805) 564-5460**.