



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.
- Produces water that:
 - Meets or exceeds all state and federal drinking water regulations and has slightly different characteristics from our current mix of water supplies. The desal treatment process includes conditioning the water to make it non-corrosive.
 - Is generally “softer” meaning it could eliminate or reduce the use of water softeners or water conditioning for some customers.
- 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 remains in a Stage Three Drought Condition requiring a 30 percent reduction in water usage communitywide; it is important to continue to conserve. Impacts from the drought will last several years and our groundwater basins will take five to ten years to recharge.
- [Cachuma Reservoir Storage](#) as of 8/6/18 - 71,806 Acre Feet (37 percent of capacity)
- [Gibraltar Reservoir Storage](#) as of 8/6/18 – 4,098 Acre Feet (82 percent of capacity)
- Groundwater Wells: Groundwater wells are now turned off for most of the year to allow basins to recover. The Downtown Groundwater Basin and the Foothill Basin are both at 30 percent of capacity.
- Imported Water: Since 2014 the City has imported 10,822 acre feet of water (State Water Project deliveries and purchased water).
- 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.