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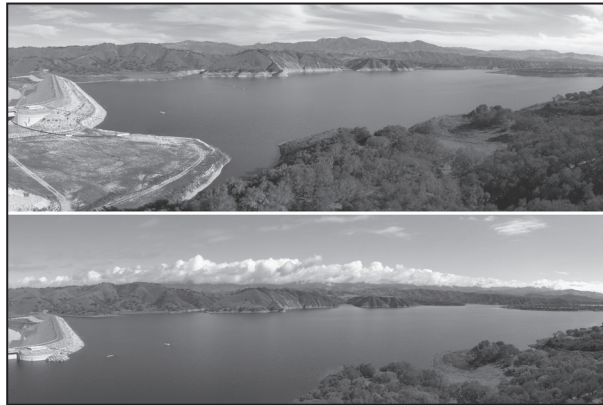
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# CITY DECLARES END TO STAGE THREE DROUGHT EMERGENCY, ADOPTS STAGE ONE WATER SUPPLY CONDITION

**Surface water supply conditions have improved; community-wide conservation still needed**



*Top: Lake Cachuma Jan. 30, 2019. Bottom: Lake Cachuma Mar. 21, 2019. Photo source: Santa Barbara County Public Works Department*

After a historic seven-year drought period, this winter brought above-average rainfall that has improved water supply conditions, and the City’s water supply forecasts show sufficient supply to meet demands through 2021. While water supplies have improved, conservation remains important to fully recover from the cumulative impacts of the drought, and to preserve water supplies for future dry years.

On April 9, 2019, City Council rescinded the Stage Three Drought Emergency and adopted a Stage One Water Supply Condition. With this action, prior drought water use regulations in effect under the Stage Three emergency are lifted; however, the City will continue to enforce its longstanding regulation prohibiting irrigation runoff and failure to repair leaks. Continuing conservation by the community to reduce water use is encouraged. The City’s twelve-month running average water conservation is 30 percent, compared to 2013 water demands. The City is grateful to our customers for making conservation a way of life, which has been vital during the historic drought and will continue to be essential going forward.

The cumulative effect of the seven-year drought on the City’s water supplies has been extreme, and it will take several years for some water sources to recover. Below is a brief status update on the City’s water supplies:

- **Lake Cachuma:** The federally-owned reservoir is currently 80% full, but it is a shared resource with stored water belonging to other agencies, including downstream water rights.
- **Gibraltar Reservoir:** This smaller reservoir is owned by the City and is currently full. 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% of the maximum annual amount. During the drought, the City contracted for supplemental water exchanges, via the State Water Project, from other water agencies outside the area. These exchanges were necessary to maintain State Water deliveries during the drought, but the agreements 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.
- **Desalination:** The City’s desalination plant has been operating since summer 2017, providing nearly one-third of the City’s current water demands. The desalination plant has played a key role in improving reliability and resiliency during the drought, and it will continue to play this role by allowing us to rest our groundwater basins and recover from the drought.
- **Recycled Water:** The City’s recycled water plant has been meeting the majority of recycled water customer demands since construction upgrades completed in November 2015.

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May 2019

# CITY DECLARES END TO STAGE THREE DROUGHT EMERGENCY

*(Continued from page 1)*

The City is well positioned to accelerate the recovery process with the City's desalination plant in operation and continued conservation efforts from our community. The City is also initiating a pilot study for potential artificial recharge of treated water into the City's groundwater basins to help recover the water levels.

Regarding water rates, the City experienced significant increases in costs during the drought to provide reliable water sources and ensure public health and safety needs were met. The water rate study conducted in 2017, which informed water rates for Aug 2017–June 2020, assumed that the drought would come to an end within that period. Therefore, the current rates, and the rates that will become effective this July, already reflect a gradual recovery from the drought costs. While the majority of costs to operate and maintain the overall water system are fixed costs, the City's water rates are structured to encourage conservation, and reduced water usage results in a lower water bill. The City will be reassessing water rates for July 2020 with a new rate study starting this summer.

**For more information on water supplies, drought, and conservation, please visit [www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov/Water](http://www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov/Water).**

# OPERATION CLEAN SWEEP VOLUNTEERS "DIVE IN" TO KEEP SANTA BARBARA HARBOR CLEAN

The seafloor in any busy harbor may be littered with lost or discarded junk, impacting the environment just like litter on land. Ever wonder, "What's down there, where does it come from and does anybody ever clean it up?" On Saturday, May 18 you'll find out.

Santa Barbara Harbor's Operation Clean Sweep, a seafloor debris cleanup program, holds its 13th annual event on Saturday, May 18. A team of volunteer divers, supported by 40 or so volunteer dock workers, will remove junk from beneath Marina 2. Divers will locate the junk and dock volunteers will cart it off for disposal. The event begins at 8 a.m., with a briefing on the Travel Lift Pier beneath the Harbormaster's Office, complete with free coffee and donuts, and concludes with a hearty box lunch at 11:30 a.m.

During past events, volunteers—many of them "Clean Sweepers" from the start—removed a total of 21.2 tons of debris from Santa Barbara Harbor. Items retrieved during past years ranged from bicycles, barbeques, plastic barrels, and boat propellers to pipers, wire cages, outboard engines, phones, computers, and the occasional marine battery.

The City joins volunteers from NOAA, SB Maritime Museum, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper, SB Sail and Power Squadron, Santa Barbara Surfrider Foundation, Channel Islands Marine & Wildlife Institute, and harbor dive businesses in this effort.

**For more information about the event or to volunteer, call the Harbormaster's Office at (805) 564-5531 or visit [www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov/CleanSweep](http://www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov/CleanSweep).**

# VISIT THE 10TH ANNUAL HARBOR NAUTICAL SWAP MEET

On Saturday, May 25, the 10th Annual Harbor Nautical Swap Meet will attract hundreds of treasure hunters to the Main Harbor Parking Lot from 8 a.m. to noon. Dozens of vendors will display and sell boat rigging, surfboards, fishing gear, inflatable boats, pumps, winches, boat motors, and other marine/nautical items. Spend the morning looking for new gear while enjoying free coffee, fruit, and other refreshments care of the Harbor Merchants Association. Admission is free.

## Water Wise Classes!



<b>Site Assessment 101</b> Sat. May 4 10:30 am – 12:00 pm	<b>Rain Harvesting 101</b> Thurs. May 9 7:00-8:30 pm	<b>Graywater 101</b> Wed. May 29 7:00-8:30 pm	<b>Water Wise Plant Maintenance 101</b> Sat. June 8 10:30 am – 12:00 pm
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All classes are scheduled at the Eastside Library located at 1102 E. Montecito Street

Free parking available in adjacent lot.

A suggested donation of \$10/ person or \$15/couple can be made to Sweetwater Collaborative.

For more information visit [SantaBarbaraCA.gov/GardenClasses](http://SantaBarbaraCA.gov/GardenClasses)



## New Ordinance in the City of Santa Barbara Targets Ocean Pollution

### Plastic Straw, Stirrer, and Cutlery Ordinance

July 1, 2019

**When**

**Who**

Food or Beverage Vendors

(This does not affect the retail sale of straws in bulk or straws included in prepackaged items. Other exemptions apply, see ordinance for details.)

**What**



**Banned**

All plastic straws and stirrers, including all compostable\* plastic made from plants. \*These items are not certified to biodegrade in a marine environment.

**Alternatives**



**Must Ask or Offer**

All plastic utensils, including all compostable\* plastic made from plants.



All other single-use straws including paper, sugar, hay, noodle, etc.



**Recommended**

Washable and reusable straws made from bamboo, metal, glass, silicone, etc.

(...or skip the straw altogether!)

For more information or assistance, visit [SBRecycles.org](http://SBRecycles.org) or call (805) 564-5631.

