



Sacramento Suburban Water District

Year in Review 2020



2020 was truly a year like no other. The COVID-19 pandemic upended our daily lives in ways we could not have anticipated and forced every one of us to adapt to a radically different lifestyle.

The pandemic impacted nearly every aspect of our lives—from work and school, to grocery shopping, going to the gym, and gathering with family and friends. Through this incredible challenge, the SSWD team maintained their focus on providing high-quality service to our customers.

I am deeply proud of our staff and how they rose to the moment and overcame all of the obstacles before them. They seamlessly shifted to working from home when shelter-in-place orders were issued, and when those orders were modified incorporated the numerous safety protocols put into place to keep our customers, staff, and their families safe while working in the field and in the office.

I am both proud and not surprised that SSWD staff displayed a strength of commitment to our Mission that was inspiring and deeply gratifying.

We are not yet through the pandemic, but the end is in sight, and SSWD will continue to meet its Mission and rise above whatever challenges may come.

DAN YORK
General Manager

Mission Statement

To deliver a high quality, reliable supply of water and superior customer service at the lowest responsible water rate.





Keeping the Water Flowing During the Coronavirus Emergency

Throughout 2020, SSWD continually updated its operations in response to the latest COVID-19 guidance from federal, state, and local agencies while maintaining the focus on serving customers and fulfilling its Mission. Through uncertain times, SSWD's team made certain water would continue to flow, 24/7.

A COVID-19 Task Force was established and comprised of staff with knowledge and expertise in human resources, safety, and operations. The COVID-19 Task Force created safety guidelines to protect SSWD's customers, employees, and their families.

Customer Service staff quickly pivoted to assisting customers remotely as the SSWD administration office was closed to the public to help slow the spread of the coronavirus. Team members worked in the office on a rotating basis, following social distancing and hygiene guidelines.

Field Operations created teams that rotated work shifts to minimize contact with each other in order to keep everyone safe and healthy. This approach also ensured that there was a "deep bench" of expertise at the ready in the event of an emergency.

Engineering continued field work on scheduled capital improvement projects, while incorporating pandemic safety protocols. They created teams that rotated work shifts to minimize contact with each other to continue working on project plans and to keep digital mapping up-to-date with construction work.

The Water Conservation team began offering Water Wise House Call and Leak Investigation services as virtual meetings, assisting customers by phone, FaceTime, or Zoom. These were later expanded to in-person house calls with social distancing and other safety protocols in place.

SSWD Board Meetings Go Virtual

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the SSWD Board of Directors began holding monthly meetings via videoconference and teleconference. Customers continued to be invited to attend and could do so and participate by either videoconference (Zoom) or phone.



Capital Improvement Program Update

Each year, SSWD invests millions of dollars into upgrading and improving its water system so that it can continue to meet the goals of maintaining a sustainable water supply, excellent customer service, and optimized operational efficiencies. Even with the constraints caused by the coronavirus pandemic, SSWD was able to continue its planned Capital Improvement Program projects, which included:

Water Main Replacement Program

SSWD's water main replacement program is one of the District's largest investments in improving the water system and is central to upgrading infrastructure that has reached the end of its useful life.

Over the past 15 years, SSWD has invested approximately \$163 million into this effort and has completed the following:

- Replaced approximately 80 miles of water main
- Upgraded approximately 2,000 fire hydrants
- Installed approximately 39,000 new water meters

In 2020 alone, SSWD replaced over 4.5 miles of water main, upgraded 79 fire hydrants, and installed 209 new water meters. The new water main has a 100-year life expectancy, and the meters feature advanced technology that allows SSWD to read them remotely and quickly identify properties with potential leaks.

Well Replacement Program

SSWD draws much of the water it delivers to customers from over 70 groundwater wells. Many of these wells were constructed decades ago and are nearing the end of their useful life.

In 2020, SSWD continued work on two new groundwater wells and pump stations. These new wells will increase SSWD's groundwater pumping reliability. Investment into new wells and pump stations is critical to helping the District meet the water needs of its customers today and far into the future.

Water Meter Retrofit Program

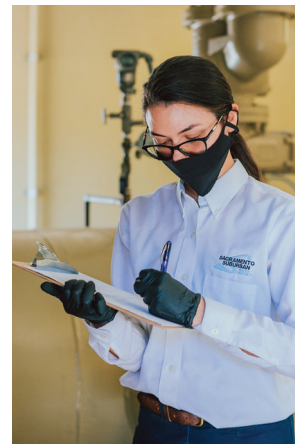
SSWD installed 794 water meters in 2020. The District is anticipating it will be fully metered by the end of 2022, in advance of the state deadline of 2025. Meter retrofits include the installation of meters with advanced technology that allow customers to better track their water use. This is a major accomplishment in the ongoing efforts to make sure "every drop counts."

Planning Documents

SSWD maintains several planning documents to shape and guide the maintenance and replacement of assets to ensure supply reliability goals are achieved. In 2020, the following documents were updated or adopted:

- Groundwater Well Asset Management Plan
- Buildings and Structures Asset Management Plan
- Transmission Main Asset Management Plan
- Fleet Asset Management Plan (new plan adopted)

Information about each plan can be found on SSWD's website, sswd.org.



2020 Project of the Year – Regional Groundwater Substitution Transfer

SSWD was honored along with several other area water purveyors with the 2020 Regional Water Management Award by the Regional Water Authority (RWA). RWA represents water providers throughout the Sacramento region. The award was given to agencies for participation and leadership in the Regional Groundwater Substitution Transfer, which “creatively addressed a water management need and also benefits the region.”

Other honorees and partners in the project included Carmichael Water District, the City of Sacramento, Fair Oaks Water District, Golden State Water Company, and Sacramento County Water Agency.



Transferring Excess Supply to Benefit SSWD’s Customers and the Region

SSWD has invested a considerable amount of resources into developing its Conjunctive Use Program. A Conjunctive Use Program allows SSWD to access surface water contract supplies from Placer County Water Agency and the City of Sacramento when excess surface water is available.

Conjunctive Use Programs have helped the groundwater basin recover from historic lows, establish stronger connections with regional water providers, and offer other beneficial opportunities.

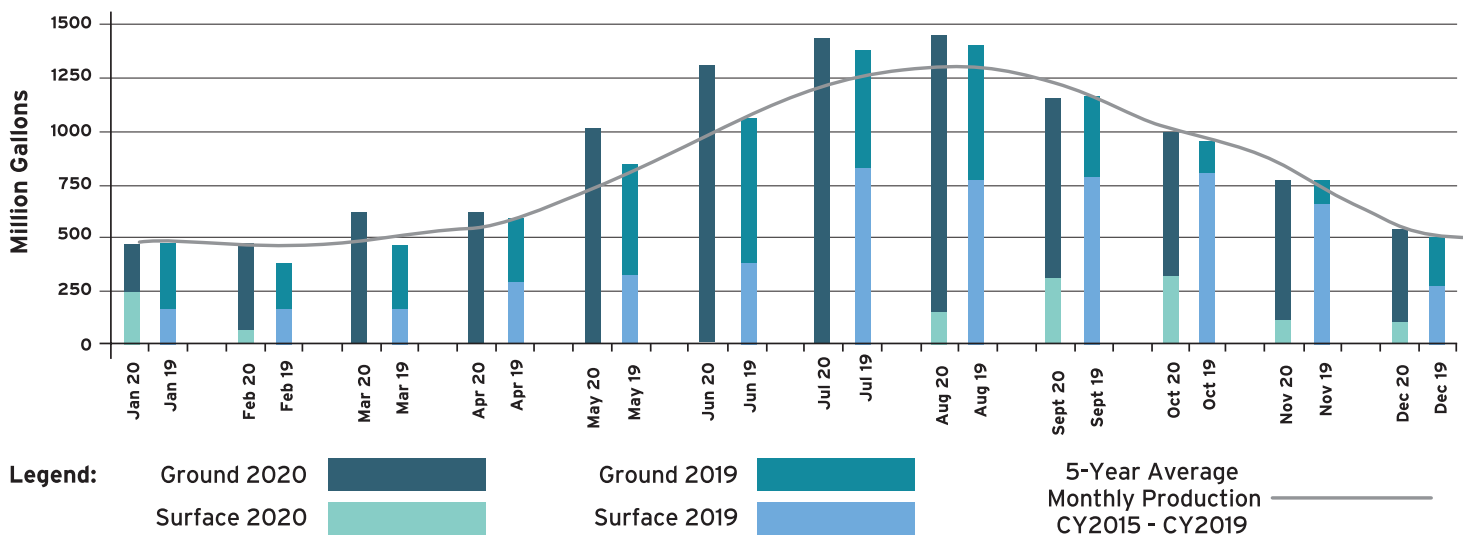
For example, in years when there is an excess supply of surface water in the Sacramento region, and water supplies are low in other parts of the state, SSWD’s Board of Directors has authorized the transfer of some of the excess water.

In 2020, SSWD participated in a regional pilot project—the Regional Groundwater Substitution Transfer—that transferred 14,000 acre-feet of surface water from July through November to farmers in the Central Valley. Rather than using surface water from lakes and rivers, SSWD and other participating water providers used groundwater. This freed up surface water for farmlands that otherwise might have been fallowed.

The 2020 regional water transfer demonstrated how SSWD and other water providers in the Sacramento region could sustainably transfer water to benefit both our customers and others in need. Ultimately, the project is part of a long-term plan and portfolio of water projects designed to increase the reliability of the local water supplies, protect the local environment, and address the anticipated impacts of climate change.

As an added benefit the financial compensation SSWD receives to transfer water helps to offset the cost of further investments in a reliable water system for our customers.

Monthly Water Production



Financial Stewardship

Managing the District's financial health is one of SSWD's main priorities. The District continually strives to find the best ways to properly invest resources in upgrades and maintenance, and to ensure the highest returns on capital reserves. All of this effort is to make sure the District can provide the highest quality water and service at the lowest responsible water rate. 2020 was the first year for the approved five-year rate increase, which has allowed the District to continue to maintain and upgrade the system and provide excellent service to ratepayers.

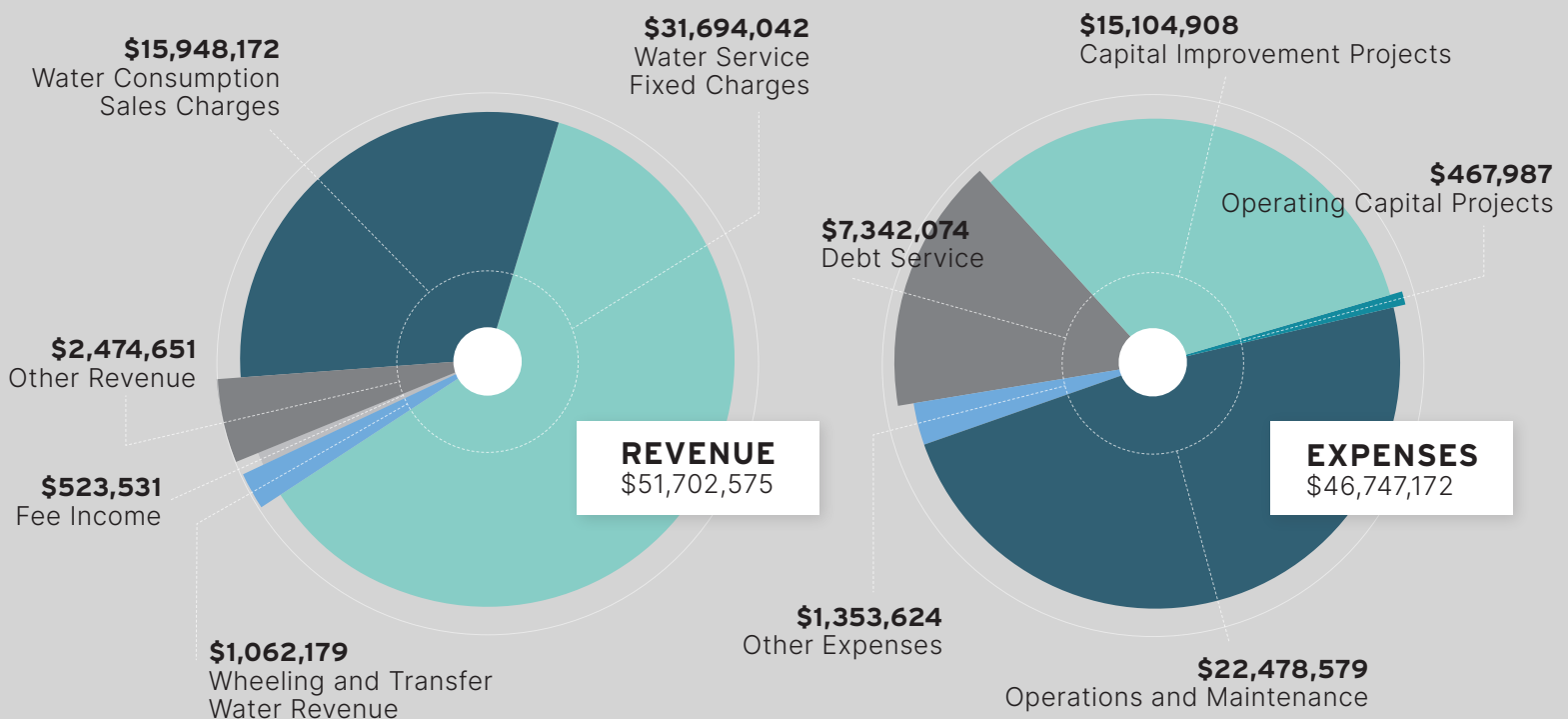
In 2020, the District generated:

- \$48,165,745 from rate payers
- \$3,536,830 from other sources including interest, lease, development charges and water transfer sales
- \$3,886,153 reduction in operating expenses



The Finance Department has received top honors from the Government Finance Officers Association for the completeness and readability of the annual financial reports for the past 9 years.

WATER SYSTEM FINANCES





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Governance

SSWD is governed by a five-member
Board of Directors elected to serve four-year terms.

Robert P. Wichert, President (Division 3)

Craig M. Locke, Vice President (Division 5)

David A. Jones, (Division 1)

Kathleen McPherson (Division 2)

Kevin M. Thomas (Division 4)

Sacramento Suburban Water District

Dan York, General Manager

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