

SMALL WATER SYSTEMS

25. SMALL COMMUNITY WATER SYSTEMS

OVERVIEW

There are a number of mutual water companies (MWCs) and privately-owned water systems providing service within the County. They are an important component in the overall provision of water service in the County, but are not under LAFCO's jurisdiction. Mutual water companies (also called water companies, cooperative company, water system, water association, and water works) are a legal entity with no specific requirement for the size of the system or number of connections. It essentially means that there are shared interests in the water system and service by customers of the system.

Water systems may also be investor owned, meaning that the owners, whether it be an individual or group, are not customers of the water system. These investor owned systems are regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). The focus in this chapter is on community water systems that serve a non-transient residential population.

Various operations and activities of these water systems are regulated by several agencies depending on size (number of connections and population served), water source, and ownership. The primary regulators for health purposes are the County Department of Environmental Health (DEH) for systems consisting of five to 14 connections and the California Department of Public Health (DPH) for systems of greater than 15 connections. Systems of four or less connections are not regulated by a public health agency. A system may be regulated by both CPUC and a public health agency; the two are not mutually exclusive. For more details on the regulation of water systems, refer to the Regulation of Water Providers section in Chapter 2 of this document.

SMALL WATER SYSTEMS IN SANTA CLARA

Per the records of DPH and the Santa Clara County DEH, there are 100 water systems that serve non-transient residential communities in Santa Clara County of five or greater connections. This excludes institutional systems and RV Parks. Of these systems, 60 have five to 14 connections, and 40 with 15 or more connections.

Since 2005, two mutual water companies are no longer in operation. Chiri Ranch Estates MWC split up into individual well connections, and Redwood MWC was purchased by San Jose Water Company in 2006. DPH currently regulates two additional MWCs than in 2005—Valley View Ranches MWC and Emerald Valley Estates MWC.

CPUC regulates four small water systems in Santa Clara County—Mecchi Water Company, Idylwild Water System, Klein Homes Water Company, and Twin Valley Water Company, Inc. The Idylwild Water System suffered a water shortage at the end of 2010 and

had to truck in water from a private provider. The situation is presently stable there, however, the Idylwild Water System is looking to connect to the San Jose Water Company system to prevent another such shortage.

The complete list of current mutual water companies and mutually owned small water systems, their locations, number of connections and regulatory authorities are shown in Figure 25-1.

Figure 25-1: Small Community Water Systems in Santa Clara County

Water System	Location	Number of Connections	Regulatory Authority
Aborn Heights Water Mutual Association	Lazy Lane, San Jose	19	DPH
Alamo Farms Mutual Water Company	Travis Court, Gilroy	8	DEH
Alram Mutual Water Company	Cinnabar Hills Road, San Jose	7	DEH
Amberwood Ln. Water Company	Amberwood Lane, Morgan Hill	6	DEH
Angelo Lane Water Company	Canada Road, Gilroy	15	DPH
Arlen Ct. Mutual Water Company	Arlen Court, East San Jose	11	DEH
Arlington Mutual Water Company	Arlington Court at E. Middle	8	DEH
Arrowhead Cooperative Company	Rolling Hills Road, Saratoga	38	DHS
Baughman Water System	Monterey Road, Morgan Hill	7	DEH
Bella Madeira Mutual Water Company	Casa Madeira Lane	12	DEH
Blossomwood Mutual Water Company	Daugherty Avenue, Morgan Hill	10	DEH
Blue Oaks Water System	Blue Oaks Road & Wild Turkey, Los Gatos	8	DEH
Brush and Old Well Mutual Water Company	Brush Road, Los Gatos	29	DPH
Burchell Road Water Company	Burchell Road, Gilroy	27	DPH
Call of the Wild Water Works	Call of the Wild Road, Los Gatos	8	DEH
Canada Rd. Water System	Canada Road, Gilroy	6	DEH
Candy Ranch Mutual Water Company	Center Avenue & Dias Drive	6	DEH
Chaboya Hills Est. Mutual Water Company	Chaboya Ct	11	DEH
Chemeketa Park Mutual Water Company	Comanche Trail, Los Gatos	143	DPH
Chiala Water System	Hill Rd & Tennant Ave	12	DEH
Chiri Sweet Water Company	Leann & Maple Avenue, Morgan Hill	8	DEH
Dayland Water Company	Lucky Court, Gilroy	6	DEH
Deep Hole Water Association	Godfrey & Ferguson	6	DEH
Deer Hill Mutual Water Company	Barnard Road, Morgan Hill	14	DEH
Emerald Valley Mutual Water System	Melchior & Day Road, Gilroy	13	DEH, DPH
Espana Mutual Water Company	Paquita Espana Court, Morgan Hill	8	DEH
Est.of Paradise Valley Water Company	Louis Holstrom Drive	6	DEH
Fagole Water System	Tourney Road, Los Gatos	6	DEH
Notes:			
DEH = Santa Clara County Department of Environmental Health, DPH = California State Department of Public Health, PUC = California Public Utilities Commission			

Figure 25-1: Small Community Water Systems in Santa Clara County (continued)

Water System	Location	Number of Connections	Regulatory Authority
Far-View Mutual Water Company	Far-View Lane & Denevi Lane, Los Gatos	8	DEH
Foothill Mutual Water Company	San Martin	15	DPH
Golden Heights Mutual Water Company	Roop Road & Via del Oro, Gilroy	20	DEH, DPH
Green Acres Mutual Water	Green Acres Court, Morgan Hill	18	DPH
Green Mountain Water Company	Armsby Lane, Morgan Hill	49	DPH
Happy Acres Mutual Water Company	Campisi Court, Gilroy	78	DPH
Howell Water System	Elege Road off Black Road, Los Gatos	6	DEH
Idylwild Water System	Old Santa Cruz Highway, Los Gatos	43	DPH, PUC
Jean Ellen Mutual Water Company	Jean Ellen Drive, Gilroy	8	DEH
Jefferson Drive Mutual Water Company	Jefferson Drive, Gilroy	6	DEH
Kell Park Mutual Water Company	Kell Court, Morgan Hill	12	DEH
Kennon Water Company	Top of the Hill Court, Los Gatos	48	DPH
Lake Canyon Mutual Water Company	Manzanita Drive, Los Gatos	56	DPH
Landmark Mngmt Water System	Thompson Road, Los Gatos	8	DEH
Lee's Orchard Water System	1000 Old Piedmont Road, Milpitas	13	DEH
Lena Ave. Mutual Water Company	Lena Avenue, Gilroy	9	DEH
Lilac Ln. Water Company	1910 Lilac Lane, Morgan Hill	14	DEH
Little Kennon Water Company	Sky Lane, Los Gatos	7	DEH
Live Oak Creek Mutual Water Company	New Avenue, Gilroy	12	DEH
Los Ranchos De Uvas Water Company	Calle Uvas, Gilroy	22	DPH
Main Ave. Mutual Water Company	Alpet Drive, Morgan Hill	8	DEH
Maria Lane Mutual Water Company	Maria Lane, Saratoga	12	DEH
Mecchi Water Company	Crowner Avenue, San Martin	26	DPH, PUC
Melody Woods Water Company	Melody Lane, Los Gatos	54	DPH
Mireval Improvement Association	Paseo Carmelo, Los Gatos	15	DPH
Mountain Springs Mutual Water Company	Old Santa Cruz Highway, Los Gatos	17	DPH
Mt. Eden Mutual Water Company	Mt. Eden Road, Saratoga	46	DPH
Mt. Pleasant Water Users Association	Not Reported	70	DPH
Murphy Mutual Water Company	Whiskey Hill, Drive, Gilroy	7	DEH
New Avenue Mutual Water Company	New Avenue & Roop Road, Gilroy	96	DPH
No-Name Burchell Mutual Water Company	Burchell Road, Gilroy	6	DEH
Oakmont Mutual Water Company	Not Reported	24	DPH
Oaksprings Water Company	Oaksprings Circle, Gilroy	8	DEH
Oaktree Estates Mutual Water Company	Sugarbabe Drive, Gilroy	10	DEH
Osborne Ct. Water System	Bowden Court, Morgan Hill	8	DEH
Paradise Oaks Mutual Water Company	Edmondson Court, Morgan Hill	7	DEH
Peacock Ct. Mutual Water Company	Peacock Court, Cupertino	11	DEH

Notes:

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Figure 25-1: Small Community Water Systems in Santa Clara County (continued)

Water System	Location	Number of Connections	Regulatory Authority
Pinecrest Water System	Pinecrest Drive, San Martin	6	DEH
Quail Creek Estates Mutual Water Company	Not Reported	18	DPH
Rancho de Lomas Mutual Water Company	Celle Moniz & Peebles Avenue, Morgan Hill	12	DEH
Rancho Robles Mutual Water Company	Not Reported	35	DPH
Rancho Vista Water System	Rancho Vista Court, Gilroy	8	DEH
Rockwood Ranch Estates Mutual Water Company	Oak Glen & Chesbro Lk Drive, Morgan Hill	10	DEH
Roseview Heights Mutual Water Company	Crothers Road, San Jose	49	DPH
Rucker Avenue Mutual Water Company	Rucker Avenue, Gilroy	6	DEH
San Martin Foothills Water Company	Vincent Drive, San Martin	40	DPH
Santa Teresa Meadows Water Company	Lantz Drive, Morgan Hill	21	DPH
Saratoga Heights Mutual Water Company	Not Reported	83	DPH
Schramm Mutual Water Company	Benetta Lane, Gilroy	6	DEH
Shady Lane Mutual Water Company	Drysdale Drive & Dumtree Lane, Los Gatos	15	DPH
Shannon Heights Mutual Water Company	Shannon Heights Road, Los Gatos	10	DEH
Shawana Water Company	New Avenue, San Martin	6	DEH
Sheldon Rd. Water Company	Sheldon Road, Los Gatos	8	DEH
Sierra Road Improvement Association, Inc	Sierra Road, San Jose	48	DPH
Six Water Works	Denio Avenue & Malo Court, Gilroy	6	DEH
Skylane Mutual Water Company	Sky Lane, Los Gatos	9	DEH
Spring Ave. Mutual Water Company	632 Spring Avenue, Morgan Hill	7	DEH
Spring Creek Lane Mutual Water Company	Spring Creek Lane, San Jose	8	DEH
Spring Valley Heights Mutual Water Company	Vista Spring Court, Milpitas	19	DEH, DPH
Stonebridge Mutual Water Company	Stonebridge Drive, Morgan Hill	15	DEH
Sullivan Mutual Water Company	Scheller Avenue, Morgan Hill	16	DPH
Sweigert Rd. Water Company	Sweigert Road, San Jose	6	DEH
Terri Lynn Water System	Terri Lynn Court, Gilroy	12	DEH
Three Springs Ranch Mutual Water Company	Three Springs Road, Mt. Hamilton	31	DPH
Twin Creeks Properties	Alamitos Road, San Jose	51	DPH
Twin Valley Water Company Inc.	Sycamore Drive, Morgan Hill	83	DPH, PUC
Valley View Ranches Mutual Water Company	Fitzgerald Avenue & Green Valley Drive, Gilroy	15	DEH
Velladao Mobile Home Park	Not Reported	27	DPH
Vista del Lago Mutual Water Company	De Paul Circle, Gilroy	11	DEH
Vista Grande Water Users Association	Montevina Road, Los Gatos	24	DPH
Walnut Hills Mutual Water Company	Merkley Row Street, San Jose	6	DEH
Whispering Oaks Water Company	Whispering Oaks Drive, San Jose	12	DEH
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CONTAMINATION CHALLENGES

All entities extracting groundwater are required to pay the pumping tax imposed by the SCVWD because they benefit from the groundwater management services provided by the District. Smaller mutual water companies, privately operated systems, and individual well owners typically do not have the facilities to treat groundwater other than disinfection at the wellhead. When these systems are impacted, they often seek the assistance of a larger public or private provider in the area that could extend service. DPH encourages small water systems to merge with larger providers.

The issue is particularly critical in the South County region where groundwater quality is impacted. Although the perchlorate contamination appears to be lessening, some water systems still face challenges with nitrates and septic systems near their wells. For example, San Martin County Water District has received inquiries from neighboring mutual water companies that would like to connect their water systems to the District's due to contamination issues.

According to the Environmental Working Group, a national public health nonprofit, there are a number of small private water systems and mutual water companies in Santa Clara County that have contaminated water supply. Individual systems and specific contaminants that are below legal limit but above the recommended healthy limit are shown in Figure 25-2. There are

Figure 25-2: Contamination in Small Water Systems

Water System	Contaminant
Happy Acres Mutual Water Company	Alpha Particle Activity Manganese Radium - 228
New Avenue Mutual Water Company	Alpha Particle Activity
Green Mountain Water Company	Alpha Particle Activity
Melody Woods Water Company	Manganese
Rancho Robles Mutual Water Company	Alpha Particle Activity Arsenic
Thee Springs Ranch Mutual Water Company	Alpha Particle Activity
Santa Teresa Meadows Water Company	Alpha Particle Activity Lead
Sullivan Mutual Water Company	Alpha Particle Activity
Vista Grande Water Users Association	Trihalomethanes* Bromodichloromethane Chloroform Dibromochloromethane Dichloroacetic acid Haloacetic acids Trichloroacetic acid
Spring Valley Heights Mutual Water Company	Alpha Particle Activity Radium - 228
Angelo Lane Water Company	Manganese
Los Ranchos de Uvas Water Company	Alpha Particle Activity
Green Acres Mutual Water Company	Asbestos* Alpha Particle Activity Lead
Burchell Road Water Company	Radium - 228
San Martin Foothills Water Company	Radium - 228* Alpha Particle Activity
Mecchi Water Company	Alpha Particle Activity
Aborn Heights Mutual Water Company	Alpha Particle Activity Radium - 228
Shady Lane Mutual Water Company	Dichloroacetic acid Chloroform Bromodichloromethane Dibromochloromethane Trihalomethanes
Mountain Springs Mutual Water Company	Radium - 228 Alpha Particle Activity Bromodichloromethane Dibromochloromethane Barium
Foothills Mutual Water Company	Nitrate* Alpha Particle Activity Arsenic
Twin Valley Water Company Inc	Radium - 228 Alpha Particle Activity Lead

Source: The Environmental Working Group
Note: *Above legal limit.

four systems that contain contaminants above the legal limit—Vista Grande Water Users Association (Trihalomethanes), Green Acres Mutual Water Company (Asbestos), San Martin Foothills Water Company (Radium-228), and Foothill Mutual Water Company (Nitrate).