

# Free Workshops

Please join us for our free water conservation workshop.

- **Rainwater Capture and Graywater** - Learn how to install a small scale system that meets all county health and safety requirements. 9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, May 13, 2017.
- **Community Drought Workshop** – Get an update on Casitas' water supply conditions, drought status, conservation, and water supply projects. Time will be provided for questions and answers. 9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, June 17, 2017.



**Drought Workshop**

Please RSVP early at [bsandoval@casitaswater.org](mailto:bsandoval@casitaswater.org) or (805) 649-2251 Extension 105. The workshop will be held at Oak View Park & Resource Center (formerly the Oak View Elementary School) located at 555 Mahoney Avenue. Attendees are encouraged to park in the parking lots instead of the street.

Casitas is co-sponsoring “**The Drought Defying California Garden**” with the California Native Plant Society. Speaker will be Greg Rubin, California native plant expert and author. This workshop will take place at 7:00 pm on February 21, 2017. It will take place in the Topping Room, E.P. Foster Library, East Main Street, Ventura, California. Please park in the back. (No RSVP is required for this meeting)

**Casitas' Speakers Bureau:** Provides an opportunity for customers and the community to learn more about water issues in the Western Ventura County area. Please contact Ron Merckling, Water Conservation and Public Affairs Manager, (805) 649-2251, extension 118, to invite a speaker to your next community group or organizational meeting.



Please visit the Water Wise Gardening in Ventura County website at [www.ventura.watersavingplants.com](http://www.ventura.watersavingplants.com).

The Casitas Board of Directors is scheduled to meet at 3:00 p.m. in the board room located in the main office at 1055 Ventura Ave., Oak View, on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month.

- Bill Hicks, Division I
- James W. Word, Division II
- Pete Kaiser, Division III
- Mary Bergen, Division IV
- Russ Baggerly, Division V

### Your Board in Action

Join the Casitas Municipal Water District Facebook page to get the latest updates on water conservation and the Lake Casitas Recreation Area at: [www.facebook.com/fbsitecasitasmunicipalwaterdistrict](http://www.facebook.com/fbsitecasitasmunicipalwaterdistrict).



[www.casitaswater.org](http://www.casitaswater.org)

1055 Ventura Ave.  
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# CASITAS WATER NEWS

Winter 2017

## DROUGHT STILL ON Ventura County Remains at Epi-Center of California's Drought

United States Drought Monitor reports, as of mid-January 2017, Ventura County remains in “extreme drought.” Casitas continues the call for mandatory water conservation restrictions on all water customers in response to historically low water levels in Lake Casitas. The droughts impact in lowering local groundwater supplies increased demand on Lake Casitas as the area’s backup water supply.



**Lake Casitas – Drought still on as lake levels drop.**

“Until we get significant inflow into Lake Casitas, we need to remain vigilant in our water conservation efforts,” said Ron Merckling, Public Affairs/Resource Manager for Casitas. “We need everyone in Western Ventura County to know, recent rains have not ended the drought. We still strongly encourage everyone to maintain water conservation as a way of life.”

**What will it take to fill Lake Casitas?**  
“Refilling Lake Casitas will not happen in one storm or in one wet year – it will take several years of substantial rainfall,” explained Merckling. At present, Lake Casitas is 164,000 acre-feet below its 254,000 acre-foot capacity. One acre-foot of water is equal to about one football field filled with water one foot

high. During 2005, the local area experienced over 60-inches of rain and Lake Casitas storage increased by 80,000 acre-feet. The El Nino rainfall years of 1993, 1995 and 1998 had similar results on the refilling of Lake Casitas. “Absent such rainfall years, we are reminded that it took twenty years (1958 to 1978) to initially fill Lake Casitas,” said Steve Wickstrum, General Manager for Casitas.

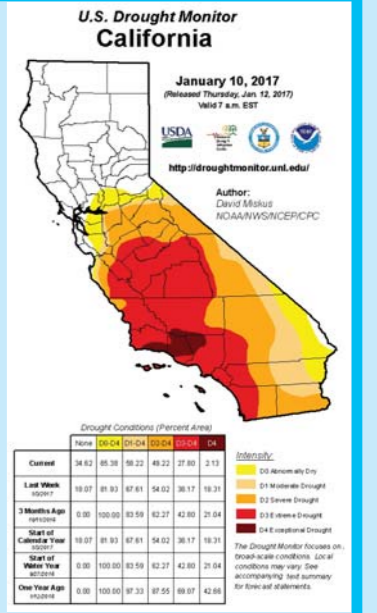
### Casitas Seeks New Water Supplies

Casitas' Board of Directors continues to take action to explore other water supplies in response to the historic drought. Lake Casitas dipped to 35% of full capacity, the lowest level since the 1960s. With the concern of the declining storage at Lake Casitas, Casitas' Board implemented water demand reduction requirements for the first-time in Lake Casitas' nearly 60 year history.

Project (ISWP) and the Matilija Formation Horizontal Bore (MFHB) (a well project).

The ISWP is a collaborative effort by Ventura County water agencies to determine the best manner to move water into western Ventura County from the State Water project, a system of aqueducts that brings water from Northern California to Southern California. The intertie project would connect into western Ventura County from Calleguas Municipal Water District, which receives water directly from the State Water Project. Ventura Water is working with a consultant to assess the

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# Conservation - California's Way of Life

The State Water Resources Control Board staff recommended on January 17, 2017, that the Board should extend emergency drought regulations for at least three more months. State Board staff indicated that there are still areas in the State that are dealing with significant drought impacts, this includes western Ventura County. A final vote by the State Board is set for February 7, 2017.

The website address for the State Water Resources Control Board's emergency drought page is: ([www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/conservation\\_portal/emergency\\_regulation.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/conservation_portal/emergency_regulation.shtml))

Some drought regulations are anticipated to become permanent. With drought going on six years, Governor Gerry Brown issued Executive Order B-37-16. State agencies created a plan to implement this order called, "Making Water Conservation a California Way of Life." The State Water Resources Control Board, and the Department of Water Resources, proposes several actions to implement the Governor's order that will require local urban water agencies, including Casitas, to do the following:

- ◆ Enforce water use efficiency targets beginning 2025
- ◆ Enforce system of water loss performance standards
- ◆ Require five-year drought planning program for each agency
- ◆ Require local drought plans to have a:
  - Communication plan
  - Monitoring and reporting protocols

- Regular review process.
- ◆ Provide State with annual local supply and demand assessments

The State will require water efficiency targets be met by all of California's urban water agencies. The targets will include outdoor and indoor standards for each water agency. The standards will use total population and landscaped areas in each water district boundary to determine a water budget for each agency. Water agencies not meeting these standards could be subject to fines or other penalties.

Each water agency will be given an outdoor water budget based on weather conditions and the acres of landscaped areas within the district. The indoor water budget will be based on the number of people living within an urban water agency multiplied by 55 gallons per capita day. This means that every two person household would be allotted 3,300 gallons per month, or 4.4 units of water per month for indoor water use. The State anticipates lowering this amount to 49 gallons per capita day by 2030 based on the assumption that more efficient appliances will be in homes. That would mean 2,940 gallons, or 3.9 per units, of water per month of indoor water use would be allowed for each two person household. "Now is a good time to check our monthly water use on our water bills to determine how close we are at meeting these goals. A good way to know your monthly indoor water usage is to check your January water use, which should not include any outdoor watering," said Ron Merckling, Public Affairs/Resource Manager.

## Urban Customers Cut Water Demand by Nearly 40%

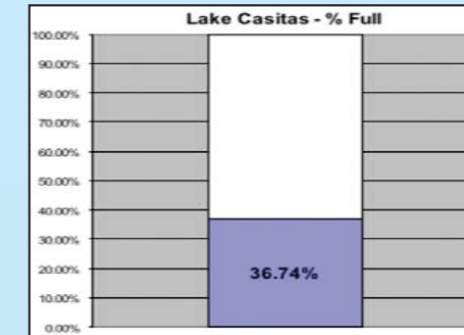
Casitas' direct urban water customers used nearly 40% less water in 2016, as compared to 2013. This is one of the greatest decreases in water sales among urban water providers in the State of California. "This level of conservation can extend Casitas' water supply by years, significantly increasing the resiliency of the water system to withstand long-term drought conditions," said Ron Merckling Public Affairs/Resource Manager. "Casitas' water customers continue to do a great job in reducing their water usage during this historical drought," said Merckling. During calendar year 2016, as compared to calendar year 2013, total water demand, district wide, was down 31% from 20,502 acre-feet to 14,150 acre-feet. This decrease in water use comes from agriculture, other water agencies that purchased water from Casitas, and Casitas' direct urban customers.

In response to historically diminished local water supply conditions, the Board of Directors of Casitas declared a Stage 3 drought in the spring of 2016, when lake levels reached below 40% for the first time since the late 1960s. Low annual rainfall has now persisted for five consecutive years. Casitas requests that everyone remain vigilant with their water use until Lake Casitas can fully recovery.

## Lake Level Graph on Casitas' Website is Correct!

A lot of people called and emailed Casitas' staff asking if the lake level graph on Casitas' website ([www.casitaswater.org](http://www.casitaswater.org)) is current. The graph showed a lake low point of 35.1% on January 4. It increased a couple of weeks later to 36.7% after the January rains.

The most significant diversions into the lake over the last five years occurred this January for two days, raising the lake by 1.6%. It takes a lot of rain, more than a six inch storm, for diversions to occur. The lake is seventy seven feet down



from spill, so a few inches of rain on top of the lake will have little impact in filling it. Lake Casitas fills from direct drainage from the watershed, and diversions from the Ventura River.

**Are you doing your part to save Lake Casitas?**  
If so, please inquire about getting your **Conserving LakeCasitas Sign** for your front landscape.



## New Water Supplies

*Continued from page 1*

best method to bring State Water into the city from Calleguas. There is additional collaboration between Casitas and Ventura Water to determine the projects necessary to move the water into the Casitas system.

The MFHB appears to be an untapped local groundwater source in the Santa Ynez mountain range surrounding Lake Casitas. Casitas is now investigating the feasibility and impacts of accessing this water during drought conditions. "Casitas is dedicated to continue work on developing new water supply, coordinating existing local water supplies, and maintaining water conservation efforts to ensure Western Ventura County preserves a sustainable water supply through extended drought periods," said Wickstrum.

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Course #2- 2/18, 3/3, 3/4, 3/5, 3/11, 3/12

Course #3- 3/18, 3/31, 4/1, 4/2, 4/8, 4/9

Course #4- 6/12, 6/19, 6/20, 6/21, 6/22, 6/23

*\*Course #4 Applicants Will Not Be Considered for Hire Until After July 1<sup>st</sup>*

**Application Forms Available for Download Under the Employment Tab On the Left**



**Send Applications To:**

Camille Finnerty  
(805) 649-2233x116  
[cfinnerty@casitaswater.com](mailto:cfinnerty@casitaswater.com)  
11311 Santa Ana Rd.  
Ventura, CA 93001

[WWW.LAKECASITAS.INFO](http://WWW.LAKECASITAS.INFO)