Status of Santa Cruz Water System  Serving City of Santa Cruz and Adjacent Unincorporated Areas of Santa Cruz County and Parts of the City of Capitola

Time and Date Posted – 1:00 p.m. Friday, August 21, 2020

Note: Information is accurate at the time of posting. Conditions are continually and sometimes rapidly evolving. We will do our best to update information as we can.

1. What is the status of the water system?
   At the time of this writing, the water system is fully functional and functioning in a largely normal fashion. One tank on the west-side pump system lost electricity on Wednesday, August 19th but is being operated by a back-up generator which is being refueled as needed.

2. Have any water facilities been lost or damaged due to the fire?
   Water system operational facilities have not sustained damage at this time. The upper reaches of the Laguna watershed, part of the water system’s North Coast sources and systems, has been impacted by fire, but that system is out of service because the flows during the summer season are dedicated to protecting and supporting fish habitat for threatened steelhead trout and endangered coho salmon.

3. I live in an elevated zone—am I in danger of losing water service?
   No, probably not. Water Department staff is working closely with CalFire Incident Management staff to make them aware of where water facilities are located and the important role they play in delivering water to customers as well as ensuring water is available through fire hydrants for fire-fighting. On Friday, August 21st, CalFire staff took steps to create larger defensible spaces around all the water system’s west-side storage tanks. These steps are designed to make the facilities easier to defend in the event fire moves into the area where they are located.

4. Should I be conserving water right now to help the fire-fighting effort?
   Enough water is available at this time to meet user needs as well as fire-fighting needs, so the Water Department is not asking customers to reduce water use at this time. As noted earlier, this incident is changing rapidly, so please do stay tuned to social media and other credible information sources, and be assured that if water use reductions are necessary, the request will be communicated widely with specific details about what is needed.

5. Should I set aside some water in case I lose water service to my property?
   It is always wise to have some bottled water on hand in the event of an emergency, however, as noted in the response to Question 4 above, the water system is currently operating in a reasonably normal manner and can meet both user and fire-fighting needs. In addition, the probability of your losing water service to your property and not having been already asked to evacuate from your property is quite low. This means that you don’t need to plan to fill your bathtub or buckets in your showers or sinks in order to get you through an outage.

6. If I am ordered to evacuate, should I shut off the water before I leave?
   No.