

2023 COMMUNICATIONS YEAR IN REVIEW

Public Outreach and Legislation Committee

January 18, 2024



2023 COMMUNICATIONS YEAR IN REVIEW



AWARDS

- PRSA-Los Angeles

DEPARTMENT ADMIN

- Strategic Plan Nexus
- Department Budget
- Measuring Success
- Government Affairs

ADMINISTRATIVE EFFORTS

- Brand Guide
- Comms Assistance Guide & Intake Form

EDUCATION

- Water Academy
- Landscape & Gardening Workshops

CAMPAIGNS & ENGAGEMENT

- Customer Care
 - Ratepayer Assistance Program
 - AMI Meter Upgrades
- Conservation – A CA Way of Life

EVENTS

- KHTS Home & Garden Show
- Bridgeport Pocket Park

ONLINE/MEDIA PRESENCE

- Social Media
- Advertising
- Website

SCV WATER WINS FIVE PRSA-LA AWARDS!



PRism Awards

- Drought Ready, SCV! Campaign
- *The Pipeline* – Internal Newsletter
- *Water Currents* – Monthly Customer Newsletter

Award of Excellence

- 2023 Consumer Confidence Report

Best in Community Relations

- Drought Ready, SCV!

STRATEGIC PLAN NEXUS

Goal A: Customer/Community

Implement policies supporting the social, quality of life, and environmental values of the community.

Goal F: High Performance Team

Grow a culture of continuous improvement that fosters SCV Water's values.

Strategy A.2

Proactively communicate with and engage our community on water matters of importance to the region positioning SCV Water as a leading resource and reliable authority on water issues.

Strategy A.3

Work with local, regional, state and federal agencies, industry associations and organizations to influence water policy for the benefit of our service area customers.

Strategy A.4

Engage in statewide and federal water legislative and policy issues.

Strategy F.4

Promote an open and professional work environment.

COMMUNICATIONS BUDGET

Account	Description	Budget FY 2023/24
Employee Expense & Travel; Education/Seminars	Employee expenses for meetings and conferences; mileage and work-related travel; as well as registration for employee education, training and seminars.	\$ 12,500
Supplies & Services	Expenses related to event booths - décor, equipment, giveaways, day-of expenses, etc.	\$ 50,000
Printing & Publications	Design and print of collateral and publications.	\$ 15,000
Public Affairs & Partnerships	Sponsorships and collaborations.	\$105,000
Outreach Consultants	Consultants for support and professional assistance.	\$100,000
Website Online Presence	Website(s) development/maintenance/hosting as well as social media/digital content creation and management.	\$ 52,000
Campaigns & Messaging	Agency promotional campaigns, messaging and media buys.	\$100,000
	TOTAL	\$434,500

METRICS: MEASURING SUCCESS

Feedback: Qualitative and Quantitative

- Advertising
 - Digital - # of impressions; # of click throughs
 - Print - # of scanned QR codes
- Customer Action
 - Customer calls - # of calls; topics that frequently come up
 - Water Currents eNewsletter - # of opens; # of click throughs
 - Program Participation – i.e. # of rebates distributed, # ratepayer assistance signups, etc.
- Education
 - Water Academy – # of participants; session surveys
 - Gardening Classes – # of participants
 - Events
 - # of attendees
 - Feedback (community and staff): on the opportunities for and the level of engagement

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS (& ADVOCACY)

Networking/Advocacy Memberships

- SCV Chamber of Commerce
- Valley Industry Association (VIA)
- SCV PIO
- Special Districts Association of North LA County
- LA County Business Federation
- ACWA Communications Committee

Government Affairs Analyst (FY24/25)

- Local Advocacy (City Council, Board of Supervisors)
- Professional Organizations
- Coordination with State and Federal Advocates
- Legislative Analysis/Reports for Agency Executives and Board of Directors

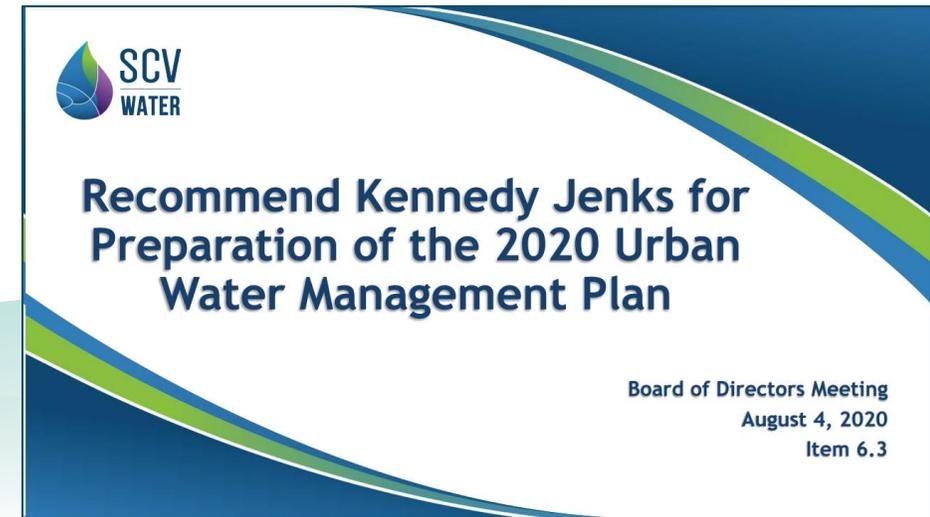
Administrative Efforts



HISTORY OF OUR BRAND GUIDE

The Beginning

- No formal brand guidelines (Jan. 1, 2018 through Nov. 2022)
- Lack of consistency with standardized items (i.e. PPT, letterhead, logo and color palette usage, language in reports, etc.)
- Attempts for unified “rules” and “best practices”, but ultimately there was subjective use of branded items



BRAND GUIDE

Overview

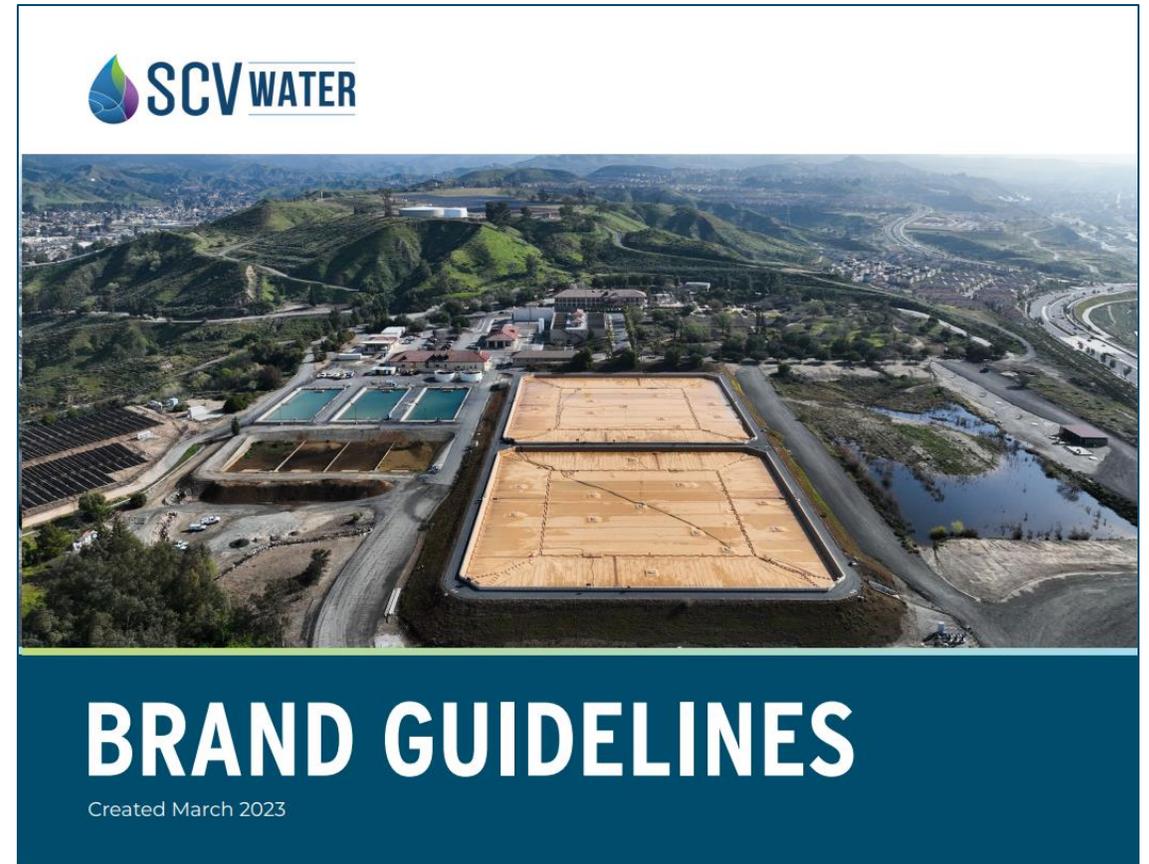
- Logo, Colors and Typography
- Design Best Practices
- Photo/Video Guidelines
- Writing Style Guidelines & Tips
- Applications: Templates (letterhead, PPT, etc.)

Timeline & Training

- Finalized March 2023
- October - Trained 20+ Department Admins
- Revised December 2023

Upcoming Training

- Agency-Wide Recorded Webinar (Feb. 2024)

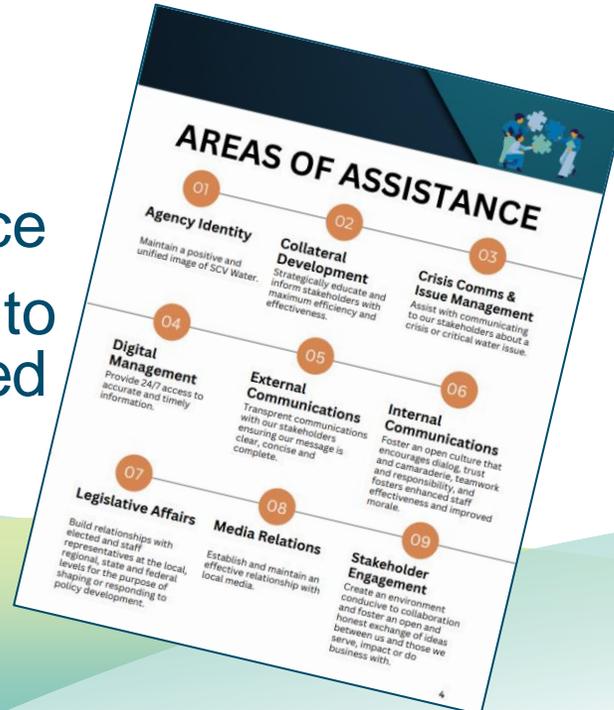


COMMS ASSISTANCE GUIDE & INTAKE FORM

Launched June 2023

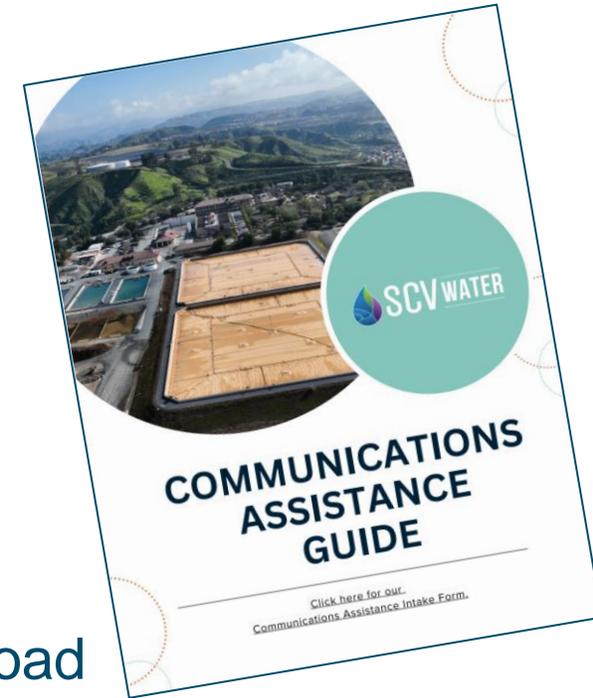
Assistance Guide

- Purpose: Proactive Communications
- Meet Your Team
- Service Request Process
 - Expectations
 - How to Request Assistance
- Areas of Assistance
- Next Steps: What to Do When You Need Assistance



Intake Form

- Helps Comms with workflow and workload
- Gets people to think about comms much earlier in the process
- Helps Comms track where our time is being spent
- Helps give realistic expectations for outreach based on lead time and project needs



RESPONSE TO COMMS INTAKE FORM

- (More than) adequate lead time for upcoming projects!
- Lots of projects that need communication and outreach!

2023 Communications & Outreach Needs

Customer Care

- Ratepayer Assistance Program
- AMI Meter Upgrades

Engineering

- Deane Tank & Site Improvements
(project was cancelled indefinitely in November)
- Dickason Pipeline Project
- Honby Drain Line near Santa Clara Street
- LARC Pipeline Project
- Valencia Marketplace Pipeline Replacement Project
- Well 205 Water Treatment Facility

Finance

- !!NEW!! Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) design

Water Resources

- !!NEW!! SCV Annual Water Report design

2024 and Beyond: Communications & Outreach Needs

Conservation

- Conservation in Action
- HOA Toolkit Webpage
- Homeowner & Professional Landscape Care Guides
- Non-Functional Turf

Engineering

- Backcountry Reservoir
- LARC Pipeline Project – Milestones & Ribbon Cutting
- PFAS – N Wells Groundwater Treatment; Well D Groundwater Treatment
- Sand Canyon Reservoir Expansion Project
- Smyth Pipeline Project

Finance

- Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) design

Water Resources

- SCV Annual Water Report design

Hands-On Educational Opportunities



WATER ACADEMY

- Launched Spring 2023
- Topics: Water Management, Conservation, and Infrastructure
- Participant Learning Goals:
 - SCV Water and Its Functions
 - Water-Related Challenges and Solutions
- Outreach Tools:
 - Water Currents eNewsletter
 - Sunday Signal Ads
 - Social Media

Participation

- Spring 2023 Cohort: 23
- Fall 2023 Cohort: 20
- Upcoming 2024 – Summer



LANDSCAPE & GARDENING WORKSHOPS

Outreach Tools

- Email Approx. 20,000 Contacts Monthly
- Monthly Press Release
- Social Media Posts
 - Paid Signal and KHTS Partnership Post
- Share Schedule with Community Organizations

2023 Program Updates

- Jan. 7 – First In-Person Class in 3 Years (35 attendees)
- Classes (Hybrid): 12 Total; 8 Virtual and 4 In-Person (228 attendees)
- Cost: \$24,000

2024 Program Changes

- Classes: 6 Total; All In-Person
- Location(s): Pine Street and Bridgeport Sustainable Landscape Demonstration Garden

Campaigns & Engagement



CUSTOMER CARE: RATEPAYER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Program

- Launched February 2023
- 2023 Total Participation = 510
(254 priority, 256 non-priority enrollments)

Advertising

- ValPak Ads (Oct – Dec)
- Sunday Signal Ads

Outreach Opportunities

- Senior Fair at Bella Vida
- Veterans Group Event
- Light Up Main Street
- Santa Clarita Public Library Branches



**NEED HELP
PAYING YOUR
WATER BILL?**

Apply for
SCV Water's
Ratepayer
Assistance
Program



SCV Water's pilot Ratepayer Assistance Program (RAP) helps some low-income residential households stay current on their water bills.

ASSISTANCE

Qualifying SCV Water residential customers can receive a \$10 monthly credit towards their fixed service charge, for up to a 12-month period during the fiscal year.

Assistance will be given to qualifying customers on a "first-come, first-served" basis, so long as funds are available. Priority registration will be given to the following groups: seniors aged 62 or older, veterans and the permanently disabled.

**Funds are limited.
Customers must qualify.
Apply today!**



* CARE is the California Alternate Rates for Energy program through Southern California Edison and Southern California Gas Companies

For more information, visit:
yourSCVwater.com/ratepayer-assistance



**¿NECESITA
AYUDA PARA
PAGAR SU
FACTURA DEL
AGUA?**

Solicite el Programa
de Asistencia al
Contribuyente
(RAP) de SCV Water



El Programa piloto de Asistencia al Consumidor (RAP) de SCV Water ayuda a algunos hogares residenciales de bajos ingresos a mantenerse al día en sus facturas de agua.

ASISTENCIA

Los clientes residenciales de SCV Water que califiquen pueden recibir un crédito mensual de \$10 para su cargo fijo por servicio, por un período de hasta 12 meses durante el año fiscal.

La asistencia se otorgará a los clientes que califiquen del grupo prioritario, por orden de llegada, siempre y cuando haya fondos disponibles. Se dará prioridad de inscripción a los siguientes grupos: mayores de 62 años, veteranos y los discapacitados permanentes.

**Los fondos son limitados.
Los clientes deben cumplir los requisitos.
Solicítelo hoy mismo.**

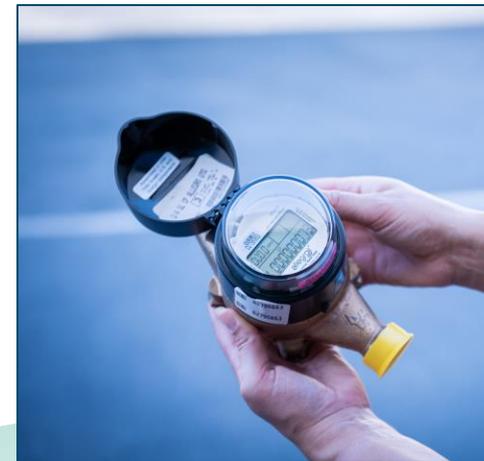


* CARE es el programa de Tarifas Alternativas de Energía de California de las empresas Southern California Edison y Southern California Gas.

Para más información, visite
yourSCVwater.com/ratepayer-assistance

CUSTOMER CARE: AMI METER UPGRADES

- Program Started in July 2022
- Continued Outreach in 2023
- Over 3,000 Meters Changed Out in 2023
- Outreach Tools
 - Postcards
 - Door Hangers
 - Water Currents
 - Social Media



SCV WATER METERS ARE GETTING AN UPGRADE

Today, SCV Water's meter replacement contractor replaced your manual water meter with an Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI) water meter.

BENEFITS OF THE AMI METER

- Remote meter readings
- Increased water savings
- A simple leak detection tool
- Reduced carbon footprint
- 24/7 access to water usage for customers (future phase)

IMPORTANT INFO

If you notice discoloration or air in your water line after your meter is replaced, turn on the cold water spigot in your bathtub or outdoor cold water faucet for 1-to-3 minutes.

📞 (661) 294-0828
✉ ccare@scvwa.org
🌐 www.yourSCVwater.com/AMI

FOLLOW US ON

QR code

CONSERVATION

... Is a California Way of Life

- Launched Campaign July 2023
- Direct Mailer in September 2023
- Social Media, Digital Ads and Online Presence
- Traditional Advertising

2023 WATER SUPPLY FACTS AND RESOURCES

While rain and snow provided significant relief throughout the state and the SCV early in 2023, consecutive, multi-year drought and existing impacts on our groundwater supplies mean that it will take time to build back and grow our banked reserves for future dry years.

We must all continue to do our part to reduce water waste and save water for future droughts. Long-term conservation efforts, achieve community goals, and help us prepare for future droughts.

SCV Water offers our customers and resources to help us prepare for future droughts.

ACTION NEEDED TO BANK WATER FOR OUR FUTURE

Although SCV Water has moved toward hitting our planned yearly conservation targets, our banked water supplies need to be replenished. During the last drought, we relied heavily on our banked water supplies in Kern County, using up 45% of those dry-year reserves. SCV Water's normal conservation program targets a 2-to-3% reduction annually in gallons used per person per day, and we ask that customers continue conserving to replenish our banked water supply for future years.

Learn more: www.scvwater.com

SCV Water
Dec 18, 2023

As temps dip low in the SCV, freezing pipes may lead to leaks. This December, prioritize your home's warmth and safety to ensure a cozy, leak-free winter: Insulate your pipes and regularly check for broken pipes that may be causing leaks. [#SantaClarita](#) [#Conservation](#) [#HolidayTips](#)

RAIN BARRELS HELP CAPTURE AND CONSERVE WATER

Check for broken pipes that may be causing leaks

Conservation is a California Way of Life

Coming in 2024 ...

Non-Functional Turf Emergency Watering Ban
Turn It Off, Cap It, or Convert It.

YOUR URGENT ATTENTION AND ACTION IS REQUIRED. THE STATE BAN ON WATERING NON-FUNCTIONAL TURF WITH POTABLE WATER LIKELY AFFECTS YOUR PROPERTY.

In response to severe drought conditions in California and below average rainfall and reservoir levels, the State Water Resources Board has issued a statewide ban on the watering of non-functional turf with potable water. This ban will stretch water supplies to protect the health and safety of all residents. **Landscaping is one of the biggest uses of water and we're counting on you to do your part to save and conserve the Santa Clarita Valley's precious water supplies!**

BAN ON WATERING NON-FUNCTIONAL TURF
The drought prompted the State Water Resources Control Board to issue a statewide ban on the watering of non-functional turf with potable water (<https://bit.ly/2WRCBConservationFAQs>).

Who does the ban apply to? SCV Water customers subject to this ban include Commercial, Industrial, and Institutional (CI) customers including the common areas of Homeowners Associations as well as Common Interest Developments.

What is Non-functional Turf (NFT)? NFT is mowed grass that is ornamental and not otherwise used for human recreation purposes. It also applies to the non-functional turf maintained by homeowner associations.

NFT does not apply to residential properties, school fields, sports fields, and areas regularly used for civic or community events.

How long is the ban? The ban, effective June 16, 2022, is in place for one year, unless extended.

Are there exceptions? Exemptions include areas needed to water trees, shrubs, perennials, and native/drought-tolerant grasses.

ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES
While the State Water Resources Control Board emergency order gives SCV Water the authority to enforce the ban and levy \$500-a-day fines for non-compliance; at this time, we are prioritizing education, engagement, and program support. Over the past several decades when severe droughts have occurred in California, Santa Clarita Valley property owners and residents have answered the call to reduce water use. We are counting on the same positive effort this time and fully appreciate and recognize the community's drought response and water conservation efforts.

The State Water Resources Control Board has banned watering non-functional turf with potable water. This affects SCV Water's commercial, industrial and institutional customers.

CONSERVATION IN ACTION Stories Series
Communication Plan

SCV WATER



Events



KHTS HOME AND GARDEN SHOW

April 29-30, 2023

- Over 20,000 Attendees
- SCV Water Staff:
 - Water Quality
 - Education
 - Conservation
 - Customer Care
 - Communications



RIBBON CUTTING: BRIDGEPORT PARK

September 1, 2023

Features & Community Benefits

- 14,800-Square-Foot Demonstration Garden:
 - Sustainable Landscape Designs
 - Native and Low-Water Plants
 - High-Efficiency Irrigation
 - A Permeable Concrete Pad
 - Benches
 - Educational Signage



EVENTS

2023 Community Events

MAR	3/11. Free to Be Me Festival 3/18. JCI: Get Real 101
APR	4/20. CSUN Nursing Student Presentation 4/22-23. Cowboy Festival 4/29-30. KHTS Home and Garden Show
MAY	5/13. Placerita Nature Center Open House
AUG	8/12. Concerts in the Park – A Twist on Taylor 8/23. JCI Treatment Plant Tour
SEPT	9/1. Bridgeport Park Ribbon Cutting Ceremony 9/23. River Rally 9/30-10/1. Pow Wow Festival
OCT	10/5. Senior Fair 10/14. CAST for Kids 10/24. SCV PIO Luncheon
NOV	11/4. Touch a Truck – SCV Education Foundation 11/18. Light Up Main Street – City of Santa Clarita
DEC	12/2. Family Literacy Festival – City of Santa Clarita

Anticipated 2024 Events

MAR	Free to Be Me Festival JCI: Get Real 101
APR	4/20-21. Cowboy Festival 4/27-28. KHTS Home and Garden Show 4/30. CSUN Nursing Student Presentation
MAY	Placerita Nature Center Open House
AUG	Concerts in the Park JCI Treatment Plant Tour
SEPT	River Rally Pow Wow Festival
OCT	Senior Fair CAST for Kids
NOV	Touch a Truck – SCV Education Foundation Light Up Main Street – City of Santa Clarita
DEC	Family Literacy Festival – City of Santa Clarita

Online Presence



SOCIAL MEDIA

- Increased Audience Across All Platforms

PLATFORM	2022	2023
Instagram	1,592	1,779
Twitter (X)	1,245	1,304
Facebook	1,100	1,218
LinkedIn	540	756

- Increased LinkedIn Followers by **40%** and Engagement by **525%**
- Engagement **with Videos** Across All Platforms Increased by **475.4%**
 - Created High-Quality Content and Videos
 - Featured Staff and the Work They Do



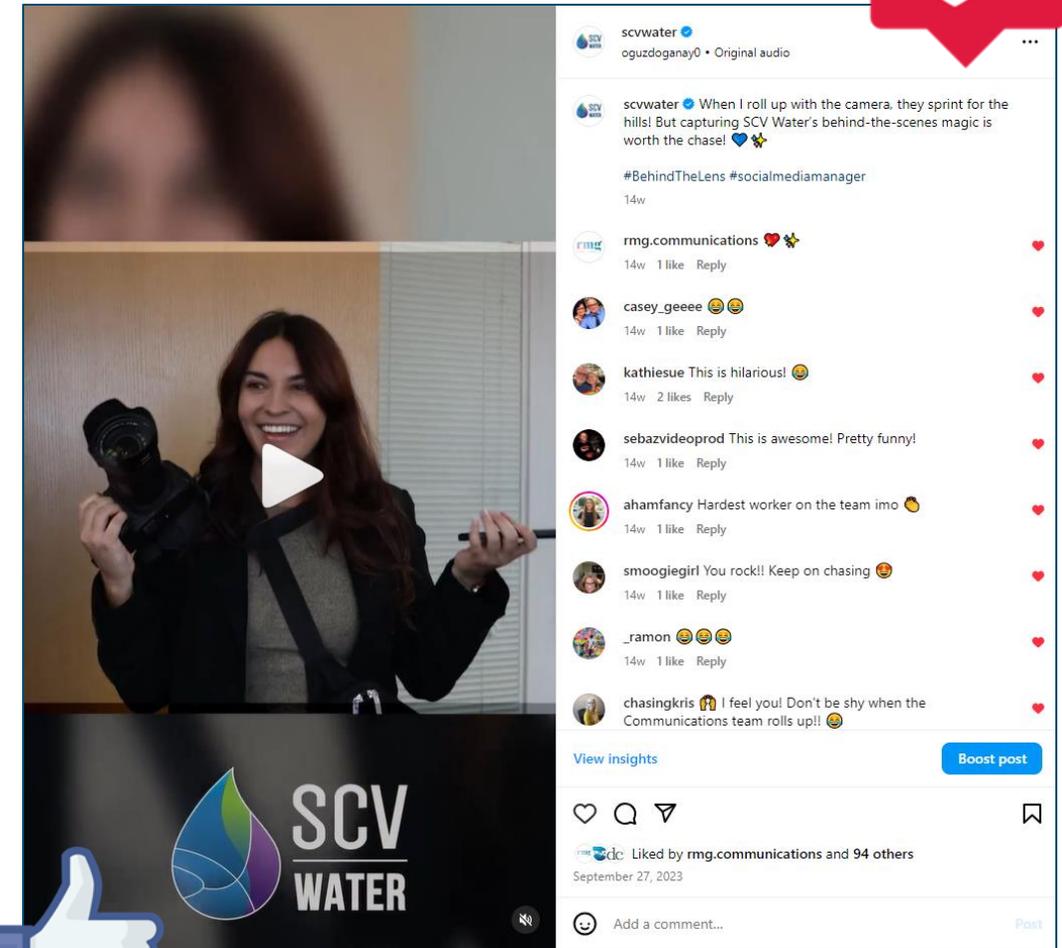
SOCIAL MEDIA – GOALS FOR 2024

Continue to Increase Engagement

- Boost Likes, Comments, and Shares by Creating Compelling and Interactive Content
- Use Stories Polls, Quizzes, and Open-Ended Questions to Encourage Audience Participation
- Staff SM Takeover- A Day in the Life of an Engineer, Customer Service Rep, etc.

Videos – Join Trends

- Our Audience Interacts More with Video Content That Is Trendy on Social Media



TRADITIONAL ADVERTISING

Print

- Enhance Visual Identity and Increase Print Media Presence
 - Create on-brand creatives in multiple media platforms to increase brand awareness

TV

- TV Appearances and Advertisements
 - Spectrum 1 News Advertisement and Agency Features

Radio

- Radio Audience Outreach through KHTS
 - Key during times of drought

AD BUYS FY 23/24*

Inside SCV	\$10,790
KHTS	\$30,000
Signal	\$30,000
Sunday Signal	\$35,000
Spectrum	\$95,736
SC Magazine	\$10,176
ValPak	\$22,800
Total	\$234,502

*Includes invoices to other departments

DIGITAL ADS - 2023

OUTLETS	AD DESCRIPTION	AUDIENCE
Signal	Web Ads	~15,000,000 Impressions / 4,000 Clicks
	Daily Email Blast	23,000 Daily Recipients
KHTS	Web and Daily Email Blast	38,000+ Daily Recipients
Spectrum	Display Campaign	2,226,342 Impressions (-41.5%) 35,358 Engagements (-32.8%)
	Search Campaign	38,111 Impressions (-60.8%) 7,046 Clicks (-78.5%) CTR 18.49% (-15.3%)

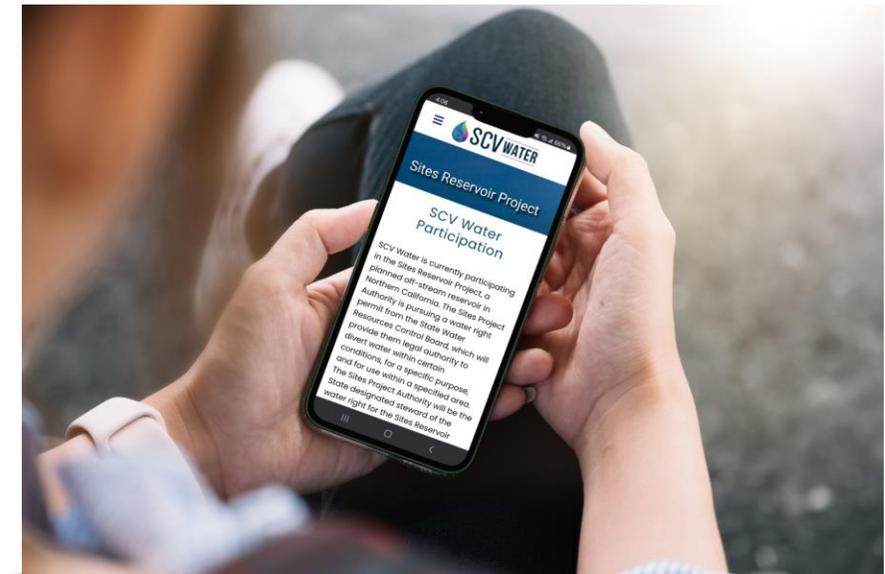
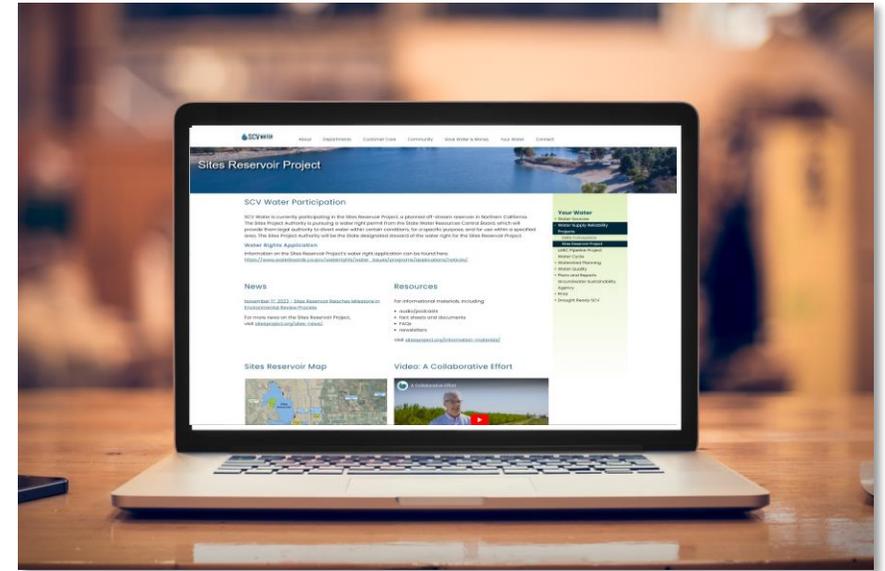


WEBSITE

- Launched February 2023
- Customer-First and Mobile-First UX
- Seamless Integration with Third-Party Platforms (e.g. CCare Billing System and Conservation Rebate Portal)

NEW!! Water Supply Reliability Projects

- Delta Conveyance Project
- Sites Reservoir



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