



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SCV Water Enters Into a
Community Workforce Agreement
Fulfilling SB 634 Promise
*Agreement Includes Provisions to Encourage
Local Workforce Participation and Veteran Hiring***

Paving the way for greater local workforce participation and veteran employment opportunities, the SCV Water Board of Directors authorized a Community Workforce Agreement (Agreement) with the Los Angeles/Orange Counties Building and Construction Trades Council at the September 18 board meeting.

SB 634 (SCV Water's enabling legislation) was amended in August 2017 to incorporate provisions for the potential development of this Agreement, which is a five-year pilot program for contracts for recycled water construction projects over \$500,000. Key elements include provisions for local hiring as well as work opportunities for veterans. It also opens up the ability to use two additional project delivery methods not otherwise available to the Agency.

"The goal is that at least 30% of all construction labor hours for these recycled water projects come from veterans and qualified local residents," said Bill Cooper, board president.

During the five-year pilot program, SCV Water will have the opportunity to make some comparisons with non-Agreement water projects to assess the Agreement's benefits and drawbacks.

Contractors and local unions will rely on non-profit veterans' support organizations, such as "Helmets to Hardhats", to recruit and refer skilled craft workers. "Helmets to Hardhats" is a program that is designed to help military service members successfully transition back into civilian life by offering them the means to secure a quality career in the construction industry.

"As a veteran, it's great to see that there are job opportunities for other veterans," said SCV Water Board member and Vietnam War veteran, R.J. Kelly. "It's great that they are able to learn through apprenticeship programs to receive valuable skills and job training."

Additionally, the Council and local unions will first recruit and refer skilled craft workers who reside within the SCV Water service area, and then within 50 miles, for projects built under this agreement.

Maria Gutzeit, board vice president, said "I'm excited to see local skilled tradespeople be able to stay off the freeways and work closer to home, on infrastructure we need."

The pilot program has the potential to result in more project dollars coming back into the community directly to benefit local workers as well as the veteran community. In addition, it would permit the Agency to use two additional forms of project delivery not otherwise available to it.

Traditional “design-bid-build” public contracting methods have design plans and specifications completed by the Agency which are then put out to bid for construction by the responsible low bidder. The “design-build” process competitively bids the entire project including design and construction, as a single package. Contractors and design firms form teams and work together to find cost savings during the design process. The “construction manager at risk” process provides for a guaranteed maximum price based on a set of specifications and tasks. Currently public agencies in California are limited in the kinds and size of projects which can use these methods. This agreement, under the provisions of SB 634, provides access to these additional project delivery methods.

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About SCV Water:

The Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency (SCV Water) is a full-service regional water agency located in the Santa Clarita Valley. SCV Water provides water service to business and residential customers – half are local groundwater supplies and the other half is imported from the State Water Project and other sources.

SCV Water was formed on January 1, 2018 and combines the former service areas of Castaic Lake Water Agency, Newhall County Water District, Santa Clarita Water Division and Valencia Water Company. Following a multi-year public engagement process, the agency was formed through Senate Bill 634 authored by Senator Scott Wilk and signed by Governor Jerry Brown on October 15, 2017. SCV Water was formed to enhance regional water management and reduce costs for local ratepayers.

More information can be found at www.YourSCVwater.com

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