

CCWD works on issues in Rancho Cal

By Nick Baptista / The Valley Springs News / Wednesday, November 1, 2017

The Calaveras County Water District is working to address waterline breaks and pressure issues within the Rancho Calaveras distribution system.

“We will deploy all available resources, both Capital R&R funds and staffing, to address the line breaks and high pressure issues experienced in Rancho Calaveras that have impacted our customers,” said CCWD General Manager Dave Eggerton. “Our goal is to transition from a reactionary mode of chasing leaks to taking proactive measures to remove the underlying problems such as old, failing pipes. The incredibly important R&R funds provided by our ratepayers make it possible for us to turn the corner on these issues and deliver better service to our customers in Rancho Calaveras.”

With 85 miles of lines within the Rancho distribution system, many of those pipes dating back nearly six decades, it will take time to complete the task, “but we have a good plan in place and we appreciate the community’s understanding,” said Joel Metzger, manager of external affairs, conservation and grants.

The district has been experiencing 200 to 500 leaks the past five years on the Rancho system.

The district’s board earlier this year approved a five-year capital improvement plan that dedicated \$250,000 a year to projects including pipeline replacement. Those funds have been put in use this year with replacement of a large section of pipeline on Harper Lane. Additional pipeline replacements are scheduled this year and next on Ormes Court, Hautly Lane, Jenny Lind Vista, Sparrowk Road and Watts Drive.

“Over the next few years we hope to have the worst of the infrastructure replaced,” Metzger said.

In addition to its own crews, CCWD will also hire contractors to complete some of the work.

CCWD plans to work closely with county public works to coordinate those replacement projects before road paving work.

High water pressure and the failure of pressure valves is another concern about the water distribution system that CCWD is working to address.

Due to the diverse topography in Rancho Calaveras of hills and valleys, the district’s water system operates at a wide variety of water pressures in delivering service to all customers. While the district tries to maintain pressures between 30 and 80 pounds per square inch,

pressures in some areas are more than 150 psi. The district has pressure-reducing valves on its main lines, but it also is the customer's responsibility to have PRVs on their side of the water meter.

Customers should have PRVs that can handle a surge up to 300 psi, Metzger said. High quality PRVs cost approximately \$200 and can be self-installed.

"But hire a professional if you're not comfortable," he added.

The district has created a new web page dedicated to educating customers about the high pressure issue at <http://ccwd.org/protect-home-high-water-pressure/>.

In addition, the district will use the website to keep customers briefed on the latest information such as the repair schedule, leak locations and estimated repair times in the near future.

"We're committed to keeping the community updated and plan to have another town hall meeting to discuss our progress and game plan," Metzger said.

That meeting should be in early December at a location to be determined.