

# Calaveras water district taking ownership of Wallace customers

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SAN ANDREAS - Come January, the 100 customers in the Wallace Community Services District will get their water and sewer bills from Calaveras County Water District.

On Wednesday, CCWD directors voted unanimously to accept ownerships of the Wallace District's water and sewer facilities.

A small group of Wallace service district members were on hand to cheer.

"This is the best Christmas present ever," Patsy Bailey, president of the Wallace service district board said before the vote.

Bailey said high costs, especially because of state regulations, made it extremely difficult for such a small district to function.

"It is ridiculous for 100 people. And the board is all made up of retired people. None of us should be operating a water or sewer plant," Bailey said.

The Wallace district is transferring its water and sewer property to the CCWD but will continue to care for roads, lights, a lake and small dam.

To prepare for transferring the water and sewer operations to the CCWD, district residents had to first vote to tax themselves in order to raise enough money to allow the CCWD to build required repairs and upgrades.

District residents did that in March. Most homeowners will pay an assessment of \$418.20 a year. In all, that will raise more than \$45,000 a year for needed construction.

This is not the first time in recent years that the CCWD has been called on to annex a small neighborhood and help solve its water woes. In 2010, residents on Dalee and Cassidy roads in Rancho Calaveras near Jenny Lind voted to pay a hefty assessment of \$1,460 a year each for 25 years so they could be annexed into the CCWD. The reason: failing wells in the area were forcing many there to truck in water.

Since then, the CCWD has installed pipes to that neighborhood and begun providing water.

Failing wells, increasing regulatory costs and other challenges operating water and sewer systems will likely force other small public and private operations to seek the CCWD's help, district officials said.

CCWD directors said Wednesday they want to be prepared for those requests.

CCWD General Manager Mitchell Dion said he would create a "process map" for such annexations and bring it to the board in a couple of months.

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