



# United Water

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## CONSERVATION DISTRICT

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **STATE SHUTS DOWN LOCAL WATER WELL FOR UNSAFE NITRATE LEVELS ASKS UNITED WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY WATER**

The State Water Resource Control Board's drinking water division asked United Water Conservation District to provide emergency water connections to a small community in Ventura County earlier this week when it was determined that unsafe levels of nitrates were found to be present in both of their water wells.

The Vineyard Avenue Acres Mutual Water company, which supplies drinking water to 364 homes and businesses in the El Rio community, located adjacent to Oxnard, was notified by the State on May 10, 2019 that their water well needed to be shut down due to unsafe, elevated levels of nitrates. The Agency's only other water well was shut down in 2014 for the same reason.

United Water Conservation District immediately responded, acquiring 800-feet of hose and providing a temporary connection from the OH system to their system so that families and businesses could have drinking water. United Water also worked with Roberts Associated Water, a contractor of the Cloverdale Water Mutual, to complete the connection.

"United Water staff worked over-time to complete the connection in one day and install a meter and check valve so that this community could have safe drinking water," explains Mauricio Guardado, General Manager for United Water Conservation District.

"We are beyond thankful that United Water was able to establish a connection and get water to our customers," said Roxana Gamboa of Vineyard Avenue Acres Mutual Water Company. "I don't know what we would have done without the quick action of United," she added.

The high nitrate issue is not a new one in Ventura County. According to the Highlands Economic LLC study of 2017, lack of adequate water diversion has dire consequences for residents, farmers, municipalities and businesses that depend upon well water.

With adequate water diversion, especially in a very wet year like we had, this water well shut down could have potentially been avoided. This year, United Water was only able to divert 16,000 acre-feet of water due to stringent requirements imposed by National Marine Fisheries Services' Long Beach Division.

"With the permit we are seeking from the federal government, more than three times that amount of water could have been diverted, diluting the nitrates so that the water would be safe for drinking, thereby avoiding emergencies such as these," explains Guardado.

United Water Conservation District has submitted a Habitat Conservation Plan to National Marine Fisheries Service that, if approved, would allow United to divert adequate amounts of water for Ventura County residents, businesses, municipalities and farmers.

**United Water Conservation District: Who we are, what we do and why it matters:**

Since 1927, United Water Conservation District has served as a leader among water agencies by managing, protecting, enhancing and securing the water resources of the Santa Clara River and Oxnard Coastal Plain. The District works to protect the environment's natural attributes and conserves runoff from all major tributaries of the Santa Clara River including Piru, Hopper, Sespe and Santa Paula Creeks.

United Water Conservation District is committed to managing the area's water supplies through groundwater replenishment and construction and operation of efficient water supply and delivery systems. The District serves as the conservator of groundwater resources that are utilized by the cities of Oxnard, Port Hueneme, Ventura, Santa Paula and Fillmore, as well as several mutual water districts, farms and individual pumpers. United Water also provides surface water for agricultural irrigation and treated drinking water to the cities of Oxnard and Port Hueneme. **UnitedWater.org.**

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