

## **UNITED WATER PROVIDES EMERGENCY WATER TO 364 HOUSEHOLDS AND BUSINESSES IN EL RIO COMMUNITY**

United Water Conservation District (UWCD) leapt into action in June, answering a call from the State Water Resource Control Board to provide an emergency water connection to a small community in Ventura County when unsafe levels of nitrates were found in its local well.

UWCD immediately responded, working overtime to provide a temporary connection in just one day so that families and businesses could have safe drinking water.

The Vineyard Avenue Acres Mutual Water Company, which supplies drinking water to 364 homes and businesses in the El Rio community, was notified by the State that its water well needed to be shut down due to unsafe elevated levels of nitrate. The Agency's only other water well was shut down in 2014 for the same reason.

"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 Water," 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," explains Mauricio Guardado, General Manager for United Water.

United Water is currently seeking a permit from the federal government, which would allow for more than three times the current amount of water to be diverted, which would dilute nitrate so that the water would be safe for drinking, thereby avoiding emergencies such as these.