



Reservoir Operations Update

Date: April 16, 2025

Subject: City of San Diego is Maximizing Use of Local Water

Thanks to wet winters in 2023 and 2024, the City of San Diego is maximizing use of local water for its customers. Thanks to the extensive collection of rainfall, it is estimated the City will save more than \$100 million this year.

The primary function of the City's reservoirs is to impound water and provide water supply for the City's water customers. Local water captured in City reservoirs is the most cost-effective and efficient source of water. As the cost of imported water continually rises, the City continues to look for ways to reduce costs, including using as much local water as possible. Historically, the City has had to import 85% to 90% of its drinking water, purchased from the San Diego County Water Authority. The cost of this imported water has increased nearly 75% since 2016.

The City has nine reservoirs that accumulate billions of gallons of water through rainfall runoff collection. The cost of an acre-foot of local water supply from our reservoirs is approximately \$400, compared to approximately \$2,300 per acre-foot for imported water. These savings will help partially offset rising costs for both imported water and Public Utilities operations.

It is important for the City to take advantage of the local water it captures during wet years and maximize its use. During extended warm and dry periods, the City's reservoirs are subject to increased evaporation, so it's necessary to use the water as soon as possible.

Due to this use of local water supply, visitors to some City reservoirs may notice a lower water level and some recreation impacts at select reservoirs. For specific questions about El Capitan Reservoir, please visit the [El Capitan FAQs](#).

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