



WEST VALLEY WATER DISTRICT
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WWW.WVWD.ORG

SPECIAL POLICY REVIEW AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING
AGENDA

Tuesday, September 22, 2026, 6:00 PM

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that West Valley Water District has called a meeting of the Policy Review and Oversight Committee to meet in the Administrative Conference Room, 855 W. Base Line Road, Rialto, CA 92376.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director Gregory Young, Chair
Director Daniel Jenkins

Members of the public may attend the meeting in person at 855 W. Base Line Road, Rialto, CA 92376, or you may join the meeting using Zoom by clicking this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8402937790>. Public comment may be submitted via Zoom, by telephone by calling the following number and access code: Dial: (888) 475-4499, Access Code: 840-293-7790, or via email to administration@wvwd.org.

If you require additional assistance, please contact administration@wvwd.org.

CALL TO ORDER

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Any person wishing to speak to the Board of Directors on matters listed or not listed on the agenda, within its jurisdiction, is asked to complete a Speaker Card and submit it to the Board Secretary, if you are attending in person. For anyone joining on Zoom, please wait for the Board President's instruction to indicate that you would like to speak. Each speaker is limited to three (3) minutes. Under the State of California Brown Act, the Board of Directors is prohibited from discussing or taking action on any item not listed on the posted agenda. Comments related to noticed Public Hearing(s) and Business Matters will be heard during the occurrence of the item.

Public communication is the time for anyone to address the Board on any agenda item or anything under the jurisdiction of the District. Also, please remember that no disruptions from the crowd will be tolerated. If someone disrupts the meeting, they will be removed.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Minutes of the July 9, 2026, Policy Review & Oversight Committee Meeting PG. 4
2. Updates to the Policy Review and Oversight Committee
3. WVWD Brand Guidelines PG. 6
4. Internal Communications Plan PG. 48
5. Crisis Communication Plan PG. 76

ADJOURN

Please Note:

Material related to an item on this agenda submitted to the Board of Directors after distribution of the agenda packet is available for public inspection in the District's office located at 855 W. Base Line Road, Rialto, CA 92376, during normal business hours. Also, such documents are available on the District's website at www.wvwd.org subject to staff's ability to post the documents before the meeting.

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2(a), any request for a disability-related modification or accommodation, including auxiliary aids or services, to attend or participate in the above agenda public meeting should be directed to the Board Secretary, Brandon Yoshida, at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting to ensure availability of the requested service or accommodation. Brandon Yoshida may be contacted by telephone at (909) 875-1804 ext. 703, or in writing at the West Valley Water District, P.O. Box 920, Rialto, CA 92377-0920.

DECLARATION OF POSTING:

I hereby declare under penalty of perjury, that I am employed by the West Valley Water District, and that the foregoing agenda was posted at the District Office's bulletin boards and the District website at www.wvwd.org on September 18, 2026, by 6:00 p.m., in compliance with the provisions of the Brown Act.

Brandon Yoshida

Brandon Yoshida, Board Secretary

Date Posted: September 17, 2026

MINUTES
POLICY REVIEW AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING
of the
WEST VALLEY WATER DISTRICT
July 9, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Young called the Policy Committee Meeting of the West Valley Water District to order at 6:00 p.m.

Attendee Name	Present	Absent	Late	Arrived
Gregory Young	☒	☐	☐	
Daniel Jenkins	☒	☐	☐	
John Thiel	☒	☐	☐	
Linda Jadeski	☒	☐	☐	
Paola Lara	☒	☐	☐	

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Chair Young inquired if anyone from the public would like to speak. No requests were received, therefore Chair Young closed the public comment period.

III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Updates to the Policy Review and Oversight Committee.

Assistant General Manager Jadeski announced that as part of the SCADA Masterplan, staff is working on several I.T. policies that will be presented to the committee at a future meeting.

2. Board Policies and Procedures – Continued Development of Potential Changes on Additional Items

Executive Assistant Lara presented a draft of a new proposed policy outlining the procedure for calling a Special Board meeting, which includes steps for when a Board Member requests to call for a Special Board meeting. The committee approved the draft policy. As this was the final pending item for the Board Policies and Procedures updates, the committee directed staff to schedule a Board Workshop to review the proposed updates to the Board Policies and Procedures Manual.

IV. ADJOURN

Chair Young adjourned the meeting at 6:19 p.m.

ATTEST:

Brandon Yoshida, Board Secretary



STAFF REPORT

DATE: September 22, 2026
TO: Policy Review and Oversight Committee
FROM: Socorro Pantaleon, Public Outreach & Government Affairs Manager
SUBJECT: WVWD Brand Guidelines

STRATEGIC GOAL:

Strategic Goal 3 - Develop and Grow Effective Communication and Advocacy Practices; A. Advance Effective Internal and External Communication Processes

Strategic Goal 8 - Deliver Superior Customer Service; D. Communicate Effectively with Customers

MEETING HISTORY:

External Affairs Committee - 2025

BACKGROUND:

West Valley Water District (WVWD) communicates with customers, community members, elected officials, and other stakeholders through a range of print, digital, and in-person materials. Over time, the materials have been developed independently to meet communication needs, resulting in variations in logos, formatting, presentation styles, and other visual elements across District communications.

The District has not previously had formal branding standards to guide the consistent presentation of WVWD's identity. As the District's public outreach, community engagement, digital communications, and external presence have expanded, staff identified the need to establish a cohesive, recognizable, and accessible WVWD brand across all platforms and points of contact.

The proposed Branding Guidelines provide the District with its first formal framework for establishing consistency while building upon the District's existing identity and materials. The guidelines will also incorporate accessibility and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) considerations into the development of District communications, including appropriate color contrast, typography, readability, digital documents, presentations, and other public-facing materials.

This approach will help WVWD present a consistent and professional identity to the community.

DISCUSSION:

The proposed WVWD Branding Guidelines establish a consistent framework for the use of the District's existing visual identity and provide staff with a centralized reference for developing District communications.

WVWD already has an established primary District logo. The proposed guidelines will reinforce the use of this logo as the District's primary identifier and provide standards for its consistent placement, sizing, colors, and application across District materials.

Staff is also seeking direction from the Board regarding a secondary logo. Several logo variations have been used by the Board in the past for trips, events, and other external activities. Staff proposes reviewing these previously used designs and, with Board direction, identifying an appropriate secondary logo or logo options that could be incorporated into the Branding Guidelines. This would provide flexibility for select applications while maintaining a cohesive WVWD identity.

As part of the branding refresh, staff will also standardize key District materials, including:

- Letterhead
- Business cards with QR code
- Cohesive email signature line
- Zoom/virtual backgrounds
- Board agenda presentation templates

The brand guidelines are intended to reinforce WVWD's existing identity, not create a new brand. The goal is to bring greater consistency to materials that have historically been developed in different formats and ensure that the District presents a unified and recognizable identity across all communications.

The guidelines will also incorporate ADA accessibility considerations, including color contrast, typography, readability, and accessibility of digital documents and presentations.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The initial refresh of existing communications materials will be completed using existing staff resources and available communications materials. Any future costs associated with printing, production, or implementation will be managed within existing departmental budgets or brought forward as necessary.

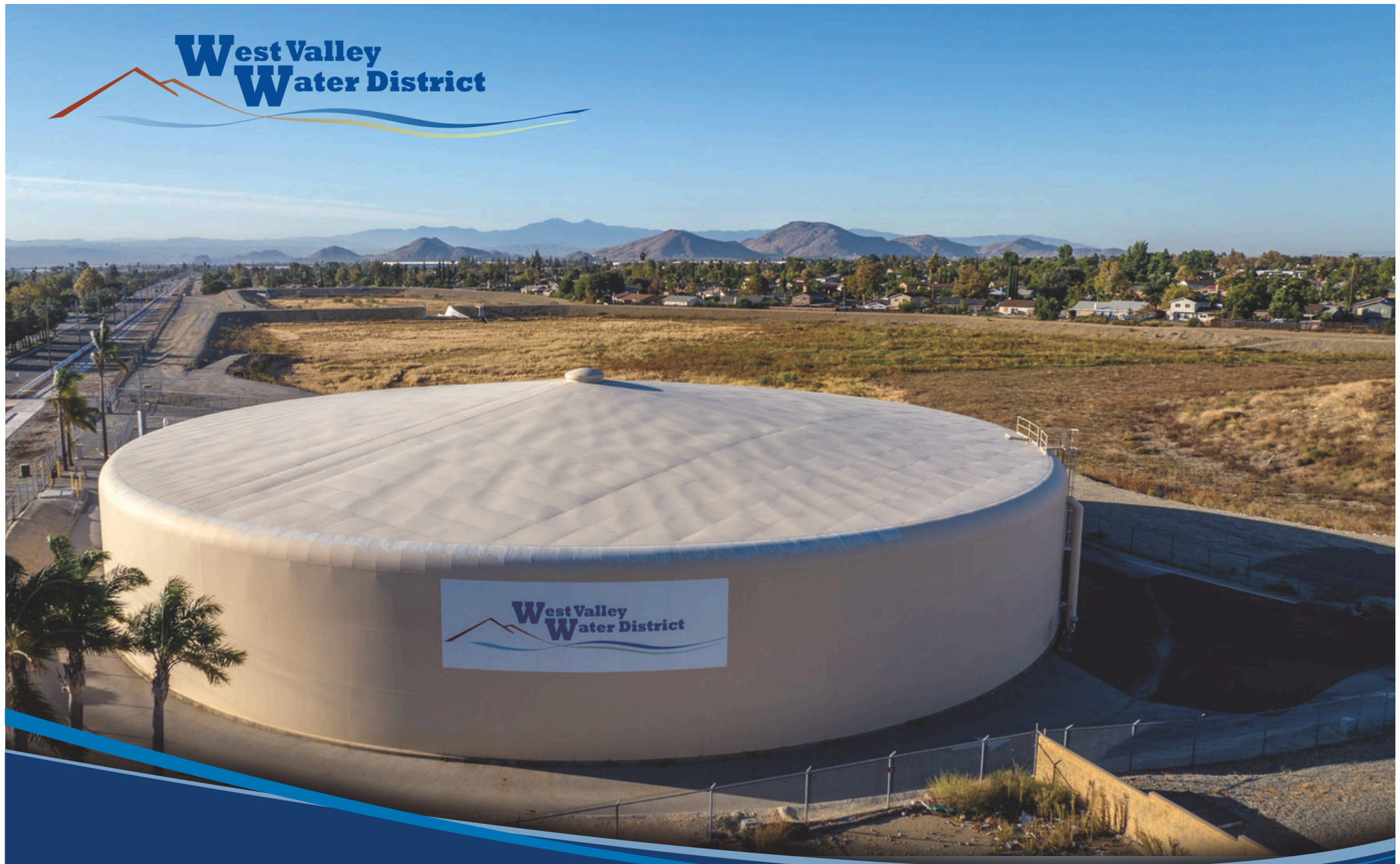
REQUESTED ACTION:

Staff recommends that the Committee provide direction on the Branding Guidelines and proposed secondary logo, and forward the recommendations to the Board of Directors for consideration and approval.

Attachments

[WVWD Brand Guide Final Draft.pdf](#)

[Secondary Logo for Committee .pdf](#)



BRAND GUIDELINES

Draft - 9.14.2026



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OVERVIEW

West Valley Water District's (West Valley/WVWD/District) brand is the face West Valley presents to our community. It encompasses the total effect of our logo, services, programs, and all other key touch points representing us.

Our mission is to provide our community with high-quality and reliable water service in a cost-effective and sustainable manner.

These standards allow West Valley to present a unified voice to our customers and community, strengthening and enhancing our reputation. By adhering to these guidelines, our customers and other key audiences will better recognize the vital services we provide, reflecting our commitment to our values:

INNOVATION

We foster innovation, creativity, and ingenuity in all our services, programs and practices.

REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

As a proactive leader, we engage in regional collaborations that improve our community and water supply.

PREFERRED WORKPLACE

We strive to be a model employer, providing an environment that supports professional growth and well-being.

PUBLIC TRUST & INTEGRITY

We maintain a culture of openness, transparency, and accountability, ensuring our community trusts in our actions and decisions.

SUSTAINABILITY

We are dedicated to sustainable practices that ensure the long-term success of our organization and the community we serve.

CONSISTENCY IS KEY

Consistency across all platforms, including digital media, social interactions and customer service, is crucial. Whether through our website, social media, or printed materials, maintaining a unified voice ensures that our community perceives a cohesive and trustworthy image of West Valley.

WE ALL REPRESENT WEST VALLEY'S BRAND

Every West Valley employee serves as a brand ambassador. This role isn't confined to how we present our visual identity but extends to how we embody our values in our daily interactions. From administrative duties to field services, each action reflects our commitment to quality, innovation and community welfare.

OUR BRAND IN ACTION

Our brand is also about community engagement, where our actions speak as loudly as our words. We participate actively in community initiatives, reinforcing our role as a vital regional partner.

THESE GUIDELINES ARE NOT STATIC; THEY EVOLVE

As our community's needs change, so too will our brand, ensuring it remains relevant and effective. We encourage feedback on these guidelines, as continuous improvement is intrinsic to our brand promise.

WE VALUE YOUR FEEDBACK

We value your input. Please contact our Public Outreach and Government Affairs team for suggestions on improving our brand representation or these guidelines.

BRAND GUIDELINES MANAGEMENT

The Public Outreach and Government Affairs Manager or designee has the ultimate responsibility and authority for implementing this Brand Guide and all its design considerations. Any questions regarding logo use, fonts, colors, PowerPoint templates, and other elements should be directed to the Public Outreach and Government Affairs team.



LOGO

PRIMARY LOGO

The West Valley primary logo serves as the principal brand identifier, capturing the essence of integrity and environmental stewardship through its thoughtful design elements. The mountain range, flowing river, and natural grasslands reflect West Valley's deep connection to the regional landscape and commitment to water resource management. As the cornerstone of brand identity, the primary logo must maintain consistent presence across all internal and external communications, community engagement initiatives, and outreach efforts.



SECONDARY LOGO

The West Valley secondary logo provides an alternative brand identifier, offering a distinctive and compact representation of the District's identity and heritage. The circular design incorporates the mountain range, flowing river, and natural landscape featured in the primary logo, reinforcing West Valley's connection to the region and commitment to responsible water resource management. The inclusion of "Since 1952" recognizes the District's longstanding history of serving the community. The secondary logo may be used when a more contained or commemorative representation of the brand is appropriate, while maintaining a consistent and recognizable presence across District communications, programs, and outreach efforts.

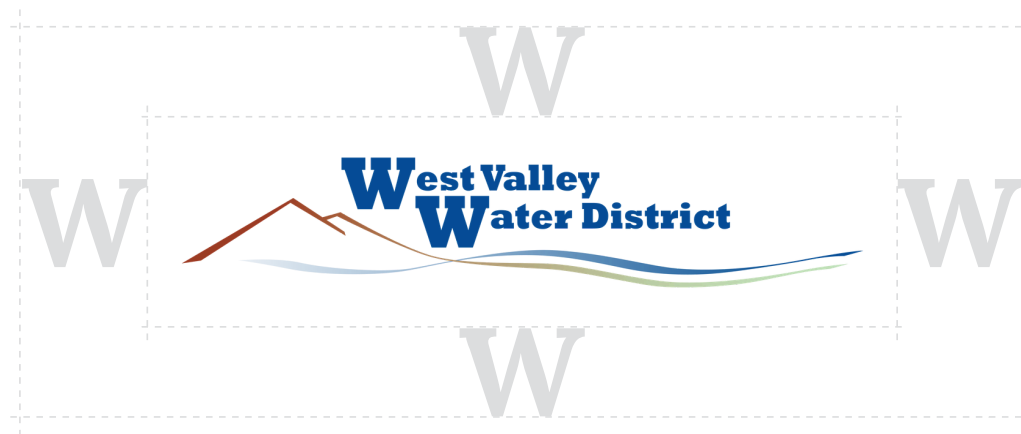


LOGO USAGE AND INTEGRITY

When selecting which logo version to use, consider the size and orientation of the space available. To maintain its integrity, the logo should not be altered.

Clear Space

The logo should be surrounded by clear space to ensure its visibility and impact and the proportional relationship between the logo. Clear space is determined by the height of the “W” in West. No graphic elements should appear inside the clear space area.



MINIMUM SIZE

The main logo should not appear smaller than .5” tall. If the logo needs to be presented smaller, Logo Type should be used instead.



INCORRECT LOGO USE

The West Valley logo should only appear in the primary or secondary logo formats noted in this guide. It should not include changed colors or fonts or be stretched, condensed, or redrawn.



LOGO COLOR VARIATIONS

From time to time, the West Valley logo may be used in white, black or specific color logo for specific campaigns, joint collaborations or other similar endeavors. These color variations are at the discretion of the public outreach and government affairs manager and must be approved by the public outreach and government affairs manager or designee before use.

4 Color



1 Color Blue



1 Color Black



1 Color White



SUB-BRANDS LOGOS

West Valley employs “living” sub logos to celebrate seasonal themes or observances, enhancing community engagement and reflecting the district’s dynamic role in the community. These sub logos are inspired by the approach of changing themes akin to Google’s homepage doodles.

Design and Creation:

- These logos are crafted by the Public Outreach and Government Affairs team, ensuring they align with community events, holidays, or environmental themes relevant to the district’s mission.
- Themes can include but are not limited to:
 - Winter, Spring, Summer, Autumn, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas.
 - Observances like Earth Day, Water Professionals Appreciation Week, etc.
- Guidelines for Use: Sub logos should only be used in appropriate contexts:
 - Digital Platforms: Suitable for social media, the district’s website, and electronic communications where a dynamic or festive appearance is desired.
 - Print: Can be used on promotional materials, community event flyers, or educational materials where the thematic element enhances the message or event.
 - Approval Process: Before public release, each sub logo must go through an internal review process to ensure it adheres to our branding standards, message integrity, and appropriateness for the occasion.

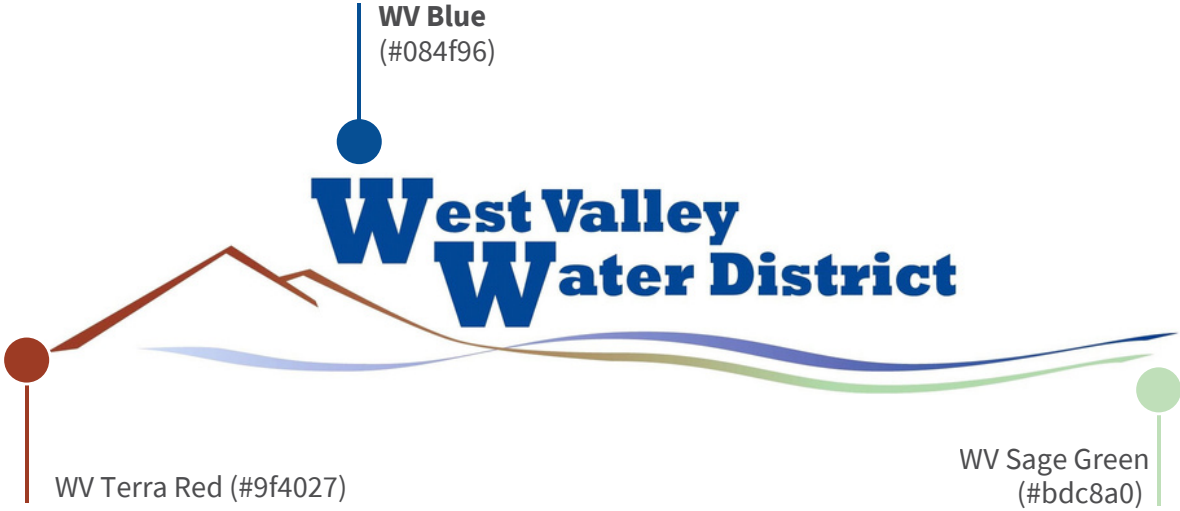


COLOR

Our color palette combines trusted professionalism with environmental stewardship.

Led by our foundational WV Blue, which represents reliability and expertise, the palette flows through fresh water-inspired blues and natural sage greens. Warm terra cotta and earth tones ground us in our local landscape, while modern supporting colors ensure clear communication.

This balanced system reflects our dual commitment: delivering exceptional water service while protecting natural resources for future generations.



LOGO BASE COLORS



WV Blue

Hex #035194

RGB 3, 81, 148

HSB 208, 98%, 58%

CMYK 100, 76, 12, 2

WV Blue serves as our foundational color, representing the authority and stability of water management. It projects trustworthiness while establishing a strong institutional presence that speaks to our legacy of reliable service.



WV Sage Green

Hex #BDC8A0

RGB 189, 200, 260

HSB 77, 20%, 78%

CMYK 28, 12, 43, 0

WV Sage Green This natural green tone embodies our commitment to environmental stewardship while maintaining a professional demeanor. It creates a bridge between our infrastructure responsibilities and our role as environmental custodians.



WV Terra Red

Hex #A04127

RGB 160, 65, 39

HSB 13, 76%, 63%

CMYK 26, 84, 95, 20

WV Terra Red Drawing from the local landscape, this warm red connects our brand to the region’s natural geography and heritage. It grounds our visual identity in the community we serve.

West Valley’s color palette is the visual component of our brand. These colors were thoughtfully chosen for our logo and represent our brand identity. The colors of our logo should not be changed (except our one-color, grayscale, or reversed-out white logos). The medium (print or electronic) in which the logo and colors will be used will dictate the color specifications.

- CMYK and PMS

Used for printed materials, such as magazines and newspapers
- RGB and or HEX

Used for digital media



COLOR STRATEGY

PRIMARY APPLICATION

Our color system works as an integrated whole to tell our story. The deep blue leads our communications, supported by secondary blue for supporting elements, while terra cotta and earth brown colors serve as sparingly used accent colors. Light and deep blues can be applied for interactive elements and data visualization, while earth tones add warmth and approachability to communications. Gray and steel blue tones provide balance through supporting elements and text applications.

- Primary brand messages lead with deep blue
- Secondary information utilizes secondary blue and supporting earth tones
- Tertiary elements incorporate earth brown, steel blue and leaf
- Call-to-action elements can feature accent colors
- Body copy maintains clarity with slate black

This thoughtful color system creates a cohesive visual language that honors our heritage, demonstrates authority, shows environmental commitment, and projects innovation while maintaining strong community connections. The careful balance of professional blues, natural greens, and warm earth tones ensures our communications remain both engaging and trustworthy.

Accessibility Considerations

When combining colors, maintain strong contrast for optimal readability. Pair lighter backgrounds with darker text colors, and ensure interactive elements stand out clearly. Consider color-blind users by not relying solely on color to convey critical information.

DEEP BLUE

SECONDARY BLUE

EARTH BROWN

TERRA COTTA

PRIMARY PALETTE

These primary colors are the core colors to West Valley's brand and are incorporated into the official West Valley logo.

Hex #012E40
RGB 1, 46, 64
HSB 197, 97%, 13%
CMYK 98, 28, 0, 75

Deep Blue This tone conveys sophistication, stability, and intelligence representing our forward-thinking approach and technological advancement in water management. It signals our commitment to innovation while maintaining connection to our core service.

Hex #758B5D
RGB 117, 139, 93
HSB 89, 33%, 55%
CMYK 57, 31, 74, 9

Leaf This green symbolizes our dedication to watershed protection and sustainable practices. It reinforces our role as stewards of both water resources and the broader environment.

Hex #0077B6
RGB 0, 119, 182
HSB 201, 100%, 71%
CMYK 87, 48, 5, 0

Secondary Blue Representing water purity and transparency, this fresh blue tone communicates clarity in both our operations and communications. It brings a sense of cleanliness and accessibility to our visual language.

Hex #E1E7D3
RGB 225, 231, 211
HSB 78, 9%, 91%
CMYK 11, 3, 18, 0

Light Sage This subtle green creates a fresh, natural atmosphere in our communications while maintaining professionalism. It serves as a gentle reminder of our environmental responsibilities.

Hex #8B7355
RGB 139, 115, 85
HSB 33, 39%, 55%
CMYK 42, 48, 69, 16

Earth Brown This grounding brown represents our commitment to soil conservation and groundwater protection.

Hex #C25A39
RGB 194, 90, 57
HSB 14, 71%, 76%
CMYK 18, 76, 86, 6

Terra Cotta Echoing the region's natural tones, this warm color connects our brand to local geology and historical infrastructure, reinforcing our deep community roots.

BODY COPY

Hex #4D4D4F 77,
RGB 77, 79 240,
HSB 3%, 31% 0, 0,
CMYK 0, 85

Slate Black Our primary text color achieves perfect readability while avoiding the harshness of pure black. It maintains professionalism while ensuring accessibility across all materials.



SECONDARY PALETTE

Our secondary colors highlight and complement West Valley’s primary brand colors, creating depth and visual interest while maintaining sophistication. These colors should always accompany, never overshadow, our primary palette. When thoughtfully applied as accents, they enhance our visual communications while ensuring consistent, elevated design across all materials.

Hex

#577B95

RGB

87, 123, 149

HSB

205, 42%, 58%

CMYK

71, 44, 29, 4

Steel Blue This versatile blue bridges our traditional service role with modern operations. It communicates technical expertise while remaining approachable.

Hex

#ECCC80

RGB

236, 204, 128

HSB

42, 46%, 93%

CMYK

8, 18, 58, 0

Nilla This warm neutral tone reflects the urban environment, bridging natural and built landscapes. As an accent color, Nilla brings architectural warmth to the palette

Hex

#DCDDDE

RGB

220, 221, 222

HSB

210, 1%, 87%

CMYK

0, 0, 0, 15

Light Gray This clean, neutral gray provides balance in our communications. It offers visual rest while maintaining a modern, professional appearance.

WEBSITE PALETTE

West Valley’s digital color palette has been thoughtfully adapted from our primary brand colors, optimized specifically for screen display and accessibility. This carefully selected range ensures excellent legibility and visual harmony across our digital presence while maintaining our brand integrity.

Header Background Hex #005B8F RGB 0, 91, 143 HSB 202, 100%, 56% CMYK 96, 66, 21, 5	Header Bottom Hex #1D84C3 RGB 29, 132, 195 HSB 203, 85%, 76% CMYK 81, 39, 2, 0	Main Background Hex #FFFFFF RGB 255, 255, 255 HSB 0, 0%, 100% CMYK 0, 0, 0, 0	Sidebar Background Hex #f6f6f2 RGB 247, 246, 242 HSB 48, 2%, 97% CMYK 2, 1, 3, 0	Footer Background Hex #292929 RGB 41, 41, 41 HSB 0, 0%, 16% CMYK 71, 65, 64, 67
Text Hex #3B3B3B RGB 59, 59, 59 HSB 0, 0%, 23% CMYK 68, 62, 61, 51	Link Hex #0171B3 RGB 1, 113, 179 HSB 202, 99%, 70% CMYK 89, 52, 4, 0			



TINTS AND GRADIENTS

Our carefully curated selection of sample tints and Gradients extends West Valley's core palette, providing depth and versatility while maintaining brand integrity. These variations ensure visual harmony across all communications, delivering cohesive designs that reinforce our professional identity.

Please note that not all branded colors should be utilized as a tint or shade.

Secondary Blue	80%	60%	40%	20%
Sage Green	80%	60%	40%	20%
Leaf	80%	60%	40%	20%
Earth	80%	60%	40%	20%
Nilla	80%	60%	40%	20%



Sample Gradients to create depth and additional visual interest



TYPOGRAPHY

West Valley's typography system balances professional authority with contemporary accessibility. Our typefaces combine traditional slab serifs, which anchor our heritage and reliability, with modern sans-serif fonts that ensure clarity across all communications. West Valley provides dedicated fonts for both employee communications and professional design applications, ensuring consistent brand expression while accommodating various user needs. This thoughtful typographic approach reinforces our identity as a trusted, forward-thinking water district.

LORA

Lora anchors our visual identity, establishing presence in our logo and extending through our communications as a subtitle font. By thoughtfully implementing this typeface across various weights, we maintain a consistent thread of our brand identity throughout all marketing materials, creating a cohesive and recognizable presence.

Lora is the preferred typeface. For desktops where Lora is not available, Baskerville is the preferred substitution.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz 0123456789 **Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz 0123456789**

SOURCE SANS

Source Sans Pro delivers modern clarity and versatility across all platforms, ensuring excellent readability in both digital and printed materials. This contemporary typeface serves as our primary font for content, with light and bold weights carrying our headlines (H1), while regular and bold weights maintain clarity in body copy. Its extensive family of weights provides flexibility for creative applications. While italic versions are available for all weights, they should be used only when necessary for emphasis in body copy and titles.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz 0123456789

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz 0123456789

TYPOGRAPHY GUIDELINES

Clear typographic hierarchy reinforces West Valley's commitment to accessible communication, ensuring our message reaches every audience effectively.

Our approach to typography emphasizes clarity and readability across all materials.

TYPE SETTINGS

Leading

Headlines benefit from tighter leading, creating unified, space-efficient statements. Body copy uses more generous leading to enhance readability and bring openness to our communications.

Kerning

Set kerning to "Optical" as our standard. Manual adjustments should be limited to specific letter pairings in large-scale headlines where necessary.

Alignment

Left alignment serves as our primary choice, offering natural readability and clean visual structure. Centered, right, or justified alignment may be used when appropriate to support specific design needs, with careful consideration given to spacing and legibility.

Spacing and Tracking

Apply professional judgment to spacing and tracking decisions based on specific applications, always prioritizing clarity and readability.

ADDITIONAL TYPOGRAPHY TIPS

Headings are in bold

Make sure the size is legible. For printed items, font size should be no smaller than 10.5 pt. For digital items, font size should be no smaller than 18px.

Pixels and Points

Pixels (px) relates to a computer-specific measurement. Each monitor or screen has a certain number of pixels it can display. A point (pt) is a measurement of size commonly used to measure the height of a font.

H1: 30/60 TITLE

PREFERRED COLORS:



H2: SUBTITLE

PREFERRED COLORS:



H3: Body Bold

PREFERRED COLORS:



Body preferred copy size 10.5/12.6 Lorem Ipsum. Sed eget dolor eros. Praesent suscipit diam non risus laoreet tempor. In blandit quam ut tellus mattis malesuada. Duis ut libero quis mi porta ultrices. Mauris ullamcorper consectetur diam, consectetur lacinia

enim rutrum et. Nam a aliquet neque. Mauris euismod vitae mauris vitae venenatis. Suspendisse eu efficitur leo.

PREFERRED COLORS:



DESIGN BEST PRACTICES

Brand consistency and accuracy are key to success. Please follow these design practices to maintain our West Valley's brand.

LOGO

Do not alter the logo in any way. This includes, but is not limited to changing the color, rotating it, stretching it or adding a drop shadow.

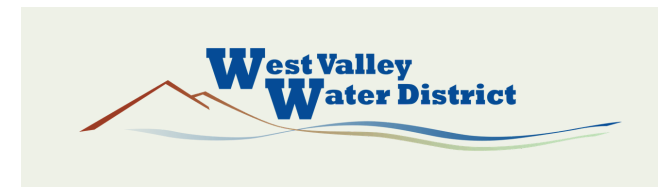
The logo should have ample white space around it to ensure readability.

Always put the logo on a white background. The white logo should be used if a white background is unavailable. Light backgrounds should use the gradient or full color logo to ensure contrast.

COLOR

The colors in this brand guide can be used for digital and print. The RGB and HEX codes are digital colors, and the CMYK codes are print colors.

When in doubt, keep it simple. Black text on a white background always looks good.



PRINT COLLATERAL

Always ask for a physical printed proof before approval when working with a professional printer.

Please contact West Valley's Public Outreach and Government Affairs team if an .eps or vector file is needed for commercial printing.



POWERPOINT/SLIDES BEST PRACTICES

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Use West Valley Templates: Always use the provided West Valley templates. They are designed with our branding, including logos, color palettes, and approved fonts.

Template Size: Opt for widescreen (16:9) templates to avoid content being cut off on modern displays.

CONTENT CLARITY

Text Minimalism: Follow the 5/5/5 rule: at most five words per line, five lines per slide, and avoid more than five text-heavy slides in succession. Limit to 3 bullet points per slide.

Font Size: Use 40 pt for headings and 20 pt for body text minimum. Adjust for readability in different viewing conditions.

Contrast: Ensure high contrast between text and background for readability. Avoid colors like orange or yellow for text.

QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

Use high-resolution images from Adobe Stock or approved sources.

Effective Use of Visuals: Use images, charts, and maps to support your message, not overshadow it. If a chart or map is too small to read, split it into overview and detailed views across slides.

Avoid Overuse: Limit images with text to two or three per slide.

PRESENTATION DYNAMICS

Keep it Simple: Avoid animations and sounds to maintain focus on your content.

Engagement: Your presentation should complement your spoken content. Slides should not be read verbatim but enhance understanding.

GENERAL TIPS

Proofread: Review your slides for errors or, better yet, get a colleague to check them. Typos can distract from your message.

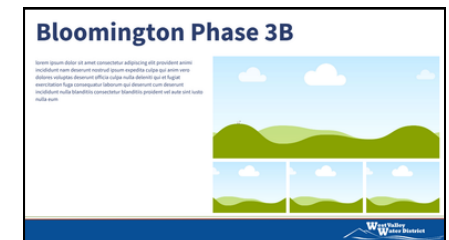
Lighting Consideration: Consider the presentation room's lighting when choosing colors and backgrounds.

FORMATTING

Alignment: Use PowerPoint's alignment tools (Shift + Select, then Arrange) to align text and graphics for a clean look.

White Space: Allow for white space on each slide for visual breathing room

By adhering to these guidelines, your presentations will reflect the professionalism and identity of West Valley and ensure your message is communicated effectively and engagingly. Remember, the goal is to present content that supports your narrative, not to create a document to be read.



PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY GUIDELINES

When choosing imagery for video or photography, images should reflect West Valley's diverse community, vibrant culture, natural beauty, and unique character.

It is always recommended that West Valley use images and videos featuring West Valley's service area, staff, and its community when available.



PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY GUIDELINES

The Public Outreach and Government Affairs team maintains subscriptions to stock photo and video resources and a library of West Valley images. If in doubt, contact the Public Outreach and Government Affairs team for assistance in photo selection.

LICENSING AND IMAGE CREDITS

If stock photos, videos or music should be used, it must be appropriately licensed from a site such as Adobe Stock or Canva. Please contact the Public Outreach and Government Affairs team for assistance in selecting an image.

Image/video credit is used when the image/video user gives attribution to the image owner. If you are sharing a photo/video by a videographer/photographer or different agency, you must get permission from the rights-holder and/or secure a license before using the image/video.

Giving credit to an image/video does not entitle West Valley to use the image. Images that include "all rights reserved" means no rights are granted for use.

Example of a photo credit: Photo by Sam Jones.

IMAGE AND VIDEO QUALITY

Images and videos should convey a message and be contextually relevant. They should also reflect a level of professional quality. Refrain from using clip art and poor-quality images that will diminish West Valley's brand.

SOCIAL MEDIA IMAGE/VIDEO REQUIREMENTS

Social media images/videos should adhere to West Valley's image/ video standards above and consider other general platform-specific requirements.

ACCESSIBLE DESIGN GUIDELINES

West Valley is committed to making our brand available and enjoyable to everyone.

Text Size, Fonts, and Readability:

- Websites should have a minimum font size of 18px; print and digital files, 10.5pt.
- Use approved, simple, readable fonts throughout all West Valley materials.
- Hyperlinks should be descriptive (e.g., “Learn more about our conservation programs”).
- Use short, simple sentences and bullet points to break up text.

Color:

- Ensure high color contrast between text and background (use tools like WebAIM’s color contrast checker).
- Avoid using color alone to convey meaning (e.g., “follow the signs with the water drop symbol”).

Images and Multimedia:

- Images: Always provide descriptive alt text for images.
- Videos: Include captions and provide transcripts for audio content.

Navigation and Interaction:

- Enable keyboard navigation for all interactive elements.
- Use “Skip to Main Content” links on web pages.
- Ensure form fields have clear labels and instructions.

General Accessibility:

- Use language tags in digital content. Test content with readability tools for comprehension level.
- Ensure consistency in applying these guidelines across all platforms.

Testing and Feedback:

- Regularly test materials using disability simulation tools.
- Provide a feedback mechanism for users to report accessibility issues.

By incorporating these practices, West Valley can ensure that its communications are accessible to all community members, reinforcing our commitment to inclusivity and public trust.

WRITING STYLE GUIDELINES

West Valley has established a preferred writing style to maintain our brand's consistency across all communications.

Tone and Voice:

Our tone is approachable, informative, and friendly, akin to a knowledgeable friend explaining complex topics. We aim for clarity, positivity, and straightforwardness, avoiding overly formal language.

AP Style:

We adhere to the Associated Press Style for consistency, with deviations to enhance clarity.

Consistency Across Departments:

While each department may adapt the tone slightly to suit its audience, the core principles of clarity, conciseness, and approachability remain constant. Engineering, for instance, might explain technical details but should still aim for accessibility.

Readability and Comprehension:

Use short paragraphs active voice, and break information into digestible chunks. Start with simple explanations before delving into complexity.

Engagement:

Engage readers through techniques like rhetorical questions, anecdotes, or direct address. Enhance content with visual aids like infographics or videos.

These guidelines should be applied flexibly based on the context and audience of the communication, ensuring that all West Valley material is engaging, easy to read, and transparent, while maintaining our professional image.



WRITING STYLE GUIDELINES: AP STYLE QUICK REFERENCE TIPS

Acronyms:

- Avoid acronyms and abbreviations.
- If using them, the first reference to the organization or industry-specific term abbreviation or acronym should be the entire term.

Addresses:

- Only abbreviate Avenue, Boulevard, and Street when used with numbered addresses. Similar words such as Drive, Road, Circle, or Terrace are always spelled out and capitalized.

Ex: 125 West Valley Water St.

- When a formal street name appears without a numbered address, spell out the full name and capitalize it.

Ex: West Valley Water Street

Citizen:

- Water Districts do not have citizens. Only countries can have citizens.
- The people we serve should be called customers, public, residents, community members or other similar terms.
- Refrain from using the term “ratepayer” in any customer-facing documents or communications. Instead, opt for more inclusive and straightforward terms like “customer” or “resident” to ensure clarity and enhance the personal connection with our service users.

West Valley Water District:

- General Usage: The term West Valley should be used in most forward-facing communications for branding consistency and recognition. The first mention should always be West Valley Water District.
- Legal Documents: In specific legal documents where clarity or formality is required, District may be used in lieu of West Valley.
- Capitalization: Always capitalize when referring to the organization by its full or abbreviated name:

Ex: West Valley Water District

Ex: West Valley

Ex: WVWD

Ex: District

DEPARTMENTS AND DIVISIONS USAGE:

Departments:

Departments within West Valley Water District should be capitalized when used as:

Proper Names:

West Valley Water District Customer Service Department
The department (when not specifying the name)
The Customer Service Department (when specifying)

Divisions:

Divisions are units withing a Departments.

Similar to Departments, Divisions should follow the same capitalization standards:

Ex: The Operations Department is home to the Water Quality Division

The division (when not specifying the name)
The Water Quality Division (when specifying)

Capitalization:

Always capitalize Department and Division when they are part of the proper name of the unit.

Use lowercase for 'department' or 'division' when used in a general context without specifying which one.

Commas:

- Do not use a comma before the conjunction in a simple series.
Ex: The flag is red, white and blue.
- Use a comma before the conjunction in a complex series.
Ex: He likes turkey, peanut butter and jelly, and ham sandwiches.

Dates:

- Write out the month entirely if there is no specific date.
Ex: January 2025
- Abbreviate the month if there is a specific date.
Ex: Jan. 31, 2025
- Months should be capitalized.
- Dates should not include st, nd, rd after the date.
Ex: Jan. 2, not Jan. 2nd
- Spell out dates when using alone, within a day or a year.
Ex: There are two council meetings in October.

Days of the Week:

- Capitalize the days of the week.
- Spell out days of the week.

Hours:

- Use figures except for noon and midnight.
Ex: 8 a.m. to noon
- Use a colon to separate hours from minutes.
Ex: 8:20 a.m.
- Use the following format for times that start on the hour.
Ex: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Use a.m. or p.m. once within the same day for a time range.
Ex: 8 to 11 a.m.

Numbers:

- Spell out figures one through nine, except for the ages of people and animals.
- Use digits for 10 and over.
- For millions, use a figure followed by "million"
Ex: 13 million, 3 million
- Ordinal numbers one through nine (i.e., first, second, third, etc.) should be spelled out. Figures should be used for 10 and above. The exceptions are geographic, military or political (ex: 7th Street or 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals)

Ex: He took home first place in the art contest.
Ex: The office was located on the 76th floor.

Percentage:

- Use % not “percent”.
Ex: 50% or 0.7%
- Spell out the percentage when used at the beginning of a sentence
Ex: Ninety-nine percent of West Valley’s customers are satisfied with our service.

Phone Numbers:

- Use the area code with phone numbers.
- Area code should be set off with dashes.
Ex: 909-875-1804

Titles:

- All titles should be uppercase when they come before a person’s name.
Ex: West Valley General Manager John Smith
- All titles should be lowercase after a person’s name
Ex: John Smith, West Valley general manager

Web Addresses:

When able, use “www” in reference to website addresses. However, exceptions can be made when needed to save space or for simplicity (e.g. on promotional items).

Ex: Press release boilerplate: Visit www.wvwd.org



BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM WRITING TIPS

West Valley staff regularly uses board and committee memorandum to provide information on agenda items. These memos should be clear and concise.





Boilerplate Paragraph

The District uses a boilerplate paragraph highlighting key information at the end of its news releases. This standardized information should be at the bottom of all news releases.

Prior to publishing your press release, please check with the Public Outreach and Government Affairs team to verify the number of service connections. As we grow, this number changes, and we want to be consistent and accurate.

About West Valley Water District

Since 1952, West Valley Water District has been dedicated to serving the Southern California communities of Bloomington, Colton, Fontana, Rialto, Jurupa Valley and Unincorporated San Bernardino County. Providing water to over 100,000 customers, West Valley is committed to delivering a cost-effective, high-quality water supply. Governed by a five-member, publicly elected board of directors, our mission encompasses strategic water resource planning, effective management, and the development of regional partnerships to ensure sustainable water solutions.

TRANSLATION GUIDELINES

Our translation guidelines ensure that customers have meaningful access to our programs, services, and information.

West Valley's service area has a diverse population and residents who speak many languages. Data shows that the majority of customers in our service area speak English, followed by Spanish.

Our translation guidelines ensure that the our customers have meaningful access to our programs, services and information. To achieve this goal, West Valley provides translation services for vital information using the following protocol:

- Our Public Outreach and Government Affairs team has determined a list of documents/ publications vital to customers obtaining services and/or benefits provided by West Valley.
 - Vital documents may include service applications, notice of rights, public notices, Consumer Confidence Reports or program specific outreach/community education materials.
- The West Valley Public Outreach and Government Affairs team assesses whether vital documents are translated into all relevant languages. They determine if these translations are provided in full, in a condensed summary form, or upon specific customer request.
- Documents not critical to West Valley services and/or benefits will not automatically be translated. Further assessment of the document's nature, need for and importance will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Please contact the Public Outreach and Government Affairs team for translation assistance.



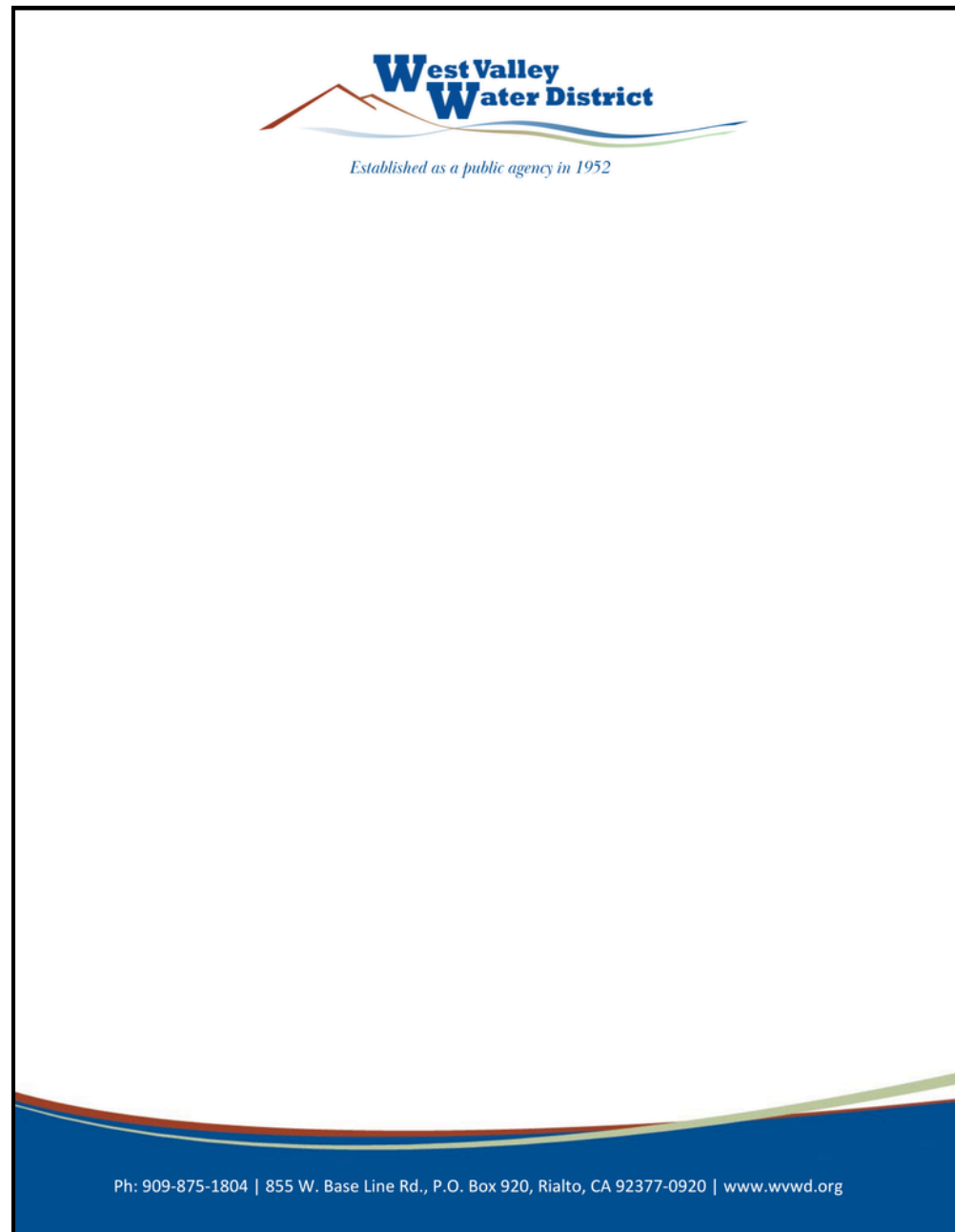
APPLICATIONS

The following applications and sample usage are common touch points for West Valley to communicate with customers and the community. These items include specific branding and aesthetic for consistency.



STATIONERY: LETTERHEAD

West Valley has developed digital and print letterhead for each department. Please make sure to use the “Print” version of letterhead for items that need to be printed.



LETTERHEAD TEMPLATES

Board of Directors



855 W. Base Line Rd.
P.O. Box 920
Rialto, CA 92377-0920
Ph: 909-875-1804
www.wvwd.org

John Thiel, P.E., General Manager

Established as a public agency in 1952

Dear [CUSTOMER],

Welcome to the West Valley Water District (West Valley)! We are pleased to welcome you as a new customer and look forward to providing you with reliable, high-quality water service. As you get started with your new account, here are a few key details to help you make the most of your service:

- Monthly Billing: Your water meter will be read once a month, and you will receive a bill around the same time each month.
- Payment Options:
 - Online: Visit www.wvwd.org (subscribe to autopay to make your payments convenient)
 - By phone: Call (909) 875-1804 (press 2)
 - By mail: Use the return envelope included with your bill,
 - In Person: Visit our customer service lobby during business hours.
- Additional Payment Locations: In-person payments (cash or check) can be made at any of our satellite locations (a map is enclosed for your reference). You can also make payments at participating PayNearMe locations such as 7-Eleven, CVS Pharmacy, and Family Dollar.

We encourage all customers to use water wisely, not only to protect our environment, but to ensure a sustainable water supply for our community now and into the future. At West Valley, we want to be your resource for all things water. From conservation tips to drought-tolerant landscaping ideas, we offer a variety of tools and information to help you make smart water choices.

If you have any questions or need assistance, our Customer Service team is here to help! You can reach us at (909) 875-1804 (press 3). Our office hours are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Tuesday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

We appreciate the opportunity to serve you and are committed to delivering exceptional service now and in the future.

Sincerely,
Customer Service Department

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kelvin Moore
President, Division 3

Angela Garcia
Vice President, Division 1

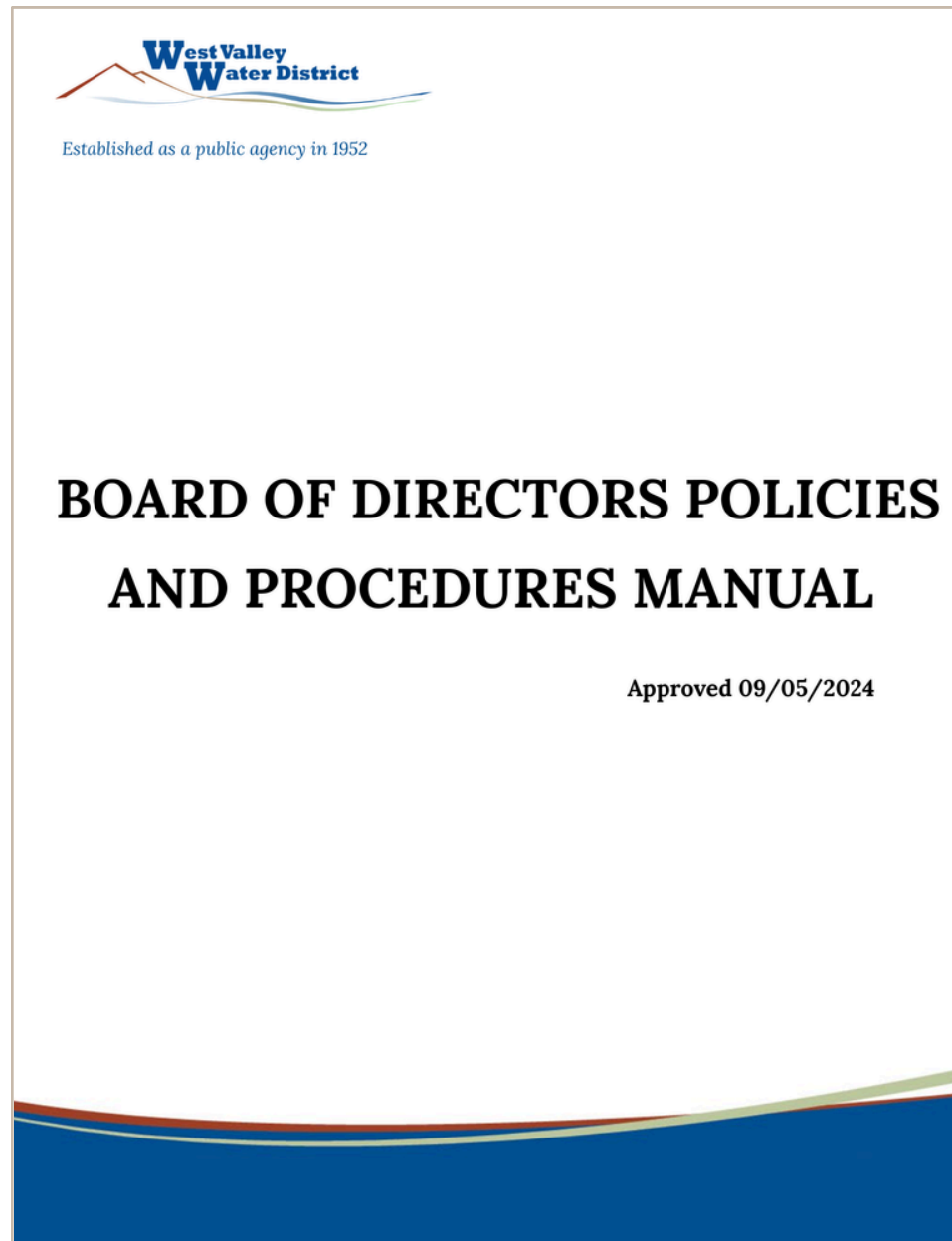
Dan Jenkins
Director, Division 2

Estevan Bennett
Director, Division 4

Greg Young
Director, Division 5



TEMPLATES: PACKET COVERS



TEMPLATES: AGENDAS



Established as a public agency in 1952

AGENDA

ADJOURNED REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Thursday, February 13, 2026, 6:00 PM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kelvin Moore, President
Angela Garcia, Vice President
Dan Jenkis, Director
Estevan Bennett, Director
Greg Young, Director

"In order to comply with legal requirements for posting of agendas, only those items filed with the Board Secretary's office by noon, on Wednesday a week prior to the following Thursday meeting, not requiring departmental investigation, will be considered by the Board of Directors."

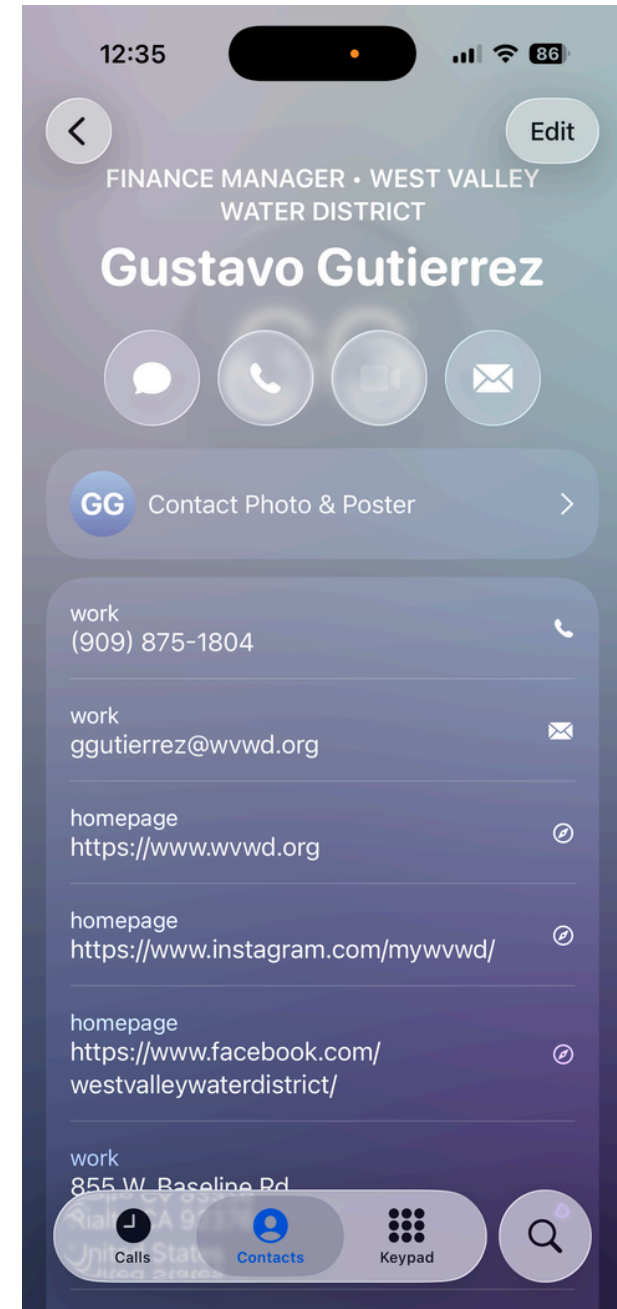
Members of the public may attend the meeting in person at 855 W. Base Line Road, Rialto, CA 92376, or you may join the meeting using Zoom by clicking this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8402937790>. Public comment may be submitted via Zoom, by telephone by calling the following number and access code: Dial:(888) 475-4499, Access Code: 840-293-7790, or via email to administration@wvwd.org.

If you require additional assistance, please contact administration@wvwd.org.

www.wvwd.org

BUSINESS CARD

SAMPLE LAYOUTS

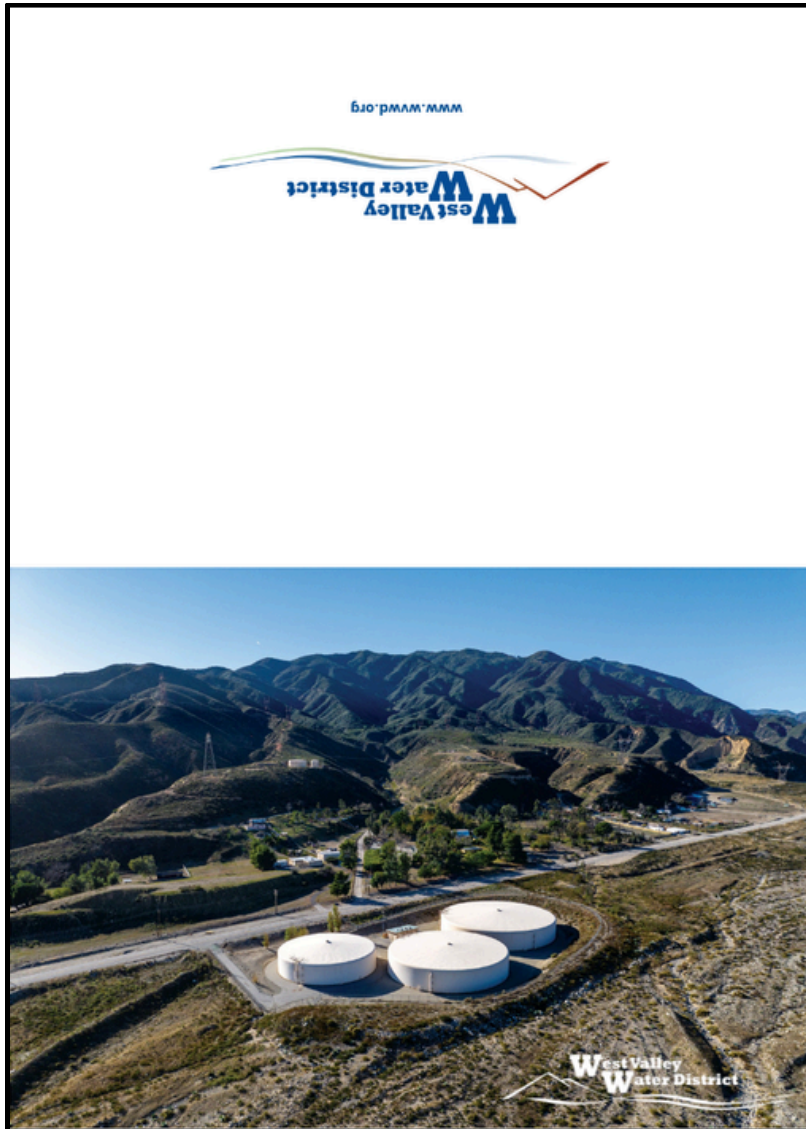


BADGES/NAME TAGS

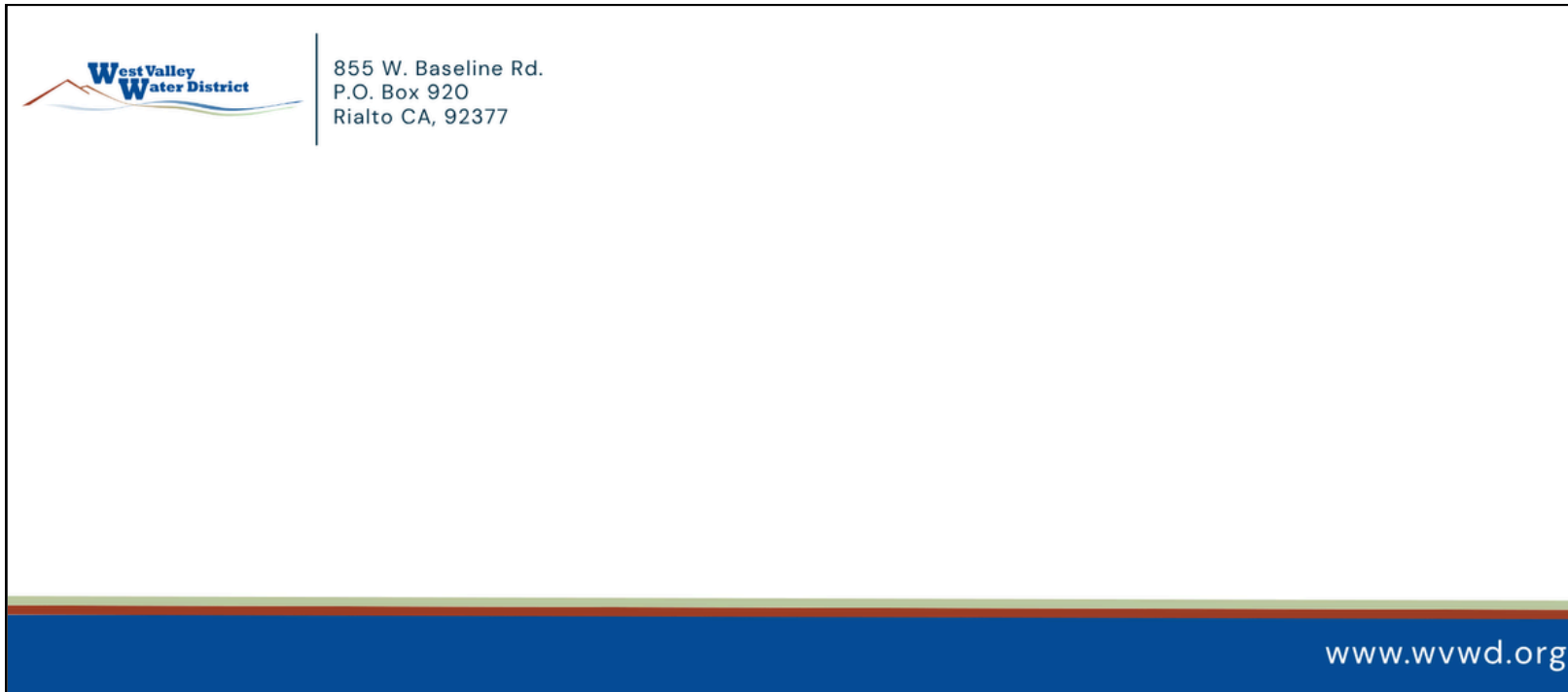
SAMPLE LAYOUTS



STATIONERY: CORRESPONDENCE CARDS AND ENVELOPES



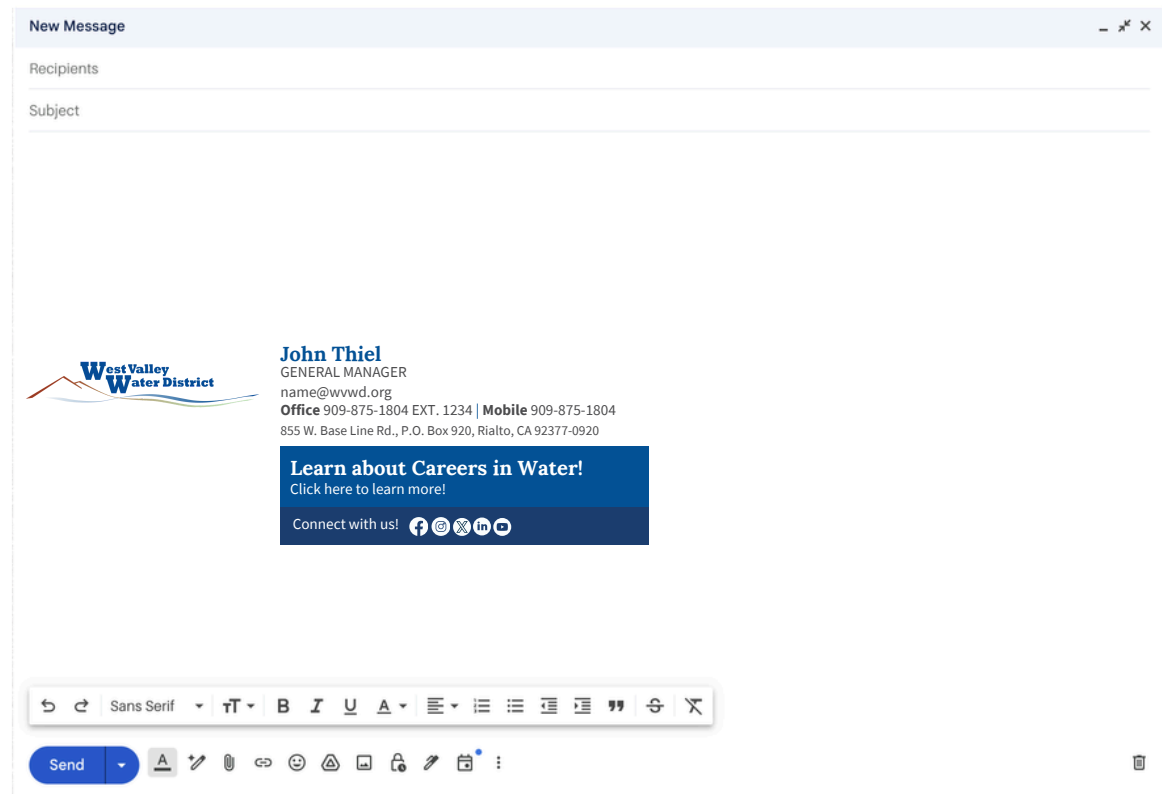
STATIONERY: CORRESPONDENCE CARDS AND ENVELOPES



DIGITAL: EMAIL SIGNATURE

Name in larger Bold font, in WV Blue. Lora typeface is preferred if unavailable use Baskerville.

For Title and contact details use Source Sans in 95% black.



SAMPLE LAYOUTS

POWERPOINT TEMPLATE

Achieving Success After Graduation

Engineering Department



POWERPOINT TEMPLATE

Achieving Success After Graduation

Engineering Department



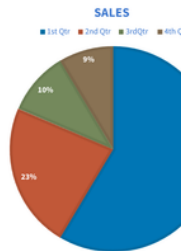
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SAMPLE TITLE

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“Serving our community with excellence and innovation, while protecting our most valuable resource for future generations.”

WVWD PowerPoint

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 Dark Brown #654321 RGB: 101, 67, 33 CMYK: 60, 55, 80, 5 100% Spot Process	 Gold #FFD700 RGB: 255, 215, 0 CMYK: 0, 16, 100, 0 100% Spot Process	 Light Green #90EE90 RGB: 144, 238, 144 CMYK: 0, 0, 40, 0 100% Spot Process	 Dark Green #008000 RGB: 0, 128, 0 CMYK: 0, 100, 100, 0 100% Spot Process	 Dark Blue #000080 RGB: 0, 0, 128 CMYK: 100, 100, 0, 0 100% Spot Process
 Orange #FFA500 RGB: 255, 165, 0 CMYK: 0, 39, 100, 0 100% Spot Process	 Light Gray #D3D3D3 RGB: 211, 211, 211 CMYK: 0, 0, 0, 13 100% Spot Process	 Dark Gray #696969 RGB: 105, 105, 105 CMYK: 0, 0, 0, 53 100% Spot Process		



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Photo Description

Thank You!

DIGITAL: ZOOM





WWW.WVWD.ORG

855 W. BASE LINE ROAD RIALTO, CA 92376

PHONE: (909) 875-1804



Logo #1

Currently used, not adopted



Logo # 2

Adds color to the mountains



Logo #3

Keeps WVWD mountains from original logo and adds year of establishment



STAFF REPORT

DATE: September 22, 2026
TO: Policy Review and Oversight Committee
FROM: Mary Jo Hartley, Senior Public Outreach & Government Affairs Rep
SUBJECT: Internal Communications Plan

STRATEGIC GOAL:

Strategic Goal 2 - Be an Exemplary Employer; D. Foster a One-District-Team Collaboration

Strategic Goal 3 - Develop and Grow Effective Communication and Advocacy Practices; A. Advance Effective Internal and External Communication Processes

Strategic Goal 5 – Apply Sound Planning, Innovation, and Best Practices; E. Define, Develop, and Implement Best Practices

Strategic Goal 8 - Deliver Superior Customer Service; A. Define, Measure, and Improve Internal and External Customer Service; D. Communicate Effectively with Customers

MEETING HISTORY:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

To align with West Valley Water District's Strategic Plan, the Public Outreach and Government Affairs Department identified the need for a Strategic Communications Plan to address gaps in its current communication processes. After a rigorous RFP process, Westbound Communications was chosen to work with the Public Outreach and Government Affairs team. Following a competitive RFP process, Westbound Communications was selected to work with the Public Outreach and Government Affairs team to assess current practices, review industry best practices, and identify opportunities for improvement.

DISCUSSION:

Having identified the need for an Internal Communications Plan (ICP) the Public Outreach and Government Affairs team worked with Westbound to assess existing communication practices, identify opportunities for improvement, and develop recommendations that support consistent, timely, and effective communication across the District.

The ICP will provide a framework for our team to work collaboratively with each other and establish best practices when communicating across the District by ensuring employees have access to the information they need to effectively perform their roles. By strengthening communication between leadership and staff and fostering collaboration across departments, the District can improve operational efficiency, strengthen employee engagement, and ultimately enhance the service provided to customers.

FISCAL IMPACT:

A Strategic Communications Plan, including an Internal Communications Plan was included in the 2025-2026 fiscal year budget.

REQUESTED ACTION:

Review the Internal Communication Plan and provide comments and feedback for presentation to the Board of Directors for consideration and adoption.

Attachments

[WVWD Internal Comms Plan - DRAFT 9-9-26.pdf](#)



Internal Communications Plan

By:
Westbound Communications
DRAFT – SEPTEMBER 9, 2026

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Introduction

West Valley Water District's (WVWD/District/West Valley) employees are the foundation of the District's service to the community. Every employee contributes to delivering high-quality, reliable water to the six Inland Empire communities WVWD serves. Effective internal communication ensures employees are informed, aligned and equipped with the information they need to represent the District and provide exceptional customer service to customers.

This Internal Communications Plan establishes a framework for sharing information across the organization. By strengthening communication between leadership and staff and fostering collaboration across departments, the District can improve operational efficiency and ultimately enhance the service provided to customers.



Why Internal Communications Matter

WVWD's employees are the District's most important ambassadors. Their understanding of key initiatives and news creates a positive experience from the inside out. When employees are informed, customers benefit from more consistent service and greater trust in the District.

Internal communication is essential to organizational success. When employees receive timely and consistent information, they are better positioned to adapt to change and confidently serve customers. Effective communication also strengthens employee engagement, reduces misinformation and fosters trust between leadership and staff. This strategic internal communication plan will connect employees to the District's goals and provide them with the understanding of how their work contributes to its overall success.

Every customer experience begins with
an informed employee.



Guiding Principles

1. Employees hear it first.

Employees should receive important District news before it is shared externally.

2. Communication supports customer service.

Timely internal communication equips employees with the information they need to provide the utmost service to customers.

3. One source of truth.

Employees should know where to find the most current information and which department is responsible for communicating it.

4. Two-way communication.

Communication is the responsibility of Executive Leadership, Operations, Customer Service, Engineering, Human Resources, Information Technology, Public Outreach & Government Affairs and all employees.

5. Transparency builds trust.

Employees should understand not only what decisions are being made, but why they matter and how they support the District's mission of providing high-quality, reliable water.

6. Safety comes first.

Internal communications should prioritize employee and operational safety, and regulatory compliance, particularly during emergencies.

Roles and Responsibilities

Internal communication is a shared responsibility across the District. From Executive Leadership to frontline employees, each role contributes to ensuring information is communicated in a timely manner to support collaboration and exceptional customer service. As mentioned in the Guiding Principles, the chart below shows examples on communication that goes not just from the top down, but also from line level employees to Executive Leadership.

WVWD Role	Internally Communications to...	Communication Priorities
Executive Leadership	1. Department Directors 2. Public Outreach and Governmental Affairs 3. Supervisors 4. All Employees	1. Communicate organizational vision and strategic priorities. 2. Share major District announcements and leadership updates. 3. Reinforce organizational values and culture. 4. Champion two-way communication and employee engagement.
Department Directors	1. Executive Leadership 2. Supervisors 3. Department Staff	1. Cascade District information to department staff. 2. Provide operational and departmental updates. 3. Elevate department concerns, successes and feedback to executive leadership.
Supervisors	1. Department Directors 2. Department Staff	1. Communicate day-to-day operational information. 2. Reinforce organizational priorities and expectations. 3. Encourage employee feedback and dialogue. 4. Identify communication gaps and escalate concerns to Department Directors.
Public Outreach and Government Affairs/ Human Resources and Risk management	1. Executive Leadership 2. All Employees	1. Share internal communication materials and direction on behalf of Executive Leadership and department directors. 2. Coordinate District-wide announcements. 3. Ensure internal communications align with external messaging. 4. Provide communication guidance during emergencies and major initiatives. 5. Support leadership with employee communications.
Department Staff <i>(Staff should always be encouraged to communicate up!)</i>	1. Executive Leadership 2. Supervisors 3. Colleagues	1. Read and acknowledge important District communications. 2. Share questions, ideas and concerns through appropriate channels. 3. Follow established communication protocols during routine operations and emergencies.

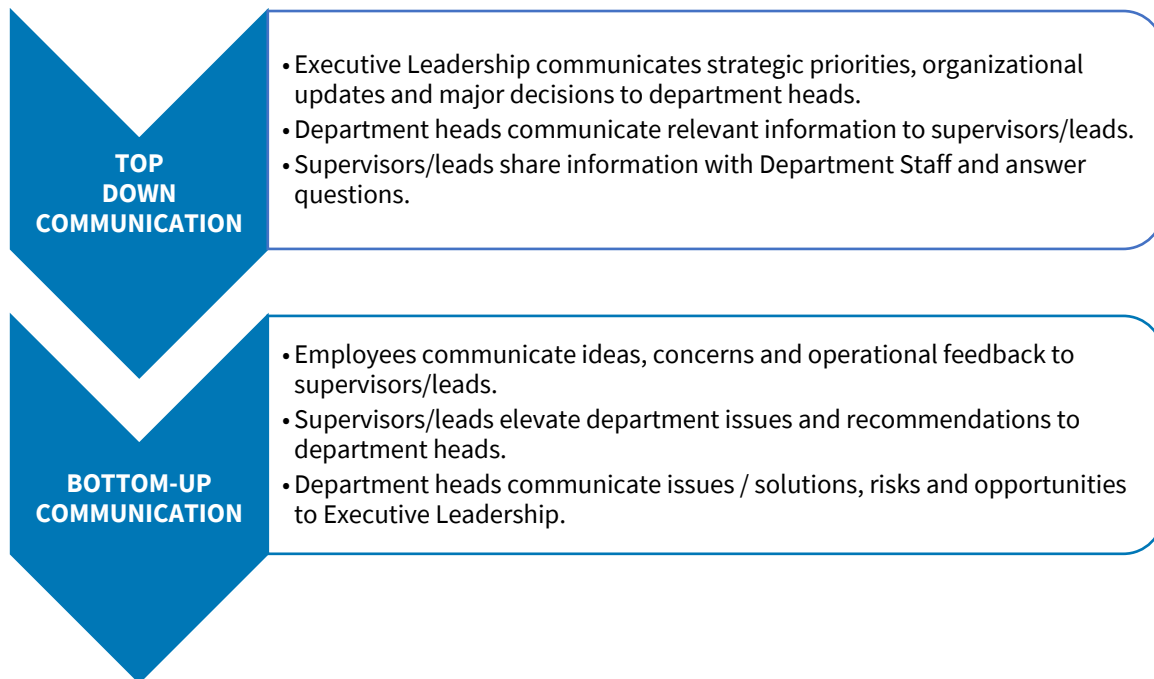


Information Flow and Cross-Department Coordination

Effective internal communication depends on clear processes for sharing information across departments and organizational levels. Establishing defined communication pathways ensures the right people receive the right information at the right time, reducing delays, minimizing misinformation and improving collaboration. This framework outlines how information should flow throughout all District levels.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION FLOW

Information should flow in both directions throughout the organization.



EMPLOYEE FEEDBACK FLOW

Employees should have multiple opportunities to provide feedback and ask questions as part of the Bottom-Up Communication flow. Feedback channels can include:

1. Supervisor conversations
2. Staff meetings / 1x1
3. Microsoft Teams
4. Employee surveys
5. Human Resources
6. Leadership Q&A sessions
7. All-hands team meetings

When appropriate, leadership should communicate how employee feedback influenced decisions to reinforce transparency and trust.

CROSS-DEPARTMENT COORDINATION

Many District initiatives require collaboration across multiple departments. Early coordination ensures information is accurate, consistent and communicated at the appropriate time.

1. Operations ↔ Customer Service

Coordinate service interruptions, maintenance activities and customer inquiries.

2. Operations ↔ Public Outreach and Government Affairs

Share operational updates requiring public communication, media response or community outreach.

3. Engineering ↔ Public Outreach and Government Affairs

Coordinate communications for capital improvement projects, construction activities and project milestones.

4. Human Resources ↔ Executive Leadership

Align employee communications related to policies, organizational changes, hiring and workplace initiatives.

5. Information Technology ↔ Executive Leadership

Align large-scale technology implementations and initiatives prior to alerting all employees.

6. Executive Leadership ↔ Board of Directors

Ensure timely communication regarding strategic initiatives, District performance and Board priorities.

Communication Channels

Effective communication depends on using the right channel for the right message. West Valley Water District utilizes a variety of communication tools to ensure employees receive timely and accessible information. The following channels support day-to-day operations, organizational updates, employee engagement and emergency communications.

Channel	Primary Purpose	Audience	Owner	Best Used for...
Email	Formal District communications.	All employees or targeted groups.	1. Department Directors 2. Public Outreach and Government Affairs	Organizational updates, operational updates, policies, announcements, meeting recaps and action items.
Microsoft Teams	Real-time collaboration.	Supervisors, department staff and project teams.	1. All departments	Daily communication, collaboration, quick updates and file sharing.
Staff Meetings/1x1	Two-way communication and discussion.	Supervisors and department staff.	1. Executive Leadership 2. Directors 3. Supervisors	Operational updates, daily / weekly priorities, team discussions and employee feedback.
“The Drip” Employee Newsletter	Employee engagement and awareness.	All employees.	1. Public Outreach and Government Affairs	District news, employee recognition, project highlights, upcoming events, organizational updates and accomplishments.
Emergency Alerts (via text message)	Immediate, time-sensitive notifications.	All employees.	1. Executive Leadership 2. Public Outreach and Government Affairs	Emergencies, facility closures, safety notifications, major operational disruptions and urgent updates.
Intranet	Central information hub.	All employees.	1. Human Resources 2. Public Outreach and Government Affairs 3. Information Technology	Policies, procedures, forms, benefits, and resources.
Signage / Breakroom Displays	Reinforce key messages.	Employees at District facilities.	1. Human Resources and Risk Management 2. Public Outreach and Government Affairs	Safety reminders, employee recognition, upcoming events, campaign messaging and important announcements.
Employee Events and All-Hands Team Meetings	Major announcements, engagements and leadership visibility.	All employees.	1. Executive Leadership 2. Human Resources 3. Public Outreach and Government Affairs	Organizational updates, strategic initiatives, major organizational news, Q&A sessions and employee recognition.

Internal Communication Playbooks

While the communication framework establishes how information flows throughout the District, the Internal Communications Playbook provide step-by-step guidance for executing communications during common organizational situations. Each scenario follows a consistent structure to ensure communications are timely and aligned with District priorities.

The six scenarios that follow provide a communication playbook for:

1. Major Operational Updates

Examples include planned outages, maintenance, infrastructure projects, and operational changes.

2. Organizational Announcements

Examples include facility openings, a major community investment, District milestones, adoption of new Strategic Plan, or the launch of a new initiative.

3. Policy Changes

Examples include new cybersecurity or password requirements, revised remote work policy, updated dress code, new workplace safety procedures, revised social media policy, and changes to paid leave or holiday schedules.

4. Leadership Communication

Examples include funding milestones, capital improvement program updates, change management, strategic plan updates, or a major budget adoption.

5. Emergency Employee Notifications

Examples include a data breach or cybersecurity event, serious injury or fatality on District property, natural disaster, water quality issue, vandalism, sabotage or facility intrusions.

6. Employee Recognition

Examples include service milestones, awards, project and operational success or a professional development achievement.

SCENARIO 1. Major Operational Updates

Examples include planned outages, maintenance, infrastructure projects, and operational changes.

The playbook below provides an example for a **planned outage**. This example is the foundation for other major operational updates in the future.

Communication Objective
• WVWD must first alert employees of a planned outage so they are aware of District operations so they can answer questions when approached by a customer.
Notification Ladder
1. Operations will first notify Executive Leadership. 2. Operations will then notify the Public Outreach and Government Affairs team. 3. Public Outreach and Government Affairs team will notify Customer Service. 4. Public Outreach and Government Affairs team notifies all employees.
Communicator
• Public Outreach and Government Affairs team.
Audience
• All employees.
Communications Tools
• Email followed by staff meetings / 1x1s.
Key Message
• Identify outage date(s). • Identify reason for the outage. • Include when customers will be notified.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Email Announcement Example Response

Email Subject Line and Body Copy:	Subject Line: Planned Service Outage Scheduled for [DATE] To support ongoing system maintenance and infrastructure improvements, a planned water outage is scheduled for [Day, Date] from [Start Time] to [End Time]. District crews will be [brief description of work (e.g., replacing a water main, installing a new valve or completing system improvements)]. The outage will affect customers in the following area(s): [Insert impacted streets, neighborhoods or service area]. These customers will be alerted of the outage on [Day, Date], and Customer Service will receive FAQs to assist customers with questions. If you receive questions from customers or community members, please refer them to Customer Service at [phone number]. Thank you for helping ensure this planned maintenance is as smooth as possible. Sincerely, Socorro Pantaleon Manager of Public Outreach and Government Affairs
Customer Service Script:	Customer Why is my water going to be turned off? Representative We have scheduled a planned water outage to [brief work reasoning (e.g., infrastructure improvements or completing system improvements)]. We understand that outages can be inconvenient, but we do this to help ensure that homes in our service area have the most reliable water service. The outage will be completed on [list end date]. We appreciate your understanding!

SCENARIO 2. Organizational Announcements

Examples include new initiatives, facility openings, a major community investment, District milestones, or the adoption of new Strategic Plan.

The playbook below provides an example for a **new initiative**. This example is the template for other major operational updates in the future.

Communication Objective

- To alert WVWD employees, first before this major news is made public through local news and customer communication channels.

Notification Ladder

1. Decision is made by Executive Leadership and the Board of Directors.
2. Executive Leadership notify Public Outreach and Government Affairs team.
3. Public Outreach and Government Affairs Team notify all employees.

Communicator

- Executive Leadership or designee.

Audience

- All employees.

Communications Tools

- Employee events / all-hands meetings, followed by an email and a story in The Drip newsletter.

Key Message

- The district is experience growth.
- As a result, WVWD is expanding its operations.
- We want you to be the first to know.
- Announce when this news will be made public.
- Share how employees can participate.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Email Announcement Example Response

Email Subject Line and Body Copy:	Team, We want you to be the first to know about an exciting new way West Valley Water District is bringing water education directly to our community! Beginning this fall, the Creek Mobile, a mobile hydration vehicle, will visit community events throughout our service area. The Creek Mobile gives us a creative new way to connect with customers face-to-face, provide free, fresh drinking water and share information about water sustainability and protecting our local water resources. You can be part of it! We invite employees to sign up to volunteer to staff the Creek Mobile at community events, help educate customers and spread the word about this new District initiative. Details about upcoming events and volunteer opportunities will be shared soon. We're excited to hit the road and bring WVWD's water education directly to the communities we serve. Thank you for helping make the Creek Mobile a success!
The Drip Newsletter Copy:	THE CREEK MOBILE IS HITTING THE ROAD! West Valley Water District is taking water education on the road! This fall, we're launching the Creek Mobile, a new mobile hydration vehicle designed to bring fresh drinking water and water education directly to the communities we serve. The Creek Mobile will make appearances at community events throughout our service area, giving employees the opportunity to connect with customers face-to-face, answer questions and help residents learn more about water quality and protecting our local water resources. You can be part of it! We invite employees to sign up to volunteer to staff the Creek Mobile at community events. Keep an eye out for the Creek Mobile's event calendar and volunteer opportunities. We can't wait to see the WVWD team help the Creek Mobile make a splash in our community!
Breakroom Signage / Banners: (as necessary)	THE CREEK MOBILE IS HITTING THE ROAD! <i>Coming This Fall</i> WVWD's new Creek Mobile will bring fresh drinking water and water education directly to community events throughout our service area. You can be part of it! Stay tuned for volunteer opportunities and a calendar of events.
Intranet:	COMING THIS FALL: THE CREEK MOBILE! WVWD is taking water education on the road. Beginning this fall, the new Creek Mobile will visit community events throughout our service area, providing fresh drinking water while connecting with customers face-to-face about water sustainability and protecting our local water resources. Want to get involved? Employees will have opportunities to volunteer at Creek Mobile events, educate customers and help make this new initiative a success. Stay tuned for upcoming stops and volunteer opportunities!

SCENARIO 3. Policy Changes

Examples include new cybersecurity or password requirements, revised remote work policy, updated dress code, new workplace safety procedures, revised social media policy, and changes to paid leave or holiday schedules.

The playbook below provides an example for **new cybersecurity or password requirements**. This example is the template for other major operational updates in the future.

Communication Objective
To alert employees about the new password requirements before they take effect.
Notification Ladder
- Lead department will first notify Executive Leadership. - Lead department will then notify the Public Outreach and Government Affairs team. - Public Outreach and Government Affairs team will then notify all employees.
Communicator
Public Outreach and Government Affairs team on behalf of lead department, who will review message and provide to Human Resources.
Audience
All employees.
Communications Tools
Email, staff meetings / 1x1s, The Drip newsletter, intranet.
Key Message
- Alert employees of the change. - Share what to expect. - Share why this extra layer of security matters. - Explain what actions need to be taken by the employee.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Email Announcement Example Response

Email Subject Line and Body Copy:	Subject Line: Action Required: New Cybersecurity and Password Requirements Protecting the District's information systems is a shared responsibility. Beginning [Effective Date], West Valley Water District will implement updated cybersecurity standards that include new password requirements and enhanced account security measures. These measures pertain to your [Internal Software] account. Effective [Date], employees will be required to: 1. Create passwords that are at least 16 characters in length. 2. Use unique passwords that are not reused across personal accounts. 3. Enroll in Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for designated District systems. 4. Complete a new, annual cybersecurity awareness training by [Date]. Why This Matters Cyber threats are real and are happening now more than ever. A strong account security is one of the most effective ways to protect District operations, customer information and critical infrastructure. These updates help reduce the risk of phishing attacks, unauthorized access and data breaches. Next Steps 1. Watch for a follow-up email from Information Technology with enrollment instructions. 2. Update your password the next time you log in after [Date]. 3. Contact the IT Help Desk if you need assistance. Thank you for doing your part to help keep West Valley Water District's systems, customers and your colleagues secure.
The Drip Newsletter Copy:	STRONGER PASSWORDS. SAFER TEAMS. Protecting West Valley Water District's systems is everyone's responsibility. Beginning [Effective Date], the District will introduce updated cybersecurity requirements for [Internal Software] accounts to help strengthen security and protect our operations, customers and critical infrastructure. What's Changing? Employees will be required to: 1. Create passwords at least 16 characters long. 2. Use a unique password that isn't reused for personal accounts. 3. Enroll in Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for designated District systems. 4. Complete annual cybersecurity awareness training by [Date]. Why It Matters Cyber threats continue to evolve, and strong account security is one of our best defenses against phishing, unauthorized access and data breaches. Small actions by each of us can make a big difference in keeping the District secure. What Happens Next? Watch for an email from Information Technology with instructions. Employees should update their passwords the next time they log in after [Date] and contact the IT Help Desk with any questions or for assistance. Thank you for doing your part to keep WVWD secure!

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Intranet:

ACTION REQUIRED: NEW CYBERSECURITY REQUIREMENTS

Beginning **[EFFECTIVE DATE]**, WVWD is implementing enhanced cybersecurity requirements for **[INTERNAL SOFTWARE]** accounts.

Employees will need to:

1. Create a password at least 16 characters long.
2. Use a unique password not used for personal accounts.
3. Enroll in Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA).
4. Complete annual cybersecurity awareness training by **[Date]**.
5. Watch for an email from Information Technology with next steps. Questions? Contact the IT Help Desk.

Thank you for helping keep WVWD secure.

SCENARIO 4. Leadership Communication

Examples include funding milestones, capital improvement program updates, annual State of the Districts, change management, strategic plan updates, or a major budget adoption.

The playbook below provides an example for a **funding milestone**. This example is the template for other major operational updates in the future.

Communication Objective Inform employees of an important funding milestone and foster pride in the District.
Notification Ladder - Executive Leadership will notify Public Outreach and Government Affairs. - Public Outreach and Government Affairs team will review language and provide edits to communicator. - Public Outreach and Government Affairs team will then notify all employees.
Communicator Executive Leadership or designee.
Audience All employees.
Communications Tools Email for the initial announcement, followed by The Drip newsletter, intranet and staff meetings / 1x1s for off-property employees.
Key Message - Share funding milestone. - Share how it impacts WVWD. - Emphasize employee role in this achievement.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Email Announcement Example Response

Email Subject Line and Body Copy:	Team, I'm pleased to share some exciting news for West Valley Water District. We have secured more than \$1 million in federal funding, thanks to the support of Congressman Pete Aguilar, to modernize our Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system. This investment strengthens our ability to provide reliable water service by enhancing system reliability, improving emergency response capabilities and increasing cybersecurity protections for our critical infrastructure. These improvements will help us better serve our customers today while preparing our District for the future. Achievements like this are only possible because of your dedication and commitment to our mission. Whether you work in the field, support our customers or keep our operations running behind the scenes, each of you plays an important role in making investments like this meaningful for the communities we serve. Thank you for your continued hard work and for helping make West Valley Water District a trusted leader in delivering dependable water service. Sincerely, John Thiel General Manager
The Drip Newsletter Copy:	MORE THAN \$1 MILLION SECURED FOR WVWD'S FUTURE West Valley Water District has secured more than \$1 million in federal funding with the support of Congressman Pete Aguilar to modernize the District's Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system. The investment will help strengthen the technology behind our water system by enhancing system reliability, improving emergency response capabilities and increasing cybersecurity protections for critical infrastructure. Ultimately, these improvements will help WVWD continue providing reliable water service while preparing our system for the future. This milestone also reflects the work happening across the District every day. From employees in the field to those supporting customers and keeping operations running behind the scenes, every team member plays a role in turning investments like this into better service for our community. Thank you to the entire WVWD team for helping us continue to build a stronger, more resilient water system for the communities we serve.
Intranet:	\$1 MILLION+ INVESTMENT IN WVWD'S FUTURE WVWD has secured more than \$1 million in federal funding with the support of Congressman Pete Aguilar to modernize our SCADA system. This investment will strengthen system reliability, emergency response and cybersecurity to help us continue to provide reliable water service today and into the future. Thank you to our entire WVWD team for helping make progress like this possible!

SCENARIO 5. Emergency Employee Notifications

Examples include a data breach or cybersecurity event, serious injury or fatality on District property, natural disaster, water quality issue, vandalism, sabotage or facility intrusions.

The playbook below provides an example for a data breach / cybersecurity attack. This example is the foundation for other major operational updates in the future.

Communication Objective
• Alert employees immediately of the security threat. • Inform employees on next steps to protect their data. • Reassure that an investigation is underway.
Notification Ladder
1. Lead department notifies Executive Leadership. 2. Lead department notifies Public Outreach and Government Affairs team. 3. Public Outreach and Government Affairs team then notifies all employees.
Communicator
• Executive Leadership or designee.
Audience
• All employees.
Communications Tools
• Text message emergency alerts, email, Microsoft Teams, staff meetings / 1x1s, signage / breakroom displays.
Key Message
• Immediately alert employees of the incident. • Communicate immediate employee actions. • Emphasize work that is being done to resolve issue.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Text Message and Email Example Responses

Text Message Alert:	WVWD ALERT We are responding to a cybersecurity incident affecting District systems. Do not open suspicious emails, click unknown links or connect personal devices to the District network. Continue following IT guidance and monitor your District email and Microsoft Teams for updates. More information coming soon.
Email Subject Line and Body Copy:	Subject Line: Critical Data Security Alert Team, We are currently investigating a cybersecurity incident affecting portions of the District's network. We are working closely with law enforcement and cybersecurity experts to assess the situation, contain the incident and restore affected systems. What you should do: 1. Remain alert for suspicious emails, text messages or phone calls requesting passwords, account credentials or other sensitive information. 2. Do not click on unexpected links or open attachments from unknown senders. 3. Report any suspicious activity immediately to IT. 4. Follow all guidance provided by IT regarding password resets, multi-factor authentication or other security measures. If you receive questions from customers, please refer them to Customer Service, who is equipped with talking points. If you receive questions from media, please refer them to the Public Outreach and Government Affairs Department and do not speculate or share unverified information. Thank you for your cooperation and continued commitment to protecting the District's systems, our customers and one another. Sincerely, Jon Stephenson Director
Breakroom Signage / Displays:	CRITICAL DATA SECURITY ALERT WVWD is responding to a cybersecurity incident affecting portions of our network. 1. Don't click suspicious links or attachments. 2. Never share passwords or account information. 3. Report suspicious activity immediately to IT. 4. Follow all IT security guidance. Please direct customer questions to Customer Service. Please direct media questions to Public Outreach and Government Affairs Do not speculate or share unverified information. STAY ALERT. HELP KEEP WVWD SECURE.

SCENARIO 6. Employee Recognition

Examples include service milestones, awards, project and operational success or a professional development achievement.

The playbook below provides an example for **announcing service milestones**. This example is the template for other major operational updates in the future.

Communication Objective

- Recognize tenured employees who have reached service milestones.
- Inspire employees to continue with employment at WVWD.
- Foster pride amongst employees for the District.

Notification Ladder

1. Human Resources alerts Executive Leadership.
2. Human Resources alerts Public Outreach and Government Affairs team.
3. Public Outreach and Government Affairs develops language or imagery to be distributed.

Communicator

- Executive Leadership followed by Public Outreach and Government Affairs

Audience

- All employees.

Communications Tools

- Incorporate into all-hands team meeting / employee event, then follow-up with The Drip newsletter, signage / breakroom display, and the intranet.

Key Message

- Announce employees with milestones.
- Congratulate individuals.
- Tie milestone back to employees as a whole.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Example Response

The Drip Newsletter Copy:	Team, At West Valley Water District, our success is built on the dedication and commitment of our employees. This month, we're proud to recognize our very own celebrating major service milestones and thank them for the lasting impact they've made on our organization and the communities we serve. Congratulations to: Five Years 1. [Employee Name], [Department] 2. [Employee Name], [Department] 10 Years 1. [Employee Name], [Department] 2. [Employee Name], [Department] 15 Years 1. [Employee Name], [Department] 20 Years 1. [Employee Name], [Department] 25+ Years 1. [Employee Name], [Department] We can't wait to celebrate you in the years to follow!
Breakroom Signage and Intranet:	Celebrating Our Team! Join us in recognizing the employees celebrating service milestones this year. Thank you for your dedication, hard work and commitment to serving our community. Congratulations to: 1. [Employee Name] – 5 Years 2. [Employee Name] – 10 Years 3. [Employee Name] – 15 Years 4. [Employee Name] – 20 Years 5. [Employee Name] – 25+ Years Thank you for making a difference every day!

Measurement and Continuous Improvement

Internal communication requires ongoing evaluation to ensure success as District priorities and its workforce evolve. West Valley Water District will regularly assess the effectiveness of its internal communications to identify strengths and address opportunities for improvement in an effort to adapt to the evolving needs of the organization. Performance metrics and employee feedback will help guide improvements to communication strategies and processes. Evaluation is based on two methods: **performance measures and annual review.**

Measurement	Purpose
Employee Engagement	Measure employee participation in District communications, events and organizational initiatives.
Email Open Rates	Evaluate employee reach and engagement through District-wide email communications, including The Drip newsletter.
Meeting / Event Participation	Monitor attendance during staff meetings, employee events and all-hands team meetings.
Employee Understanding of Key Initiatives	Assess employee awareness of District priorities, projects and organizational changes through surveys.
Cross-Department Collaboration	Evaluate how effectively departments communicate and collaborate on projects and initiatives through informal feedback.
Supervisor Feedback	Gather input from supervisors regarding communication gaps and mission / initiative understanding.
Employee Feedback	Collect employee input through surveys and focus groups.
Communication Timeliness	Assess how quickly important information is communicated to employees following key decisions or events.
Crisis Readiness	Evaluate the effectiveness of internal communications during emergency exercises, including speed, coordination and employee awareness.

ANNUAL REVIEW

This Internal Communications Plan should be reviewed biannually to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the organization and reflects evolving communication practices.

The annual review should include:

1. Reviewing the effectiveness of existing communication channels.
2. Evaluating employee engagement and communication performance metrics, such as email and newsletter open rates.
3. Assessing whether employees understand key organizational initiatives and priorities.
4. Updating internal communication playbooks, templates and messaging resources.
5. Revising communication workflows as needed.
6. Incorporating employee, supervisor and leadership feedback.
7. Identifying new communication tools or technologies that improve collaboration.
8. Conducting communication training for leaders and supervisors.
9. Capturing lessons learned from major projects, organizational changes and emergency responses.
10. Sharing recommendations and priorities for the coming year.

Communications Calendar

West Valley Water District uses a mix of recurring and as-needed communications to ensure employees receive the right information through the right channels at the right time.

The following calendar establishes a recommended communication cadence. While some communications follow a regular schedule, others are driven by organizational developments and emergencies. These channels create a consistent flow of information while providing flexibility to respond to the needs of the District.

Channel	Frequency
Email	As needed
Microsoft Teams	Ongoing communication
Staff Meetings / 1x1	Weekly staff huddles; 1x1 meetings as needed
"The Drip" Employee Newsletter	Monthly
Emergency Alerts (via text message)	As needed
Intranet	Ongoing updates
Signage / Breakroom Displays	As needed
Employee Events and All-Staff Meetings	Bi-monthly all-staff meetings; employee events as needed
Internal Communications Review	Biannually
Employee Survey	Biannually



STAFF REPORT

DATE: September 22, 2026

TO: Policy Review and Oversight Committee

FROM: Mary Jo Hartley, Senior Public Outreach & Government Affairs Rep

SUBJECT: Crisis Communication Plan

STRATEGIC GOAL:

Strategic Goal 3 - Develop and Grow Effective Communication and Advocacy Practices; A. Advance Effective Internal and External Communication Processes; B. Present the District as a Proactive Community Partner

Strategic Goal 5 - Apply Sound Planning, Innovation, and Best Practices; E. Define, Develop, and Implement Best Practices

Strategic Goal 8 - Deliver Superior Customer Service; D. Communicate Effectively with Customers

MEETING HISTORY:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

To align with West Valley Water District's Strategic Plan, the Public Outreach and Government Affairs Department identified the need for a Strategic Communications Plan to address gaps in existing communication processes and establish consistent communication practices. As part of this effort, the Strategic Communications Plan identified the need for a formal approach to communication with stakeholders, and the community during emergencies. In response, the Department developed the District's first Crisis Communication Plan, providing a framework for coordinated, timely, and effective communication during an emergency.

DISCUSSION:

The Crisis Communication Plan (CCP) is a foundational document that provides a clear, coordinated framework for communicating during incidents that may affect District operations, infrastructure, water quality, public perception, or community trust. Whether responding to a service interruption, infrastructure emergency, environmental concern, natural disaster, or reputational issue, WVWD is committed to communicating in a timely, accurate, transparent, and compassionate manner. Designed as an operational resource, this playbook guides communication from the initial identification of an incident through response, recovery, and post-incident evaluation. It establishes a consistent process for aligning internal teams, supporting informed decision-making, and ensuring that every communication reflects WVWD's role as a trusted public agency.

The CCP will be reevaluated biannually to ensure that the plan remains relevant, effective, and adaptable, including but not limited to contact information, emerging technologies and social media platforms, and assessing messaging, holding statements and decision-making timelines.

FISCAL IMPACT:

A Strategic Communications Plan, including a Crisis Communication Plan was included in the 2025-2026 fiscal year budget.

REQUESTED ACTION:

Review the Crisis Communication Plan and provide comments and feedback for presentation to the Board of Directors for consideration and adoption.

Attachments

[WVWD_Crisis Comms Playbook_DRAFT 9-9-26.pdf](#)



Crisis Communications Playbook

One Team, One Voice. One Trusted Source.

By:
Westbound Communications
DRAFT – SEPTEMBER 9, 2026

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Introduction

West Valley Water District (WVWD/District) is committed to providing high-quality and reliable water to the communities we serve. During times of uncertainty, that commitment becomes even more critical.

This Crisis Communications Playbook provides a clear, coordinated framework for communicating during incidents that may affect District operations, infrastructure, water quality, public perception, or community trust. Whether responding to a service interruption, infrastructure emergency, environmental concern, natural disaster, or reputational issue, WVWD is committed to communicating in a timely, accurate, transparent, and compassionate manner.

Designed as an operational resource, this playbook guides communication from the initial identification of an incident through response, recovery, and post-incident evaluation. It establishes a consistent process for aligning internal teams, supporting informed decision-making, and ensuring that every communication reflects WVWD's role as a trusted public agency.

WVWD COMMITMENT

Every employee represents West Valley Water District. During a crisis, our commitment is to communicate with accuracy and work as one team ensuring our community receives clear, timely information from a trusted source.

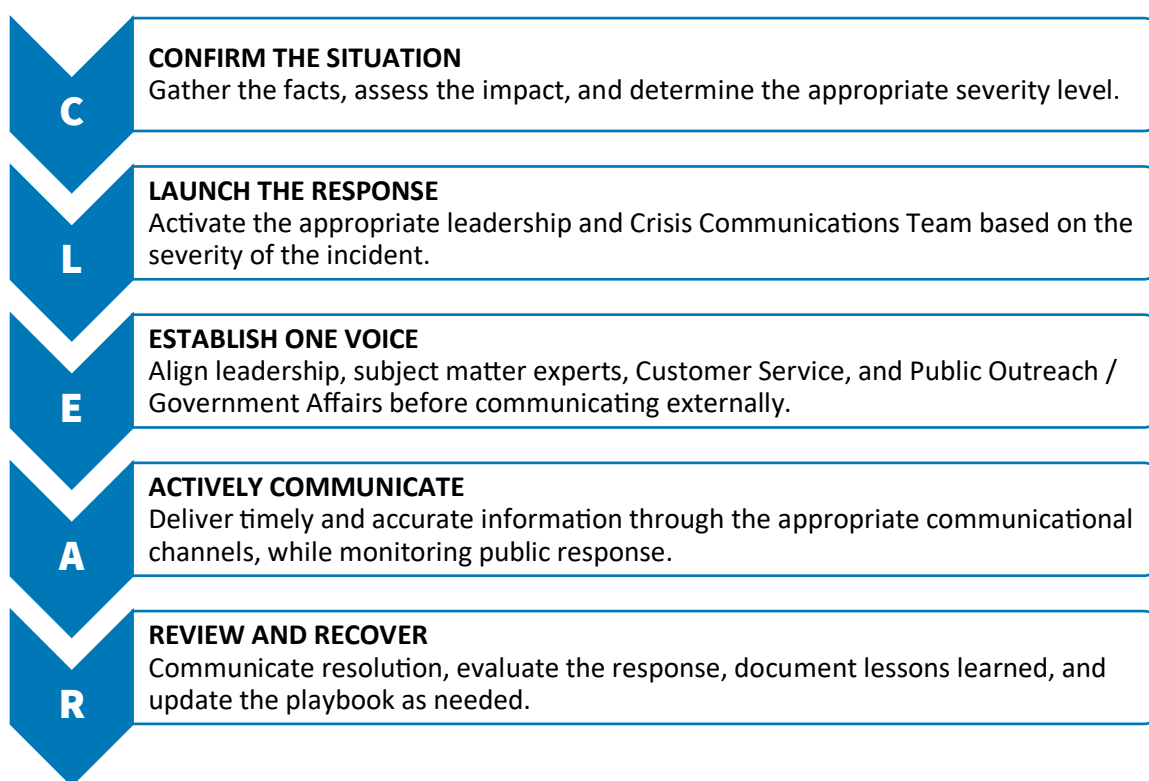
How to Use this Playbook

This Crisis Communications Playbook is designed to be a practical, easy-to-use resource that helps West Valley Water District respond quickly and maintain public trust during an incident. While every crisis is different, every response should follow the same process. This playbook provides a clear framework to help employees assess the situation, activate the appropriate response, align internal communications, and access scenario-specific guidance.

Whether the incident is a localized water outage, major infrastructure failure, cybersecurity event, natural disaster, or public health emergency, the process remains the same. By following a consistent approach, WVWD can communicate with one voice and maintain the trust of the communities it serves.

THE C.L.E.A.R. FRAMEWORK

Every crisis response should follow the **C.L.E.A.R. Framework**, which provides a consistent path from the initial identification of an incident through recovery and post-incident evaluation.



NAVIGATING THIS PLAYBOOK

The sections that follow are organized to support each step of the **C.L.E.A.R. Framework**, allowing users to quickly locate the guidance they need based on the situation at hand.

If You Need to...	Go to...
Determine the severity of an incident...	Severity Levels and Activation Framework
Activate the appropriate response...	Crisis Response Workflow
Identify the Crisis Communications Team and key contacts...	Crisis Communications Team and Roles
Review communication expectations for all employees...	Communication Principles and Protocols
Respond to a specific type of crisis...	Scenario Playbooks
Access messaging templates and communication resources...	Scenario Playbooks
Evaluate the response and update procedures...	Post-Incident Review and Continuous Improvement

ONE VOICE

Every crisis is different, but the response process should remain the same. By following the C.L.E.A.R. Framework, WVWD ensures every response is coordinated, every message is aligned, and every employee contributes to protecting public trust.

Severity Levels and Activation Framework

C.	L.	E.	A.	R.
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C.L.E.A.R. STEP 1: Confirm the Situation

The first step in every crisis response is determining:

- **What happened?**
- **Who is affected?**
- **What level of response is required?**

Not every incident requires a full activation of the Crisis Communications Team, but every incident should be evaluated using the framework. WVWD categorizes incidents into three severity levels based on their operational impact, public visibility, and potential effect on customers, employees, and the District's reputation. The assigned level determines who is engaged, what immediate actions are taken, and how communications are activated.

As the severity of an incident increases, so does the speed and coordination of WVWD's response.

BEST PRACTICE

When there is uncertainty about an incident's severity, respond at the higher level until additional information is available. It is easier to scale a response down than to rebuild public trust after responding too slowly.

Determining Severity Levels and Activation

NOTE: This content will be adjusted accordingly to reflect direction from the senior leadership team on what constitutes a severity level of 1, 2 or 3.

Severity	Situation and Triggers	Who is Involved	Immediate Actions	Communication Approach
Severity Level 1: Operational Issue	Routine issue with limited visibility or impact. Examples: 1. Minor service disruption. 2. Small main break. 3. Isolated customer complaint.	1. Department Staff 2. Supervisor (Lead) 3. Department Head	1. Address operationally. 2. Notify department leadership. 3. Monitor for escalation.	1. Internal communication only. 2. No external communication unless escalated.
Severity Level 2: Elevated Issue	Increased customer impact or potential for public concern. Examples: 1. Localized outage. 2. Increase in customer complaints. 3. Media inquiry (escalated). 4. Issue gaining traction online.	1. Department Head 2. Public Outreach and Government Affairs (Lead) 3. Customer Service 4. Assistant General Manager (as needed) 5. GM (As needed)	1. Notify cross-department team. 2. Confirm facts and scope. 3. Prepare messaging (holding statement, FAQs). 4. GM To notify Board of Directors.	1. Internal alignment required. 2. External communication may be proactive or reactive. 3. Prepare all customer-facing teams.
Severity Level 3: Crisis Event	High visibility, widespread impact, or health / safety concern. Examples: 1. Water quality concern / boil notice. 2. Major outage. 3. Infrastructure failure. 4. Wildfires, earthquakes, natural disasters. 5. Viral misinformation. 6. Social media call to action at District.	1. General Manager (lead) 2. Assistant General Manager 3. Public Outreach and Government Affairs (Lead) 4. Operations / Water Quality 5. Engineering 6. Human Resources / Risk Management 7. Customer Service 8. Legal (as needed)	1. Immediately Activate Crisis Communications Team. 2. Confirm known facts + unknowns. 3. Identify impacted areas. 4. Assign communication lead. 5. Draft holding statement and subsequent internal / external messaging. 6. GM To notify Board of Directors.	1. Immediate internal alignment. 2. Proactive external communication required (Website, social, media, and customer alerts activated). 3. Ongoing updates required.

NOTE: The levels of severity can be adapted to address scenarios that are not dictated by or out of the control of the District. For example, a fire hydrant was recently broken by a contractor working on a project in WVWD's service area that caused flooding of homes. While this was not a WVWD project, it created a situation where the District needed to respond to shut off water and caused a service disruption. An initial consideration is to develop a Level 2a and Level 2b that captures scenarios where the District has been brought into an issue that was not created by the organization, but rather a result of an outside entity.

Escalation Considerations

Not every incident fits neatly into a single category. Leadership should also consider the following questions when determining the appropriate response level:

1. Does the incident affect customer health or safety?
2. Is service reliability or water quality impacted?
3. Could the issue attract media attention or widespread discussion on social media?
4. Are regulatory agencies or elected officials likely to become involved?
5. Does the incident have the potential to affect public trust or the District's reputation?

A "yes" to one or more of these questions may warrant elevating the response level and activating additional communications resources.

ONE VOICE

Every incident deserves attention, but not every incident requires the same response. A consistent evaluation process helps WVWD respond with the right message and the right level of urgency.

Crisis Response Workflow



C.L.E.A.R. STEP 2: Launch the Response

Regardless of severity level, every response follows a consistent six-step workflow that guides decision-making from initial identification of issue through its resolution. This workflow ensures that response actions remain coordinated and clearly assigned at every stage.

1. IDENTIFY AND ESCALATE

- a. Notify your supervisor and department lead immediately
 - i. Provide workflows and authorities for when supervisors are not available
- b. Share what is known / unknown and who may be impacted
- c. Trigger internal communication protocols

2. DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF RESPONSE

- a. Assess whether the situation is:
 - i. Operational (Level 1)
 - ii. Elevated (Level 2)
 - iii. Crisis (Level 3)
- b. Engage the appropriate response team

3. ALIGN INTERNALLY BEFORE COMMUNICATING EXTERNALLY

- a. Confirm key facts with Operations, Water Quality, or relevant teams
- b. Ensure leadership and Public Outreach and Government Affairs Manager / PIO are informed
- c. Develop clear, consistent messaging
- d. Establish regular internal check-ins to evaluate evolving situations

4. COMMUNICATE CLEARLY AND CONSISTENTLY

- a. Use approved messaging and holding statements
- b. Ensure all departments (especially customer-facing staff) are aligned
- c. Communicate through appropriate channels (website, social, media, outreach)

5. MONITOR AND UPDATE

- a. Track customer inquiries, media coverage, and social media activity
- b. Provide updates as new information becomes available
- c. Adjust messaging as needed

6. CLOSE AND EVALUATE

- a. Communicate resolution to customers and stakeholders
- b. Document lessons learned
- c. Update protocols and materials as needed

QUICK REFERENCE

Before issuing any public communication, confirm that the following questions have been answered:

1. What happened?
2. When did it happen?
3. What do we know?
4. What information is still being verified?
5. Who is affected?
6. What actions is WVWD taking?
7. When will the next update be provided?

BEST PRACTICE

Respond quickly, but never speculate.

During the first hour of a crisis:

1. Focus on verifying facts.
2. Align internal teams.
3. Prepare clear coordinated communications.

When information is still developing:

1. Acknowledge what is known.
2. Explain what is being investigated.
3. Commit to providing the next update by a specific time whenever possible.

Crisis Communications Team and Roles

C.	L.	E.	A.	R.
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C.L.E.A.R. STEP 3: Establish One Voice

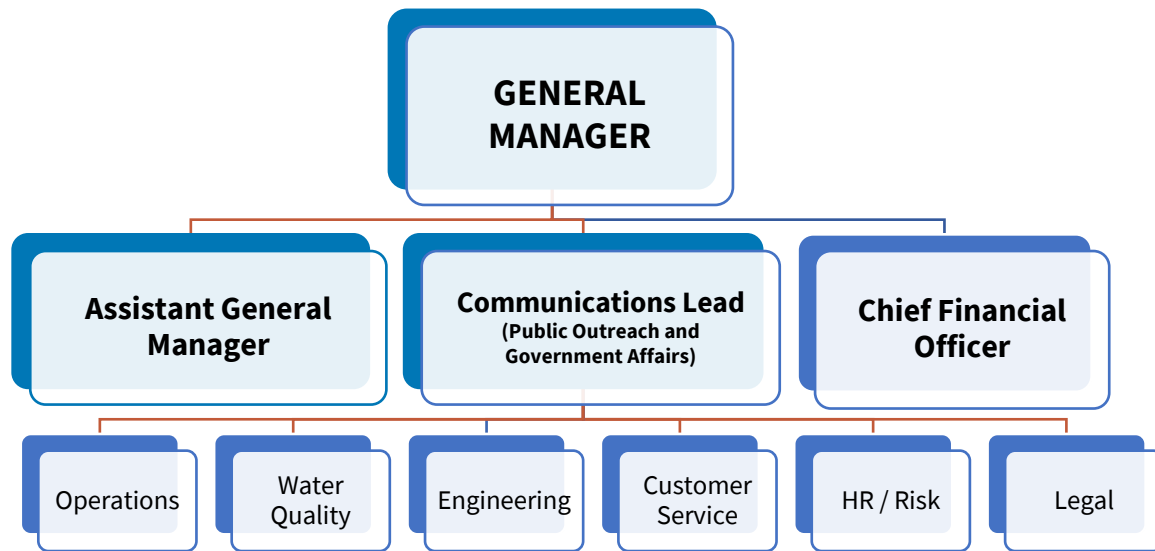
The Crisis Communications Team is the cross-departmental group responsible for activating, coordinating, and executing WVWD's response to any crisis. The team is led by the General Manager (or designee) and convenes at Level 2 for cross-department coordination and at Level 3 for full activation. Final list of team members and roles will be confirmed by senior leadership.

Role	Lead / Member	Primary Responsibility
Crisis Commander	General Manager (or Assistant General Manager or designee)	Final decision-making authority; external face of the District.
Communications Lead	Public Outreach and Government Affairs Manager / PIO	Develops and approves messaging; manages media and stakeholder communications.
Operations / Engineering Lead	Operations / Engineering	Provides technical facts and operational status.
Customer Service Lead / CFO (As necessary)	Customer Service Supervisor	Ensures customer-facing teams have aligned scripts and FAQs.
Internal Communications Lead	HR (or Designated Internal Communicator) <i>NOTE: To be confirmed by WVWD team.</i>	Manages employee communications and alignment.
Legal Counsel	District's Counsel (as needed)	Advises on legal exposure, Brown Act, PRA, regulatory obligations.
Subject Matter Experts	As needed.	Activated based on crisis category (e.g., IT for cybersecurity, Safety for incidents, etc.).

BEST PRACTICE

Identify primary and alternate representatives for every critical role. Crises rarely occur when everyone is in the office and continuity of communication depends on clear backups and delegated authority.

Incident Command Structure



Contact Directory

**See appendix for individual contact information.*

Communication Principles and Protocols

C.	L.	E.	A.	R.
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C.L.E.A.R. STEP 4: Actively Communicate

These principles and protocols establish the expectations for how information is shared internally and externally during a crisis, helping WVWD communicate with one voice while maintaining transparency and public trust.

Guiding Principles

1. ACCURATE

Communicate verified information.

2. TIMELY

Share information as quickly as practical.

3. CONSISTENT

Ensure all employees and departments, and communication channels use the same approved messaging.

4. TRANSPARENT

Be honest about what is known, what is still being investigated, and what customers can expect next.

5. EMPATHETIC

Recognize the impact on customers, employees, partners, and the community.

Internal Communication Expectations

Before communicating externally, the Crisis Communications Team should:

1. Verify all available facts with the appropriate operational staff.
2. Notify executive leadership and activate the appropriate response team.
3. Align messaging across departments.
4. Prepare Customer Service with approved talking points and FAQs.
5. Notify the Board of Directors, when appropriate.
6. Coordinate messaging with partner agencies and regulatory organizations, as needed.

External Communication Expectations

Every public communication should:

1. Focus on verified facts.
2. Clearly explain what customers need to know.
3. Describe the actions WVWD is taking.
4. Provide the next anticipated update, when possible.
5. Direct customers to official WVWD communication channels for the latest information.

Field Staff Communication Protocols

Field personnel including operations crews, water quality staff, engineering inspectors, meter service operators, and customer service representatives are often the first WVWD representatives encountered during an incident. Their primary responsibility is to safely perform their operational duties while directing all public communications through the District's designated Communications Lead.

IF APPROACHED BY THE MEDIA OR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

1. Remain calm and professional.
2. Continue your assigned operational responsibilities.
3. Refer all questions to the Communications Lead.
4. Do not speculate or discuss the cause of the incident, potential impacts, restoration timelines, or District decisions.

APPROVED RESPONSE

"I'm not authorized to comment. Please contact West Valley Water District's Public Outreach and Government Affairs department for the most current and accurate information."

IF APPROACHED BY REGULATORS OR EMERGENCY RESPONDERS

1. Cooperate fully with inspections or emergency response activities.
2. Provide factual information related to your operational responsibilities and direct observations.
3. Refer broader policy or District-wide questions to your supervisor and the Communications Lead.

Social Media Expectations

During a crisis, employees should not:

1. Post information about the incident on personal social media accounts.
2. Respond to public comments or media inquiries online.

3. Share photographs or videos from the incident scene unless authorized.
4. Speculate regarding the cause, impact, or outcome of the incident.

All public communications should originate from WVWD's official communication channels.

Documentation and Records

Emails, text messages, notes, photos, and other records created during a crisis may be subject to the California Public Records Act or legal discovery. Employees should maintain accurate documentation, preserve records, and follow District record retention policies and guidance from legal counsel.

QUICK REFERENCE

Before communicating externally, ask yourself:

1. Am I the correct person to be communicating this message?
2. Is the information verified?
3. Has leadership been notified?
4. Is everyone using the same approved messaging?
5. Does this communication tell people what they need to know and what they should do next?

BEST PRACTICE

If information changes, update it. The public is far more forgiving of evolving information than delayed, conflicting, or incomplete communications. Frequent, transparent updates help maintain credibility throughout a crisis.

SCENARIO PLAYBOOKS

CATEGORIES OF POTENTIAL CRISES

This Playbook applies across four categories of potential crises. Each category shares the same overall response structure in which incidents are classified using the severity model and managed through the Crisis Response Workflow established earlier in this Playbook, but each carries unique authorities to notify, regulatory obligations, and messaging considerations. The sections below outline what is distinct about each category. Specific messaging templates, internal escalation details, and contact information will be developed collaboratively with WVWD leadership.

1. Water Quality and Public Health
2. Supply and Infrastructure
3. Security Threats
4. Worker and Public Safety Incidents

BEST PRACTICE

Every public update should answer three questions:

1. What happened?
2. What is WVWD doing?
3. What should customers do next?

Water Quality and Public Health

Boil Water Notice

A public health warning advising people to boil water before consuming it.

Water Quality Incident

Events that may affect the safety, appearance, taste, odor, or reliability of drinking water and require investigation and / or corrective action.

Source Water Emergency

Incidents that threaten the quality or availability of a drinking water source.

Contamination Event

When chemical, biological or source water contaminants are suspected or confirmed to have entered the drinking water system.

Do-Not-Drink or Do-Not-Use-Order

Emergency advisories directing customers to avoid drinking or using tap water due to actual or potential contamination that may pose a risk to public health.

Below is an example of a Water Quality and Public Health scenario from the categories listed above. The accompanying template should be adapted to develop crisis response materials for incidents beyond a Boil Water Notice.

BOIL WATER NOTICE

A boil water notice is issued when West Valley Water District determines or is directed by the State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water, that customers should boil tap water before consuming it due to an actual or potential threat to public health. These incidents require immediate coordination between Operations, Water Quality, Customer Service, Public Outreach and Government Affairs, executive leadership, and regulatory agencies.

Because boil water notices directly impact customer health and confidence, communication should be timely, transparent, bilingual, and highly visible until the notice is lifted.

At-a-Glance | Security Level 3: Crisis Event

High visibility, widespread impact or health / safety concern. This is a crisis event.

Communication Lead:	Public Outreach and Government Affairs
Executive Level:	General Manager
Primary Departments:	Operations, Water Quality, Customer Service, Engineering, Human Resources and Risk Management
Regulatory Agency:	State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water
Primary Objective:	Protect public health through rapid, accurate communication and clear customer instructions.

IMMEDIATE ACTIVATION

1. OPERATIONS

- d. Notify the General Manager and/or Assistant General Manager
- a. Notify the Public Outreach and Government Affairs Lead
- b. Begin operational response and regulatory coordination

2. PUBLIC OUTREACH AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

- a. Activate the Crisis Communications Team
- b. Begin development of customer messaging
- c. Prepare bilingual communications
- d. Coordinate executive briefings

SITUATION ASSESSMENT

Before releasing public information, confirm:

1. What is the contaminant or issue?
2. Has it been confirmed or is it still under investigation?
3. What geographic area is affected?
4. Approximately how many customers are affected?
5. Is there an immediate public health concern?
6. What action should customers take?
7. Has the Division of Drinking Water been notified?
8. When will additional information be available?

Communications Response and Ready to Use Verbiage

PHASE 1: Acknowledge

Communication Type:	Initial holding statement.
When to Use:	Immediately after the incident has been confirmed and before all facts are available.
Objectives:	1. Acknowledge the incident. 2. Communicate that customer safety is the District's highest priority. 3. Establish WVWD as the trusted source of information.
Audience:	Media, customers, general public.
Channels:	Website, social media, media statement, customer alerts.

EXAMPLE VERBIAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

West Valley Water District is aware of a potential water quality issue affecting portions of the District's service area.

The safety of our customers is our highest priority. District staff are actively investigating the situation and coordinating with the State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water to determine the cause and extent of the issue.

At this time, customers should continue to monitor official District communications for updates. If additional actions are necessary to protect public health, affected customers will be notified immediately.

We understand customers may have questions and are committed to providing accurate information as soon as it is confirmed.

The next update will be provided no later than [TIME].

Additional information is available at www.wvwd.org.

TEMPLATE FOR OTHER INCIDENTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

West Valley Water District is aware of [NAME ISSUE] affecting [NAME AFFECTED AREA] of the District's service area.

The safety of our customers is our highest priority. District staff are actively investigating the situation and coordinating with the State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water to determine the cause and extent of the issue.

At this time, customers should continue to monitor official District communications for updates. If additional actions are necessary to protect public health, affected customers will be notified immediately.

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAYBOOK

We understand customers may have questions and are committed to providing accurate information as soon as it is confirmed.

The next update will be provided no later than **[TIME]**.

Additional information is available at www.wvwd.org.

PHASE 2: Inform

Communication Type:	Official boil water notice.
When to Use:	Immediately after the Division of Drinking Water authorizes or requires issuance of a Boil Water Notice.
Objectives:	Provide clear instructions that help customers protect themselves.
Audience:	Affected customers, employees, Board of Directors, regulators.
Channels:	Text, email, website, social media, customer alerts, direct outreach.

EXAMPLE VERBIAGE

BOIL WATER NOTICE

West Valley Water District has issued a Boil Water Notice for customers located within **[AREA]**.

Until further notice:

1. Boil tap water for one minute before drinking.
2. Use boiled or bottled water for:
 - a. Drinking
 - b. Brushing teeth
 - c. Preparing food
 - d. Making ice
 - e. Baby formula
 - f. Pet water

The notice remains in effect until laboratory testing confirms the water meets all state and federal drinking water standards.

Free bottled water is available at **[LOCATION]**.

Updates: www.wvwd.org

TEMPLATE FOR OTHER WATER QUALITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH INCIDENTS

[STATE NOTICE OR WARNING]

West Valley Water District has issued a [state notice] for customers located within **[AREA]**.

Until further notice:

1. **[LIST CUSTOMER ACTIONS]**

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAYBOOK

The **[NOTICE OR WARNING]** remains in effect until laboratory testing confirms the water meets all state and federal drinking water standards.

Free bottled water is available at **[LOCATION]**.

Updates: www.wvwd.org

PHASE 3: Update and Reassure

Communication Type:	Ongoing customer update.
When to Use:	During Phase 3 while the notice remains active.
Objectives:	Maintain transparency while demonstrating progress toward resolution.
Audience:	Customers, regulators, media, elected officials.
Channels:	Website, social media, media updates, community briefings.

EXAMPLE VERBIAGE

West Valley Water District continues responding to the Boil Water Notice affecting customers in **[AREA]**.

Today's update:

1. Water sampling is underway
2. Additional testing continues
3. District crews remain on-site
4. Bottled water remains available

The Boil Water Notice remains in effect.

Our next update will be provided by **[TIME / DATE]**.

TEMPLATE FOR OTHER WATER QUALITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH INCIDENTS

West Valley Water District continues responding to the **[LIST THE NOTICE OR WARNING]** affecting customers in **[AREA]**.

Today's update:

1. Water sampling is underway
2. Additional testing continues
3. District crews remain on-site
4. Bottled water remains available

The **[LIST THE NOTICE OR WARNING]** remains in effect.

Our next update will be provided by **[TIME / DATE]**.

PHASE 4: Resolve and Restore Trust

Communication Type:	Lift notice.
When to Use:	Immediately after receiving authorization from DDW.
Objectives:	Communicate resolution and restore customer confidence.
Audience:	All audiences.
Channels:	Website, social media, media release, email, community outreach.

EXAMPLE VERBIAGE

✅ BOIL WATER NOTICE LIFTED

West Valley Water District has lifted the Boil Water Notice for customers in **[AREA]**. Testing has confirmed the water meets all state and federal drinking water standards.

Customers may immediately resume normal use of tap water. Since the notice was issued, District crews have:

1. Completed system flushing.
2. Performed required testing.
3. Coordinated with the Division of Drinking Water.

Thank you for your patience while we worked to protect public health.

TEMPLATE FOR OTHER WATER QUALITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH INCIDENTS

✅ **[LIST INCIDENT] IS RESOLVED / [LIST NOTICE] IS LIFTED**

West Valley Water District has **[RESOLVED / LIFTED]** the **[LIST INCIDENT]** for customers in **[AREA]**. Testing has confirmed the water meets all state and federal drinking water standards.

Customers may immediately resume normal use of tap water. Since the notice was issued, District crews have:

4. Completed system flushing.
5. Performed required testing.
6. Coordinated with the Division of Drinking Water.

Thank you for your patience while we worked to protect public health.

Supporting Resource Examples

WEBSITE BANNER HEADLINE

⚠️ BOIL WATER NOTICE

Body

Customers in **[AREA]** should boil tap water before drinking until further notice.

Latest updates: **[LINK]**

SOCIAL MEDIA (FACEBOOK / INSTAGRAM)

⚠️ BOIL WATER NOTICE

A boil water notice has been issued for customers in [AREA].

Please boil water for one minute before drinking.

Updates: [LINK]

SOCIAL MEDIA (X)

Customers in [AREA].

Boil water before drinking.

Updates: [LINK]

Supporting Resource Templates

WEBSITE BANNER HEADLINE

⚠️ [STATE NOTICE OR WARNING]

Body

Customers in [AREA] should [LIST CUSTOMER ACTION] until further notice.

Latest updates: [LINK]

SOCIAL MEDIA (FACEBOOK / INSTAGRAM)

⚠️ [STATE NOTICE OR WARNING]

Has been issued for customers in [AREA].

[LIST CUSTOMER ACTION(S)]

Updates: [LINK]

SOCIAL MEDIA (X)

⚠️ [STATE NOTICE OR WARNING]

Customers in [AREA].

1. [LIST CUSTOMER ACTION]

Updates: [LINK]

Customer Service Talking Point Examples

Customer:	"Can I brush my teeth?"
Response:	Until the Boil Water Notice is lifted, we recommend brushing your teeth using boiled or bottled water. Additional updates are available at...
Customer:	"When will this be over?"
Response:	Water testing is ongoing. We'll provide another update no later than [TIME] .
Customer:	"Is my water safe for bathing?"
Response:	Bathing is generally considered safe unless otherwise directed by public health officials. If recommendations change, we'll notify customers immediately.

BOARD BRIEFING

1. Incident
2. Time initiated
3. Cause (known / suspected)
4. Customers impacted
5. Operational response
6. Regulatory coordination
7. Media activity
8. Community concerns
9. Next scheduled update

Supply and Infrastructure

Major Water Main Break

A significant break in a water transmission or distribution main that reduces system pressure and may cause temporary outages.

Public Safety Power Shutoffs

A planned utility power shutoff during high wildfire-risk conditions that may affect wells, pumps and other critical water infrastructure, potentially reducing water supply, pressure or service reliability.

Power Outage

A widespread power outage that can disrupt power to one or more District wells, pump stations and storage facilities, causing temporary water outages or intermittent services.

Natural Disasters

Includes earthquakes, fires or other inclement weather affecting water supply.

Below is an example of a Supply and Infrastructure scenario from the categories listed above. The accompanying template should be adapted to develop crisis response materials for incidents beyond a Major Water Main Break.

WATER MAIN BREAK

A **water main break notice** is typically issued when a break is significant enough to **affect customers or public safety**. For example, causing a water outage, low pressure, flooding, road closures or an extended repair. If the break results in a loss of pressure that creates a potential water-quality risk, the District may also need to issue a **Boil Water Notice (example in scenario #1)** depending on the circumstances and regulatory requirements.

Because water main breaks directly impact customer experience, communication should be timely, transparent, bilingual, and highly visible.

At-A-Glance | Crisis Level 3: Crisis Event

High visibility, widespread impact or health / safety concern. This is a crisis event.

Communication Lead:	Public Outreach and Government Affairs
Executive Lead:	General Manager
Primary Departments:	Operations, Water Quality, Customer Service, Engineering, Human Resources and Risk Management
Regulatory Agency:	State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water
Primary Objective:	Protect District reputation and community trust through proactive communication and clear customer instructions.

IMMEDIATE ACTIVATION

1. OPERATIONS

- g. Notify the General Manager and/or Assistant General Manager
- a. Notify the Public Outreach and Government Affairs Lead
- b. Begin operational response and regulatory coordination

2. PUBLIC OUTREACH AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

- a. Activate the Crisis Communications Team
- b. Begin development of customer messaging
- c. Communicate FAQs with Customer Service Lead
- d. Prepare bilingual communications
- e. Coordinate executive briefings

SITUATION ASSESSMENT

Before releasing public information, confirm:

- 1. What is the issue?
- 2. Has it been confirmed or is it still under investigation?
- 3. What geographic area is affected?
- 4. Approximately how many customers are affected?
- 5. Is there an immediate public health concern?
- 6. What action should customers take?
- 7. Has the Division of Drinking Water been notified?
- 8. When will additional information be available?

Communications Response and Ready to Use Verbiage

PHASE 1. Acknowledge

Communication Type:	Initial holding statement.
When to Use:	Immediately after the incident has been confirmed and before all facts are available.
Objectives:	1. Acknowledge the incident. 2. Communicate that customer and community safety is the District's highest priority. 3. Establish WVWD as the trusted source of information.
Audience:	Customers, employees.
Channels:	Website, social media, customer alerts

EXAMPLE VERBIAGE

West Valley Water District is responding to a water main break affecting customers in **[AFFECTED AREA]**.

District crews are on-site and working to isolate the break, assess the extent of the damage and begin necessary repairs. Customers in the affected area may experience low water pressure or temporary water service interruption while repairs are underway.

At this time, customers should monitor official District communications for updates. If any additional customer actions are necessary, affected customers will be notified directly.

We understand the inconvenience service disruptions can cause and are working to restore normal water service as safely and quickly as possible.

The next update will be provided no later than **[TIME]**.

Additional information is available at www.wvwd.org.

TEMPLATE FOR OTHER SUPPLY AND INFRASTRUCTURE INCIDENTS

West Valley Water District is responding to a **[DESCRIBE SUPPLY / INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUE]** affecting customers in **[AFFECTED AREA / ALL CUSTOMERS]**.

District crews are **[LIST CREW ACTION]**. Customers in the affected area may experience **[LOW WATER PRESSURE / TEMPORARY WATER SERVICE INTERRUPTION / NO WATER SERVICE]** while repairs are underway.

At this time, customers should monitor official District communications for updates. If any additional customer actions are necessary, affected customers will be notified directly.

We understand the inconvenience service disruptions can cause and are working to restore normal water service as safely and quickly as possible.

The next update will be provided no later than **[TIME]**.

Additional information is available at www.wvwd.org.

PHASE 2. Inform

Communication Type:	What affected customers can expect.
When to Use:	Immediately when identifying the true water main break affects and repair requirements timeline.
Objectives:	Provide clear instructions that help customers access water and plan accordingly.
Audience:	Affected customers, employees, Board of Directors, regulators.
Channels:	Text, email, website, social media, customer alerts, direct outreach.

EXAMPLE VERBIAGE

West Valley Water District continues responding to a water main break affecting customers in **[AFFECTED AREA]**.

We understand customers in the affected area are currently experiencing intermittent water service. District crews have isolated the damaged section of water main and are actively working to repair the affected pipeline.

Repairs are expected to be completed by approximately **[TIME / DATE]**. Once repairs are complete, crews will gradually restore water pressure before water service is fully restored.

We appreciate our customers' patience as crews work to safely restore water service.

In the meantime, free bottled water is available at **[LOCATION]**.

Updates: www.wvwd.org

TEMPLATE FOR OTHER SUPPLY AND INFRASTRUCTURE INCIDENTS

West Valley Water District continues responding to a **[DESCRIBE SUPPLY / INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUE]** affecting customers in **[AFFECTED AREA]**.

We understand customers in the affected area are **[LIST EXPERIENCE]**. District crews have **[EXPLAIN CREW ACTION(S)]**.

Repairs are expected to be completed by approximately **[TIME / DATE]**. Once repairs are complete, crews will **[LIST FINAL ACTION]**.

We appreciate our customers' patience as crews work to safely restore water service.

In the meantime, free bottled water is available at **[LOCATION]**.

Updates: www.wvwd.org

PHASE 3. Resolve and Restore Trust

Communication Type:	Repair complete.
When to Use:	Immediately when water service has been restored.
Objectives:	Communicate resolution and restore customer confidence.
Audience:	All audiences.
Channels:	Text, website, social media, email, direct outreach.

EXAMPLE VERBIAGE

West Valley Water District has completed emergency repairs to the water main break that affected customers in **[AFFECTED AREA]**. Water service has been restored.

Since the break occurred, District crews have:

1. Isolated and repaired the damaged water main
2. Restored water service and system pressure
3. Flushed the affected portion of the system, as necessary
4. Confirmed the system is operating normally

Customers may experience temporary air in their pipes as service returns to normal. This may cause the water to look milky as the air bubbles rise.

We appreciate your patience and understanding while crews worked to safely complete repairs and restore service.

Additional information is available at www.wvwd.org.

TEMPLATE FOR OTHER SUPPLY AND INFRASTRUCTURE INCIDENTS

West Valley Water District has completed emergency repairs to the **[DESCRIBE SUPPLY / INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUE]** that affected customers in **[AFFECTED AREA]**. Water service has been restored.

Since the **[LIST SUPPLY / INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUE]** occurred, District crews have:

1. **[LIST CREW ACTIONS TO REPAIR]**

Customers may experience **[DESCRIBE ANY WARNINGS, IF NECESSARY]** as service returns to normal. This may cause **[DESCRIBE WHAT THEY MAY NOTICE]**.

We appreciate your patience and understanding while crews worked to safely complete repairs and restore service.

Additional information is available at www.wvwd.org.

Supporting Resource Examples

WEBSITE BANNER HEADLINE

⚠ WATER MAIN BREAK

Body

Customers in [AREA] may experience temporary service disruptions.

Latest updates: [LINK]

SOCIAL MEDIA (FACEBOOK / INSTAGRAM)

⚠ SERVICE DISRUPTION

A water main break is affecting customers in [AFFECTED SERVICE AREA]. While District crews work to repair the break, free bottled water is available at [LOCATION].

Updates: [LINK]

SOCIAL MEDIA (X)

⚠ SERVICE DISRUPTION

Customers in [AREA].

Free bottled water is available at [LOCATION].

Updates: [LINK]

Supporting Resource Templates

WEBSITE BANNER HEADLINE

⚠ [STATE NOTICE OR WARNING]

Body

Customers in [AREA] may experience [LIST EFFECTS].

Latest updates: [LINK]

SOCIAL MEDIA (FACEBOOK / INSTAGRAM)

⚠ [STATE NOTICE OR WARNING]

A water main break is affecting customers in [AFFECTED SERVICE AREA]. While District crews work to repair the break, free bottled water is available at [LOCATION].

Updates: [LINK]

SOCIAL MEDIA (X)

[STATE NOTICE OR WARNING]

Customers in [AREA].

Free bottled water is available at [LOCATION].

Updates: [LINK]

Customer Service Talking Point Examples

Customer:	"When will this be over?"
Response:	District crews are working to restore the water main repair as quickly as possible. We'll provide another update no later than [TIME].
Customer:	"Why is my water off or pressure low?"
Response:	A water main break in your area may require the District to temporarily shut off or reduce water flow so crews can safely isolate the damaged pipe and complete repairs. Service will be restored as quickly and safely as possible.
Customer:	"What should I do when my water service returns?"
Response:	Customers may initially notice air in their pipes or temporary discoloration after service is restored. Follow any flushing or other instructions provided by the District.

BOARD BRIEFING

1. Incident
2. Time initiated
3. Cause (known / suspected)
4. Customers impacted
5. Operational response
6. Regulatory coordination
7. Media activity
8. Community concerns
9. Next scheduled update

Security Threat

Cybersecurity Threat

Any unauthorized attempt to access, disrupt, damage or disable the district's information technology systems, operational technology systems or digital services.

Data Breach

A type of cybersecurity incident in which sensitive confidential or personal information is assessed, acquired, disclosed or stolen by an unauthorized party.

SCADA / Operational Technology Breaches

An unauthorized attempt to access, manipulate or disrupt the industrial control systems that monitor and operate critical water infrastructure, including treatment facilities, pumps, reservoirs, valves and distribution systems.

Vandalism, Sabotage, or Facility Intrusions

Intentional acts that damage, disrupt or unlawfully access West Valley Water District property, equipment or infrastructure.

Threats Against Employees or the Public

Involves verbal, written or physical threats, acts of intimidation or other behaviors that pose a credible risk to the safety and security of West Valley Water District employees, customers, contractors or visitors.

Active Threats at District Facilities

Situations involving an immediate risk of violence or harm to employees, customers, contractors or visitors at West Valley Water District properties.

Below is an example of a Security Threat scenario from the categories listed above. The accompanying template should be adapted to develop crisis response materials for incidents beyond a cybersecurity attack / data breach.

A CYBERSECURITY ATTACK / DATA BREACH

A cybersecurity attack or data breach occurs when West Valley Water District experiences unauthorized access to, disruption of or compromise of its information technology systems, operational technology systems or sensitive data. These incidents require immediate coordination among Executive Leadership, IT, customer service, Public Outreach and Government Affairs Lead and their Crisis Communications Team, legal counsel, HR (as appropriate), law enforcement, cybersecurity experts and other regulatory or government partners.

Because cybersecurity incidents can affect public trust, service continuity and regulatory compliance, communications should be timely, transparent and fact-based. Public messaging should clearly explain what is known, what is being done to respond, whether water quality or service has been affected, and where customers can obtain verified updates as the investigation progresses.

At-a-Glance | Security Level 3: Crisis Event

High visibility, widespread impact or health / concern. This is a crisis event.

Communications Lead:	Public Outreach and Government Affairs
Executive Lead:	General Manager
Primary Departments:	Executive Leadership, Information Technology, Customer Service, Human Resources, Legal Counsel
Regulatory Agency:	Local/federal law enforcement
Primary Objective:	Maintain public trust through timely communication while providing clear guidance on any actions customers should take.

IMMEDIATE ACTIVATION

1. OPERATIONS

- a. Notify the General Manager or Assistant General Manager
- b. Notify Information Technology Department
- c. Notify the Public Outreach and Government Affairs Lead
- d. Begin operational response and regulatory coordination

2. PUBLIC OUTREACH AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

- a. Activate the Crisis Communications Team
- b. Begin development of customer messaging
- c. Prepare bilingual communications
- d. Coordinate executive briefings

SITUATION ASSESSMENT

Before releasing public information, confirm:

1. What is the security threat?
2. Has it been confirmed or is it still under investigation?
3. What is the affected geography or system (specific District facility, operational systems or full IT operations)?
4. Approximately how many individuals are affected?
5. Is there an immediate security risk, and to whom (general population / customers and / or employees)?
6. What action should customers take?
7. Have appropriate regulatory agencies been notified?
8. When will additional information be available?

Communications Response and Ready to Use Templates

PHASE 1: Acknowledge

Communication Type:	Initial holding statement.
When to Use:	Immediately after the incident has been confirmed and before all facts are available.
Objectives:	1. Acknowledge the incident. 2. Communicate that customer safety and protected data are the District's highest priorities. 3. Establish WVWD as the trusted source of information.
Audience:	Media, customers, general public.
Channels:	Website, social media, media statement, customer alerts.

EXAMPLE VERBIAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

West Valley Water District is aware of a cybersecurity incident affecting portions of its technology systems. The safety of our customers and their protected data is our highest priority, and we are actively investigating.

At this time, customers should continue to monitor official District communications for updates. If additional actions are necessary to protect data, affected customers will be notified immediately.

We understand customers may have questions and are committed to providing accurate information as soon as it is confirmed.

The next update will be provided no later than [TIME].

Additional information is available at www.wvwd.org.

TEMPLATE FOR OTHER SECURITY INCIDENTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

West Valley Water District is aware of a [LIST INCIDENT] affecting [LIST AFFECTED GROUPS OR AREAS]. The safety of our [CUSTOMERS, EMPLOYEES AND / OR PROTECTED DATA] is our highest priority, and we are actively investigating.

At this time, customers should continue to monitor official District communications for updates. If additional actions are necessary, affected customers will be notified immediately.

We understand customers may have questions and are committed to providing accurate information as soon as it is confirmed.

The next update will be provided no later than [TIME].

Additional information is available at www.wvwd.org.

PHASE 2: Inform

Communication Type:	Official data security alert.
When to Use:	Immediately when data breach has been confirmed.
Objectives:	Provide clear instructions that help customers protect themselves.
Audience:	Affected customers, employees, Board of Directors, regulators.
Channels:	Text, email, website, social media, customer alerts, direct outreach.

EXAMPLE VERBIAGE

CRITICAL SECURITY DATA ALERT

West Valley Water District is investigating a cybersecurity incident, and your data may have been compromised.

This incident is under investigation with law enforcement and cybersecurity experts. Here is what you can do now:

1. Please monitor your financial and online accounts for suspicious activity.
2. Change passwords for any accounts that use the same or similar login credentials.
3. Be cautious of unsolicited emails, text messages or phone calls requesting personal information or account credentials.

At this time, there is no indication that the incident has impacted water quality or the District's ability to provide reliable water service to customers. Protecting our customers, employees and critical infrastructure remains our highest priority.

The next update will be provided no later than [TIME]. Updates: www.wvwd.org

TEMPLATE FOR OTHER SECURITY THREAT INCIDENTS

[LIST INCIDENT OR ALERT]

West Valley Water District is investigating [LIST INCIDENT], [AND YOUR DATA MAY HAVE BEEN COMPROMISED, IF APPLICABLE].

This incident is under investigation with law enforcement [AND CYBERSECURITY EXPERTS, IF APPLICABLE]. Here is what you can do now:

1. [LIST CUSTOMER ACTION(S)]

At this time, there is no indication that the incident has impacted water quality or the District's ability to provide reliable water service to customers. Protecting our customers, employees [AND CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE, IF APPLICABLE] remains our highest priority.

The next update will be provided no later than [TIME]. Updates: www.wvwd.org

PHASE 3: Update and Reassure

Communication Type:	Ongoing customer update.
When to Use:	During Phase 3 while the investigation remains active.
Objectives:	Maintain transparency while demonstrating progress toward resolution.
Audience:	Customers, regulators, media, elected officials.
Channels:	Website, social media, media updates, community briefings.

EXAMPLE VERBIAGE

West Valley Water District continues responding to a critical data breach affecting approx. **[# OF CUSTOMERS]**.

Today's update:

1. The investigation remains ongoing with the assistance of cybersecurity experts and law enforcement.
2. Officials are working to secure and restore affected systems, and response and recovery efforts continue.
3. Water quality, water safety and water service remain unaffected.

Our next update will be provided by **[TIME / DATE]**.

Updates: www.wvwd.org

TEMPLATE FOR OTHER SECURITY THREAT INCIDENTS

West Valley Water District continues responding to **[LIST INCIDENT]** affecting approx. **[# OF CUSTOMERS, IF APPLICABLE]**.

Today's update:

1. **[LIST INVESTIGATION UPDATE(S)]**

Our next update will be provided by **[TIME / DATE]**.

Updates: www.wvwd.org

PHASE 4: Resolve and Restore Trust

Communication Type:	Resolution.
When to Use:	Immediately after receiving authorization from law enforcement and IT.
Objectives:	Communicate resolution and restore customer confidence.
Audience:	All audiences.
Channels:	Website, social media, media release, email, community outreach.

EXAMPLE VERBIAGE

✅ DATA BREACH RESOLVED

West Valley Water District has concluded its investigation into the cybersecurity incident affecting customer data and portions of its information technology systems. Affected systems have been restored and normal operations have resumed.

Customers may continue using district services as normal. Since the incident was identified, the District has:

1. Secured and restored affected systems.
2. Completed a comprehensive cybersecurity investigation.
3. Implemented additional security safeguards to strengthen system protections.
4. Coordinated with law enforcement, cybersecurity experts and other appropriate agencies throughout the response.

Throughout the incident, water quality, water safety and water service remained unaffected.

Thank you for your patience and understanding while we worked to protect your data and strengthen the security of our systems

TEMPLATE FOR OTHER SECURITY THREAT INCIDENTS

✅ [LIST INCIDENT - RESOLVED] or [INVESTIGATION CONCLUDED]

West Valley Water District has concluded its investigation into [LIST INCIDENT]. [LIST RESOLUTION OUTCOME] Normal operations have resumed.

Since the incident was identified, the District has:

1. [LIST DISTRICT ACTIONS THROUGHOUT RESPONSE]

Throughout the incident, water quality, water safety and water service remained unaffected.

Thank you for your patience and understanding while we worked to protect your data and strengthen the security of our systems

Supporting Resource Examples

WEBSITE BANNER HEADLINE

CRITICAL DATA SECURITY ALERT

Body

We are investigating a security incident where your data may have been compromised.

Latest updates: [\[LINK\]](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA (FACEBOOK / INSTAGRAM)

CRITICAL DATA SECURITY ALERT

Your data may have been compromised.

Please monitor your financial and online accounts for suspicious activity.

Updates: [\[LINK\]](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA (X)

CRITICAL DATA SECURITY ALERT

Please monitor your online accounts for suspicious activity.

Updates: [\[LINK\]](#)

Supporting Resource Templates

WEBSITE BANNER HEADLINE

[LIST INCIDENT]

Body

We are investigating a security incident where **[LIST HOW IT MAY AFFECT CUSTOMERS]**.

Latest updates: [\[LINK\]](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA (FACEBOOK / INSTAGRAM)

[LIST INCIDENT] ALERT

[BRIEF EXPLANATION ON HOW IT COULD AFFECT CUSTOMERS]

Please monitor your financial and online accounts for suspicious activity.

Updates: [\[LINK\]](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA (X)

[LIST INCIDENT] ALERT

[LIST CUSTOMER ACTION]

Updates: [LINK]

Customer Service Talking Point Examples

Customer:	"Was my personal information compromised?"
Response:	We are working to determine whether any customer information was affected. If the investigation confirms that personal information was compromised, we will notify you directly and provide guidance on how to protect your information. We will provide updates as soon as more information becomes available.

Customer:	"When will this be over?"
Response:	This investigation is ongoing. We'll provide another update no later than [TIME].

Customer Service Talking Point Templates

Customer:	"Is my water safe to drink?"
Response:	Yes. At this time, there is no indication that [INSERT INCIDENT] has affected water quality.

Customer:	"When will this be over?"
Response:	This investigation is ongoing. We'll provide another update no later than [TIME].

Customer:	"Was my personal information compromised?"
Response:	The safety of our customers and team members are our top priority, so we are working with law enforcement to ensure our facilities and infrastructure are secure. You can find updates at [LINK].

BOARD BRIEFING

1. Incident
2. Time initiated
3. Cause (known / suspected)
4. Customers impacted
5. Operational response
6. Regulatory coordination
7. Media activity
8. Community concerns
9. Next scheduled update

Worker and Public Safety Incidents

Off-Duty Employee Incidents

Specifically pertaining to incidents that involve speech or conduct that are protected by the First Amendment, but problematic.

Construction and Contractor Accidents

Incidents occurring during construction that result in injury, property damage, utility disruptions, environmental impacts or public safety hazards involving District employees, contractors or members of the public.

Public Injury at District Facilities or Worksites

Any incident in which a customer, visitor, contractor, or member of the public is injured while at a location under the District's control or management.

Fatalities (Employee, Contractor, or Public)

The death of a District employee, contractor, customer, visitor, or member of the public that occur on District property, at a District worksite, or in connection with District operations or activities.

Incidents Involving Employees or Contractors in Unlawful Activities During Work Hours

Situations can include theft, fraud, assault, substance impairment, vandalism, or other criminal acts during work hours that may affect workplace safety, public trust, or District operations.

Active Threats at District Facilities

Situations involving an immediate risk of violence or harm to employees, customers, contractors or visitors at West Valley Water District properties.

Operational Incidents Involving Employees

Work-related events that can include operational errors, policy violations, equipment misuse, workplace conflicts, or other incidents that interfere with the District's ability to safely and reliably serve customers.

Vehicle Accidents Involving District Vehicles

When a District-owned, leased, or operated vehicle is involved in a collision or other roadway event resulting in injury, property damage, traffic disruption, or impacts to District operations.

Below is an example of a Worker and Public Safety Incident scenario from the categories listed above. The accompanying template should be adapted to develop crisis response materials for incidents beyond an off-duty employee incident.

OFF DUTY EMPLOYEE INCIDENTS

An off-duty employee incident involving speech or conduct protected by the First Amendment may generate community concern, media / social media attention, or reputational risk for the District. While these incidents typically do not affect water service or public safety, they require coordination between HR, legal counsel, Public Outreach and Government Affairs, and the General Manager / Assistant General Manager.

Communications should be timely and factual, clearly distinguishing the employee's personal views from those of the District while respecting constitutional protections, employee privacy and applicable laws and policies

At-a-Glance | Security Level 2: Elevated Issue

Increased customer impact or potential for public concern.

Communications Lead:	Public Outreach and Government Affairs
Executive Lead:	General Manager
Primary Departments:	Human Resources / Risk Management, Customer Service, Legal Counsel
Regulatory Agency:	Local Law Enforcement (as needed)
Primary Objective:	Protect public trust through timely, factual communication while respecting employee rights and separating the District's views from the employee in question.

IMMEDIATE ACTIVATION

1. OPERATIONS

- e. Notify the General Manager or Assistant General Manager
- a. Notify the Public Outreach and Government Affairs Lead
- b. Notify Human Resources / Risk Management
- c. Notify Legal (as necessary)
- d. Begin operational response

2. PUBLIC OUTREACH AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

- a. Activate the Crisis Communications Team
- b. Begin development of customer messaging
- c. Prepare bilingual communications
- d. Coordinate executive briefings

SITUATION ASSESSMENT

Before releasing public information, confirm:

1. What is the situation?
2. Has it been confirmed or is it still under investigation?
3. What is the affected communications medium / platform?
4. Who and how many people are involved?
5. Is there an immediate security risk, and to whom (general population / customers and / or employees)?
6. Is the conversation picking up interest on social media or from media?
7. For a physical threat situation, have local authorities been notified, and what notification tier applies?
8. When will additional information be available?

Communications Response and Ready to Use Verbiage

PHASE 1: Acknowledge

Communication Type:	Initial holding statement
When to Use:	Immediately after the incident has been confirmed and before all facts are available.
Objectives:	1. Acknowledge the incident. 2. Communicate that customer safety is the District's highest priority. 3. Establish WVWD as the trusted source of information.
Audience:	Media, customers, online followers, general public.
Channels:	Email, social media, media statement.

EXAMPLE VERBIAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

West Valley Water District is aware of concerns regarding comments made by an employee outside of their official duties.

The views expressed are those of the individual and do not reflect the views, policies or positions of the District. We are reviewing the matter in accordance with applicable laws, District policies and procedures.

Additional information is available at www.wvwd.org.

TEMPLATE FOR OTHER WORKER AND PUBLIC SAFETY INCIDENTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

West Valley Water District is aware of [LIST INCIDENT].

[EXPRESS CONCERN / MOURNING OR SUPPORT DEPENDING ON INCIDENT LEVEL] We are reviewing the matter in accordance with [APPLICABLE LAWS, DISTRICT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OR LAW ENFORCEMENT].

We understand customers may have questions and are committed to providing accurate information as soon as it is confirmed.

The next update will be provided no later than [TIME].

Additional information is available at www.wvwd.org.

PHASE 2: Inform

Communication Type:	Official information.
When to Use:	Immediately once more information becomes available.
Objectives:	Provide clear instructions that avoids escalation of the situation.
Audience:	Customers, employees, media, online followers, Board of Directors.
Channels:	Email, social media, media statement.

EXAMPLE VERBIAGE

West Valley Water District is aware of concerns regarding comments made by an employee outside of their official duties.

The views expressed are those of the individual and do not reflect the views, policies or positions of the District.

At this time:

1. Please do not engage directly with the employee regarding this matter.
2. Direct any questions or concerns to the District through its official communication channels.
3. The District is reviewing the matter in accordance with applicable laws, District policies and procedures.

District operations continue as normal, and our focus remains on providing reliable water service to the communities we serve.

The next update will be provided no later than [TIME].

Updates: www.wvwd.org

TEMPLATE FOR OTHER WORKER AND PUBLIC SAFETY INCIDENTS

West Valley Water District is aware of [LIST INCIDENT]. [EXPRESS CONCERN / MOURNING OR SUPPORT DEPENDING ON INCIDENT LEVEL]

At this time:

1. [LIST CUSTOMER ACTION(S), IF APPLICABLE]

District operations continue as normal, and our focus remains on providing reliable water service to the communities we serve.

The next update will be provided no later than [TIME].

Updates: www.wvwd.org

PHASE 3: Resolve and Restore Trust

Communication Type:	Resolution.
When to Use:	Immediately after employee action is taken.
Objectives:	Communicate resolution and restore customer confidence.
Audience:	All audiences.
Channels:	Website, social media, media release, email, Board of Directors.

EXAMPLE VERBIAGE

West Valley Water District has concluded its review of concerns regarding comments made by an employee outside of their official duties.

The District addressed the matter in accordance with applicable laws, District policies and procedures. Because this is a personnel matter, we cannot comment on any specific employment actions.

The District remains committed to providing high-quality, reliable water service to the communities we serve. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we worked to address this matter responsibly.

TEMPLATE FOR OTHER WORKER AND PUBLIC SAFETY INCIDENTS

West Valley Water District has [LIST RESOLUTION].

[LIST APOLOGY OR EMPATHY FOR FATALITIES OR INJURIES, If APPLICABLE].

[INDICATE DISTRICT COMPLIANCE WITH GOVERNING PARTIES].

The District remains committed to providing reliable water service to the communities we serve. Thank you for your patience and understanding throughout the [INVESTIGATION / AS WE WORKED TO ADDRESS THIS MATTER RESPONSIBLY].

Supporting Resource Examples

WEBSITE BANNER HEADLINE

**⚠ WE ARE AWARE OF CONCERNS REGARDING COMMENTS MADE
BY AN EMPLOYEE OUTSIDE OF THEIR OFFICIAL DUTIES.**

Body

We are reviewing the matter in accordance with applicable laws, District policies and procedures.

Latest updates: [LINK]

SOCIAL MEDIA (FACEBOOK / INSTAGRAM)

**⚠ WE ARE AWARE OF CONCERNS REGARDING COMMENTS MADE
BY AN EMPLOYEE OUTSIDE OF THEIR OFFICIAL DUTIES.**

We are reviewing the matter in accordance with applicable laws, District policies and procedures.

Updates: [LINK]

SOCIAL MEDIA (X)

**⚠ WE ARE AWARE OF CONCERNS REGARDING COMMENTS MADE
BY AN EMPLOYEE OUTSIDE OF THEIR OFFICIAL DUTIES.**

We are reviewing the matter in accordance with applicable laws, District policies and procedures.

Updates: [LINK]

Supporting Resource Templates

WEBSITE BANNER HEADLINE

**⚠ WE ARE AWARE OF A [INCIDENT TYPE] AT
[LIST LOCATION OR AFFECTED AREA].**

Body

We are [REVIEWING / INVESTIGATING] this incident.

Latest updates: [LINK]

SOCIAL MEDIA (FACEBOOK / INSTAGRAM)

**⚠ WE ARE AWARE OF A [INCIDENT TYPE] AT
[LIST LOCATION OR AFFECTED AREA].**

We are [REVIEWING / INVESTIGATING] this incident.

Updates: [LINK]

SOCIAL MEDIA (X)

▲ WE ARE AWARE OF A [INCIDENT TYPE] AT [LIST LOCATION OR AFFECTED AREA].

We are [REVIEWING / INVESTIGATING] this incident.

Updates: [LINK]

Customer Service Talking Point Examples

Customer:	"Is the employee being disciplined or investigated?"
Response:	Because this is a personnel matter, we cannot comment on specific employment actions or internal processes.
Customer:	"Does this affect my water service?"
Response:	No. District operations continue as normal, and we remain committed to providing reliable water service to our customers.

BOARD BRIEFING

1. Incident
2. Time initiated
3. Cause (known / suspected)
4. Customers impacted
5. Operational response
6. Regulatory coordination
7. Media activity
8. Community concerns
9. Next scheduled update

BEST PRACTICE

Every public update should answer three questions:

1. What happened?
2. What is WVWD doing?
3. What should customers do next?

Consistently answering these questions builds credibility and reduces uncertainty.

Post-Incident Review and Continuous Improvement

C.	L.	E.	A.	R.
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C.L.E.A.R. STEP 5: Review and Recover

The response does not end when the incident does. Once operations have stabilized and the resolution has been communicated, thank customers and partners, and provide any final updates or service restoration or corrective actions. Conduct an internal debrief to evaluate what worked well, identify opportunities for improvement and document lessons learned. Update contact lists, templates, protocols and the Crisis Communications Playbook to strengthen preparedness and ensure an even more effective response to future incidents.

A post-incident scorecard will help evaluate the crisis response. Evaluate each measurement based on the communications response, analytics and feedback from participating teams. Document a corrective action for any categories rated **“Partially Met”** or **“Not Met”** to guide next steps.

Measurement	Score	Corrective Action (if applicable)
Initial Notification Issued within Target Timeframe	Met / Partially Met / Not Met	
Affected Area Clearly Communicated	Met / Partially Met / Not Met	
Customer Action Clearly Communicated	Met / Partially Met / Not Met	
Updates Provided at Promised Intervals	Met / Partially Met / Not Met	
Effective Internal Communications	Met / Partially Met / Not Met	
Prepared Customer Service Department	Met / Partially Met / Not Met	
Neutral to Positive Media Coverage	Met / Partially Met / Not Met	
Neutral to Positive Social Media Comments	Met / Partially Met / Not Met	
Final Resolution Communicated Promptly	Met / Partially Met / Not Met	
Outside Entities Contacted as Necessary	Met / Partially Met / Not Met	
Overall Communications Response	Met / Partially Met / Not Met	

Appendix

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAYBOOK

WEST VALLEY WATER DISTRICT EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST

The contact list below will be populated by WVWD leadership and reviewed quarterly to ensure accuracy. This internal list identifies Crisis Communications Team members and other key staff.

Name	Title	Personal Cell	Work Cell	Email
	General Manager			
	Assistant General Manager			
	Legal Counsel			
	Chief Financial Officer			
	Human Resources / Risk Manager			
	Manager of Public Outreach and Government Affairs			
	Director of Engineering			
	Director of Technical Services			
	Director of Operations			

This public agency list identifies external partners that include emergency response agencies, regulators, neighboring water agencies, and public officials who may be engaged depending on the nature of the incident.

[illegible]

