

Ventura Water System Description

The City is located 62 miles north of Los Angeles and 30 miles south of Santa Barbara along the California coastline. The City's planning area is bounded by the Ventura River on the west, Foster Park on the north, Franklin Barranca and the Santa Clara River to the east, with the Pacific Ocean as the southern boundary. The total planning area encompasses approximately 40 square miles. The City developed as a result of the ninth and last mission founded in California by Father Junipero Serra in 1782. In 1866, the City incorporated an area of about one square mile around the original Mission San Buenaventura. Since that time, the City has grown to an estimated 21 square miles. An estimated population of 113,500 (based on Census) is currently supplied water from the City's water system. This includes several unincorporated County areas, such as the upper North Ventura Avenue area to the north and developing areas east of the City boundary. The City Charter provides for a Council-Manager form of government. A seven member Council is elected at large for four-year terms, with the Mayor selected by the Council for a two-year term.

The Spanish Fathers for the Mission San Buenaventura developed the first water system for the City. It consisted of an aqueduct (that is now abandoned) to convey water from the Ventura River, near San Antonio Creek, to a reservoir located behind the Mission. During subsequent development around the Mission, additional groundwater was obtained from wells in the Ventura and Santa Clara River basins. Water facilities were developed and operated for the City by several individuals and companies over the period of 1869 to 1923. In 1923, the City acquired the water system, along with its water rights from the Ventura River, from the Southern California Edison Company and assumed the responsibility of providing water to City residents. In years following, the City developed additional sources of surface and groundwater, including wells and improvements to the surface water diversion from the Ventura River. Also, since 1960, the City has purchased surface water from Casitas Municipal Water District to supplement its water supplies. As development occurs on the east side of the City, additional groundwater sources have been developed to meet increasing demands.

Currently, the City's water system serves approximately 32,000 water service connections, which includes the population of the City plus some additional areas outside the City boundaries. The western portion of the City is within the Casitas Municipal Water District service area. The mid and eastern portion of the City is within United Water Conservation District's boundaries. Water service is provided to all residential, commercial, industrial and irrigation customers; including fire protection users.

The City water system is a complex system. The system delivers water from sea level to a maximum elevation of over 1,000 feet. The City operates three purification facilities, including one membrane filtration treatment plant for surface water sources on the west side of the City, and two iron/manganese removal treatment plants for groundwater sources on the east side.

The City also maintains and operates the Ventura Water Reclamation Facility. Ventura Water provides sewer service to approximately 98% of City residences. We also perform wastewater collection and treatment for McGrath State Beach Park and the North Coast Communities (Ventura County Service Area 29).

These residences generate approximately 9 million gallons of wastewater per day, which is carried by more than 280 miles of sewer mains and 12 lift stations to the Ventura Water Reclamation Facility. The Ventura Water Reclamation Facility is a tertiary treatment plant, located in the Ventura Harbor area, which is situated on the north bank of the Santa Clara River Estuary.

Following a three-step treatment process at the facility, treated wastewater is discharged into the estuary. The treated wastewater enters a system of wildlife ponds adjacent to the estuary. The wildlife ponds have a combined capacity of 34 million gallons. The treated wastewater is retained in these ponds for approximately 4 days. Water at the end of the wildlife pond system is either discharged to the estuary or delivered to reclaimed water customers.

The Ventura Water Reclamation Facility includes pump stations and pipelines for water reclamation. Our reclaimed water system provides water for irrigation of golf courses, parks and similar landscape areas. This reuse is an integral part of the city water conservation program and represents a reduction in demand on the drinking water supply each year of approximately 300 million gallons.