

Annual Water Festival put on hold this year due to COVID-19

[Joan Meiners](#), St. George Spectrum & Daily News | Published 5:11 p.m. MT June 25, 2020

COVID-19 has claimed another one of Cedar City's annual summer festivals.

The Central Iron County Water Conservation District's annual Water Festival has been cancelled for 2020 due to concerns about coronavirus. The festival was scheduled for this Saturday, June 27th, in Cedar City's Main Street Park.

"With COVID-19, we would hate to be responsible for an outbreak or people getting sick," said Jessica Staheli of the CICWCD. "We also thought the water games might not be fun for the kids if they had to wear a mask and didn't feel it would be good to ask for too many business sponsorships with the economy the way it is."

This Saturday would have marked the sixth-consecutive iteration of the Water Festival. The first one was held in 2015.

The Festival offers free hot dogs and water games, like water balloon tosses and a blow-up water slide, as well as educational booths for the community about new water-wise technologies and ways to conserve. It usually lasts three to four hours and hosts up to 1,500 visitors.

"Our main goal with the festival is just getting the public to really be involved and think about water conservation since it's such an important issue in our valley," Staheli said.

The Festival is sponsored by local businesses who use free booth space to advertise their water-conscious products. Past sponsors have included Southwest Plumbing Supply, Carollo Engineers, Home Depot, Cal Ranch, the 4H Club and the Master Gardeners.

"These business sponsors all understand that we all need water to continue living here in this area," Staheli said. "They know how important it is for the community to start thinking about water."

The Utah State University Extension program also typically attends the Water Festival to advertise their free water consultation service. Staheli explained that this free service consists of experts coming out to a client's home to conduct a free water check, testing sprinklers for inefficiencies and evaluating whether the lawn is being overwatered or if there are other ways residents could reduce water use.

USU Extension offers this service through the CICWCD in an effort to ease the Valley's water deficit, but the result often saves the individuals who participate money on their water bills. Free water consultations can be requested by calling the CICWCD at 435-865-9901.

Staheli says that the CICWCD hopes to resume holding the annual Water Festival again in 2021. In the meantime, they are planning some kind of socially-distanced water conservation contest for the community, complete with prizes or some kind of giveaway. Stay tuned for details on that to be announced at a later date.

“We’re really sad that we had to cancel it this year but we’re hoping to start it up next year and we hope to see everyone then,” Staheli said.



Joan Meiners is an Environment Reporter for The Spectrum & Daily News through the Report for America initiative by The GroundTruth Project.