



Central Iron County Water Conservancy District
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PRESS RELEASE

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Iron County Agencies Actively Collaborating to Respond to Drought, Monsoon Season

The entire Southwestern United States has been experiencing such dry conditions that scientists are using the term “megadrought” and labeling this the driest 22-year period in at least 1,200 years. In the Cedar Valley, the Central Iron County Water Conservancy District is working to ensure that residents and businesses have enough water and simultaneously restore health to a declining underground water supply stressed by overpumping and reduced rain and snowfall.

Unfortunately, water is not a one-solution issue. Each project comes with a price tag, but it is important we begin taking action for the future of our communities. Flood control, conservation, recharging and reusing water, and new sources of water will all play a role in the future of the Cedar Valley.

Managing monsoonal rains is important and city and county employees have been working on Coal Creek and storm drain systems to try to prevent flooding this year. Cedar City has cleaned out the creek in its boundaries and cleaned out more than 100 catch basins, including storm drain pipes and also re-established storm drain channels and Iron County and Enoch have also cleaned out many creeks, catch basins, and storm drains as well. The cities and county also offer free sandbags for residents. District projects help divert debris and sediment filled flood waters safely into Quichapa Lake and cleaner waters into recharge basins.

Conservation in agriculture, business and residential settings is another piece of the puzzle. The District has worked to help many agricultural producers to convert their sprinkler nozzles to new, more efficient technology, and it supports research taking place at the Southern Utah University Farm that will help farmers maximize their water use. The District continually strives to educate and encourage businesses and residents to conserve.

Aquifer recharge projects put water into the underground supply that would otherwise evaporate. The six recharge facilities that have been created will help to add increased water to the aquifer,

especially in years with high spring runoff. The first of the facilities was created in 2015, and the extensive Quichapa Lake recharge project was completed in 2021.

Area officials are also working to reuse water from the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Cedar City Corporation, who manages the Wastewater Treatment Plant, recently put out a request for proposals for the use of effluent water. The District worked with Enoch City, Iron County, and local growers to propose that the effluent water from the plant be used on an agricultural field. Doing this would optimize that water and decrease pumping from the aquifer in an area where groundwater is declining.

Using water from additional sources is also a proposed water solution. The District continually evaluates new sources within Cedar Valley and outside of the valley. Since 2006, the District has been working on a project to use water from Pine Valley, located northwest of Cedar City. The Pine Valley Water Supply Project is currently in the Environmental Approval Process with the Bureau of Land Management.

The valley's water situation is concerning, and it is important to optimize our water resources. The Central Iron County Water Conservancy District is working with scientists and state and local experts to help create solutions for the area's water future.

“The District has been serving the Cedar Valley community for 25 years, and we are devoted to ensuring our area has water,” said Paul Monroe, District General Manager. “We are experiencing a critical drought and we are collaborating on solutions that are necessary. It is time for us to each do our part.”

Each person in the community can do their part to help by being conscious of their water use. Shorten your showers, fix any leaks in or around your home, water outdoors after dark, remove unneeded lawn, and ensure plants are not receiving more water than they need. Individual efforts can add up to significant water savings. For more information about how you can do your part to contribute to solutions, visit CICWCD.org today.

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The Central Iron County Water Conservancy District is charged with conserving, developing and stabilizing the Cedar Valley water supply for the benefit of all current and future water users and consumers in the region. The Water District educates residents about conservation, reuse and water supply strategies as it strives to meet the challenges of declining water levels and community growth. To Get to Know Your H2O and learn more about how to water less, visit www.cicwcd.org.

Photo Captions: (photos courtesy CICWCD)

Floods: In 2021, flood waters rushed through the Woodbury Split diversion structure in Cedar City. Local entities have been working on cleaning creek and storm drain systems to try to prevent flooding this year.

Quichapa Recharge: The extensive Quichapa Lake recharge project was completed in 2021. Aquifer recharge projects put water into the underground supply that would otherwise evaporate.

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