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**2023**



TRABUCO CANYON WATER DISTRICT

# STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

DRAFT - FOR BOARD INPUT

PREPARED BY



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Trabuco Canyon Water District (TCWD) is a local water and sanitary utility serving the south Orange County communities of Trabuco Canyon, Robinson Ranch, Trabuco Highlands, Walden, Rancho Cielo, Portola Hills, Santiago Canyon Estates and Dove Canyon. TCWD prides itself on customer service, responsiveness and an understanding of the uniqueness of the area's challenges and characteristics.

To communicate effectively and proactively with TCWD customers and key stakeholders, TCWD partnered with RockSpark Communications + Marketing to develop a Strategic Communications Plan. This plan outlines goals, strategies and tactics to maximize TCWD's communications efforts through a variety of channels.

The Strategic Communications Plan is designed to embody Trabuco Canyon Water District's mission and vision. It will serve as a road map for TCWD to share its story when communicating with customers, community members, businesses and other key audiences. The actions outlined in the plan will help TCWD's stakeholders identify and connect with the vision, values and one-of-a-kind TCWD brand.

# GOALS

This plan is focused on accomplishing TCWD's three overarching communications goals:

1. Convey the value of the wide array of services provided to District customers.
2. Elevate the profile of the District and its local brand.
3. Increase trust, awareness and support for the District's actions, policies and priorities.

# STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN PHASES

## INDUSTRY GOLD STANDARD FOUR-STEP PROCESS

1. Research: Expert Insights and Analysis
2. Planning and Strategy
3. Implementation of the Plan
4. Evaluation and Optimization for Maximum Results

# PHASE 1: RESEARCH: EXPERT INSIGHTS AND ANALYSIS

To create a solid foundation for TCWD's Strategic Communications Plan, the RockSpark team conducted an in-depth research and discovery process to identify TCWD's communications needs, assess opportunities, formulate strategies and develop a measurement baseline for the plan.

## **Quantitative and Qualitative Research Conducted**

- In-depth interviews and information-gathering meetings with key TCWD staff.
- Communication materials audit, including a review of current branding, print and digital collateral, social media, events, video and existing media coverage.
- Comprehensive website audit.
- Internal strategic planning session.
- Internal stakeholder communications survey completed by TCWD employees and the Board of Directors.
- Customer communications survey. Status: in progress.

## **Research Findings Analyzed to Form the Plan Foundation**

The RockSpark team utilized the research findings and developed the following detailed reports:

- Communications Audit Report
- Website Audit Report

The reports outline key findings and accompanying opportunities and solutions that form the basis of the Strategic Communications Plan. The RockSpark team shared the reports in a meeting with TCWD leadership to receive feedback and insights and to ensure a mutually agreed-upon direction for the plan.

## Key Findings and Opportunities

- Respondents provided clear, sincere, hopeful feedback, indicating a strong organizational culture of trust and the expectation that leadership would carefully consider stakeholder input and concerns.
- Strong support for enhancing TCWD’s communications program and identification of opportunities for improvement across multiple communications platforms.
- Identification of the opportunity for increased use of digital and print communications channels.
  - Support for increased use of social media, including establishing an Instagram account.
  - Support for developing an email communications program/e-newsletter.
  - Support for developing additional print collateral.
- Connection with TCWD’s reputation as a lean, independent, reliable organization that serves the canyon communities.
- Strong support for current events, including Water Awareness Day.
- Support for each of the communications themes/topics identified by TCWD leadership.

## Complete Findings and Responses

- View the complete audit reports and findings in Appendix I and Appendix II of this plan.

# PHASE 2: PLANNING AND STRATEGY

Next, the RockSpark team developed the overall Strategic Communications Plan using the data findings from Phase 1. In this phase, the following items came to life:

- **Goals**
- **Objectives**
- **Strategies**
- **Tactics**

In addition, key audiences were identified, and topline key messages were created.



# TARGET AUDIENCES

During Phase I, the following audiences emerged:

## **Primary audiences**

- TCWD customers
  - Residents within the District's service area
  - Businesses and HOAs within the District's service area
- TCWD staff

## **Secondary audiences**

- Media
- Neighboring water districts and cities
- Legislators, including local elected officials

# COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES

This Strategic Communications Plan includes seven SMART objectives, which are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound steps that will be used to accomplish the plan goals. Each objective includes accompanying strategies and tactics.

## **Objective 1 – Branding and Messaging**

Elevate TCWD’s brand across all communications channels by refreshing TCWD’s brand and messaging to increase awareness and trust in the District and standardize the look and feel of TCWD’s communications assets across all customer touchpoints (points of customer contact).

## **Objective 2 – Digital Communications**

Increase the number and quality of TCWD’s digital communications touchpoints and the frequency of communications by enhancing current touchpoints and adding two new touchpoints within 12 months to expand awareness of TCWD’s services, programs, brand and key messages.

## **Objective 3—Print Communications**

Enhance TCWD’s print communications channels and develop new materials within 12 months to expand awareness of TCWD’s services, programs, brand and key messages.

## **Objective 4— Community Relations and Partnerships**

Increase awareness, two-way engagement and understanding of TCWD’s projects, programs and initiatives by participating in at least two new in-person and virtual interaction opportunities with customers and stakeholders within 12 months.

## **Objective 5 – Internal Communications**

Generate a 10% increase in the number of internal stakeholders that report that their overall impression of TCWD’s communications program and methods are excellent or good within 12 months (re-conduct the internal stakeholder communications survey).

## **Objective 6: Key Initiative Outreach, Including Potential Rate Increase Outreach**

Increase customer understanding of key TCWD priorities by developing targeted outreach plans for key initiatives and programs within the upcoming year.

## **Objective 7 – Media Relations**

Elevate TCWD’s profile and reach target audiences with key messages by increasing TCWD’s media mentions by 50% in year one of the plan.

# STRATEGIES AND TACTICS TO ACHIEVE EACH OBJECTIVE

## **Objective 1: Branding and Messaging**

Elevate TCWD's brand across all communications channels by refreshing TCWD's brand and messaging to increase awareness and trust in the District and standardize the look and feel of TCWD's communications assets across all customer touchpoints.

## **STRATEGY 1 - DEVELOP A CONSISTENT, MODERN BRAND WITH APPLICATIONS FOR TCWD TO USE ACROSS ALL COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS.**

### **TACTICS**

#### **Brand Refresh**

This vital communications initiative will improve brand recognition and consistency by creating a clear, modern, visual brand that's unique to TCWD. It will include the creation of a TCWD brand identity manual, style guide and templates to use throughout TCWD's internal and external communications programs. It will also include creating an updated version of the TCWD logo. The logo will not fundamentally change. It will still be recognizable, but with a simpler, more modern presentation to stand out in digital and print assets while still reflecting the TCWD brand.

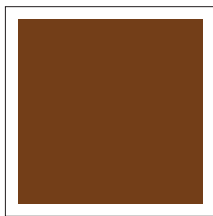
Brand applications would include typography, PowerPoint presentation template, Zoom backgrounds for employees and Board members, stationary, business cards, email signatures, news releases, social media templates and official statement templates, agendas, reports and resolutions.

## New Color Palette

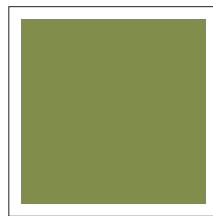
The RockSpark team developed a new color palette for all TCWD communications materials. We leveraged the current TCWD logo colors as the palette's foundation. As wisely suggested by TCWD leadership, we drew inspiration from the landscape in TCWD's service area to choose colors that represent TCWD's unique community and environment.

# PALETTE

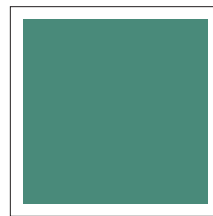
## Primary & Secondary Swatches



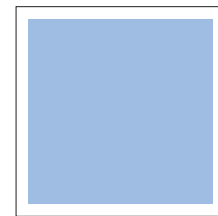
**ROCK**  
RGB 107, 65, 33  
HSB 25, 69, 41  
CMYK 36, 73, 100, 40  
HEX 6b4121



**PARK**  
RGB 130, 139, 84  
HSB 69, 39, 54  
CMYK 52, 31, 85, 9  
HEX 828b54

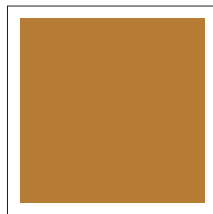


**SHALE**  
RGB 90, 136, 123  
HSB 162, 33, 53  
CMYK 73, 29, 56, 7  
HEX 5a887b

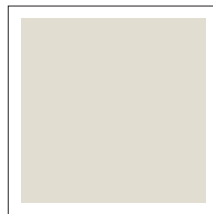


**SKY**  
RGB 165, 189, 224  
HSB 214, 26, 87  
CMYK 36, 17, 0, 0  
HEX a5bde0

Primary



**CANYON**  
RGB 176, 126, 65  
HSB 32, 62, 69  
CMYK 25, 53, 94, 7  
HEX b07e41



**SLATE**  
RGB 224, 221, 210  
HSB 46, 5, 87  
CMYK 11, 9, 16, 0  
HEX e0ddd2



**SHADOW**  
RGB 44, 41, 33  
HSB 42, 24, 17  
CMYK 65, 62, 71, 69  
HEX 2c2921

Secondary

## STRATEGY 2 – DEVELOP A MESSAGING STRATEGY TO HIGHLIGHT THE VALUE OF TCWD’S SERVICES.

### Message Platform

Develop a messaging platform that will:

- Educate audiences about the value of water and the cost of providing services, including maintaining/upgrading infrastructure.
- Share the story of what TCWD does.
- Increase proactive drought outreach and education.
- Showcase TCWD team members to highlight the difference they make by serving customers.
- Build upon the topline organizational key messages that are included in this plan.
- Emphasize the importance of maintaining the reliability and resiliency of infrastructure in a high fire danger setting.

Each message will include detailed “proof points” that will provide specific examples, statistics and other information to support each message. The messages will be used throughout TCWD’s communications channels while implementing the plan.

## **Objective 2: Digital Communications**

Increase the number and quality of TCWD's digital communications touchpoints and the frequency of communications by enhancing current touchpoints and adding two new touchpoints within 12 months to expand awareness of TCWD's services, programs, brand and key messages.

## **STRATEGY 1 — EXPAND AND ENHANCE DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS OPPORTUNITIES FOR AUDIENCES TO CONNECT WITH TCWD VIA MULTIPLE CHANNELS.**

### **TACTICS**

#### **Website**

Develop content and improve the visibility of content on TCWD's website by implementing the Initial Content Plan outlined on page 7 of the TCWD Website Audit Report in Appendix II. The plan includes developing new content pages to emphasize key initiatives and optimizing the current website structure and content for ease of navigation, ADA compliance and Federal Plan Language Standards.

#### **E-newsletter**

Develop a regular e-newsletter to connect with audiences via email. Regularly encourage customers and stakeholders to sign up for TCWD's email list to receive timely and up-to-date information. Customers should also be encouraged to sign up for the e-newsletter at events. In addition, all TCWD's e-newsletters should have a branded masthead and consistent content design.

## Social Media

Develop and implement a social media plan to strengthen TCWD's social media program and leverage the power of social media to expand TCWD's messaging reach, increase customer engagement and strengthen customer relationships by meeting them where they live online.

- **Social Media Model and Management:** Implement the PESO social media management model using Paid, Earned, Shared and Owned content. TCWD should leverage a social media management tool (such as Sprout Social or Hootsuite) to measure ROI on TCWD's social media accounts, increase quality control and approvals and centralize content deployment across platforms.
- **Social Media Calendar:** Develop a social media content calendar to include important messages, dates and events. This calendar should be reviewed and updated monthly.
- **Content Creation and Regular Posting Schedule:** Increase post frequency across TCWD's established channels, including Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, to expand audience and message reach. Create engaging content to inform and delight audiences.
- **Instagram:** Establish an Instagram presence to expand reach. In 2022, Pew Research found that 47% of American adults use Instagram, making it the fourth most-used social platform in the world behind only Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp.

## TCWD Photography

Develop an internal TCWD photo library with high-quality images that can be used in all digital, print and in-person outreach efforts and communications channels.

### **Objective 3: Print Communications**

Enhance TCWD's print communications channels and develop new materials within 12 months to expand awareness of TCWD's services, programs, brand and key messages.

## **STRATEGY 1 — PRINT COMMUNICATIONS: OPTIMIZE EXISTING PRINT COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS, INCLUDING THE CURRENT NEWSLETTER, BILL INSERTS AND OTHER COLLATERAL.**

### **TACTICS**

#### **On-Tap Newsletter**

TCWD's newsletter is a vital communications vehicle and a key touchpoint to reach customers. The RockSpark team will leverage our extensive water-industry writing and design expertise to redesign and enhance TCWD's current On Tap newsletter and create a beautiful, informative newsletter that educates, motivates and delights your customers. The newsletter will:

- Increase the content focus on infrastructure investments, the value of TCWD's services and the increased cost of purchasing water to educate customers on the possible need for a rate increase.
- Create "news bite"-style articles that are short and easy to scan.
- Use infographics to represent data visually and incorporate additional photos, illustrations and icons when possible.
- Leverage TCWD's new message platform to convey key messages.

#### **Bill Inserts**

Leverage regular customer bill inserts to communicate key messages about TCWD's projects, programs, events and initiatives.

#### **Event Materials and Project Signage**

Develop refreshed event materials to engage customers during face-to-face interactions. As suggested in the Internal Stakeholder Survey, create signage with TCWD's branding and logo to use at project sites to emphasize the value that TCWD's infrastructure provides to the community.



## **Objective 4: Community Relations and Partnerships**

Increase awareness, two-way engagement and understanding of TCWD's projects, programs and initiatives by participating in at least two new in-person and virtual interaction opportunities with customers and stakeholders within 12 months.

### **Community Events**

Continue to develop and participate in community events: Community events allow TCWD to engage directly with the community.

- Continue TCWD's beloved Water Awareness Day event. Refresh event materials with new TCWD messaging and branding.
- Develop an in-person or Zoom water-wise landscape workshop to educate customers about water use efficiency and help them get to know TCWD.
- Partner with MWDOC and local organizations for in-person events.

### **Speaker's Bureau**

Establish a TCWD community engagement/speakers' bureau comprised of employees and Board members to regularly engage with key audiences throughout TCWD's service area.

- Partner with the RSM Chamber of Commerce for a Water Leaders panel or similar event.
- Evaluate existing partnerships and determine future collaborations by engaging with local community groups and associations to determine speaking opportunities. Examples could include providing project updates or drought information at local HOA meetings.

## **Objective 5: Internal Communications**

Generate a 10% increase in the number of internal stakeholders that report that their overall impression of TCWD's communications program and methods are excellent or good within 12 months (re-conduct the internal stakeholder communications survey).

### **STRATEGY 1 - INCREASE INTERNAL STAKEHOLDER TOUCHPOINTS TO HELP EMPLOYEES FEEL INFORMED AND CONNECTED TO TCWD'S LEADERSHIP, GOALS AND PROGRAMS.**

#### **KEY TACTIC**

##### **Employee Newsletter**

Develop an internal e-newsletter from the General Manager that's sent to employees every other month. The newsletter will celebrate employee accomplishments and inform employees about upcoming projects, programs and events. The newsletter will be written from the GM's perspective to give a personalized feel and encourage two-way communication.

## **Objective 6: Key Initiative Outreach, Including Potential Rate Increase Outreach**

Increase customer understanding of key TCWD priorities by developing targeted outreach plans for key initiatives and programs within the upcoming year.

### **STRATEGY 1 — DEVELOP DEDICATED OUTREACH PLANS TO SUPPORT KEY INITIATIVES, INCLUDING THE POTENTIAL NEED FOR A RATE INCREASE.**

#### **KEY TACTIC**

##### **Rate Increase Outreach Plan**

To support TCWD in preparing for a potential rate increase, the RockSpark team developed the suggested key messages listed on page 22 of this plan. We also recommend developing a comprehensive outreach plan that includes dedicated tactics and additional messaging and proof points if this initiative moves forward.

## **Objective 7 – Media Relations:**

Elevate TCWD’s profile and reach target audiences with key messages by increasing TCWD’s media mentions by 50% in year one of the plan.

## **STRATEGY 1 – IMPLEMENT A STRATEGIC MEDIA RELATIONS PROGRAM.**

### **TACTICS**

#### **Develop an Annual Editorial Calendar**

TCWD’s editorial calendar will allow the District to strategically communicate with the media on key topics and assess potential opportunities for proactively pitching media on stories. The calendar should include relevant media outlets, content deadlines, contacts and publication dates.

#### **Establish a Media List and Strengthen Relationships with Key Media**

Develop a list of key media in the area and proactively work to provide information to them and strengthen relationships. Regularly review and update the list.

#### **Establish Media Relations Protocols**

Create protocols to outline how TCWD’s internal team can partner with the RockSpark team to handle media inquiries, interviews, news release distribution and regular engagement with the media.

#### **News Releases**

Only seven total media mentions were earned in 2022. To increase these opportunities, regularly create news releases/articles to disseminate to the media and post on TCWD’s website. Newsletter articles can be repurposed into news releases, distributed to the media and published in the News section of TCWD’s website.

#### **Create Letters to the Editor and Op-eds**

Establish the City as a credible, reliable source for commentary on initiatives, projects and programs. Look for regional and statewide opportunities to partner with other agencies on op-eds and stories.

# KEY MESSAGES

## TOPLINE ORGANIZATIONAL KEY MESSAGES

The messages below explain TCWD’s overall purpose and current initiatives. They are a first draft and will evolve during the coming months as TCWD refines its communications efforts. We also recommend developing an overall Key Message platform that includes detailed “proof points” under each message. These will provide specific examples, statistics and other information to support each message.

- Trabuco Canyon Water is your trusted, independent neighborhood water district.
- TCWD has provided reliable, dependable water and wastewater service to the canyon communities for over 60 years.
- TCWD provides clean, safe drinking water.
- TCWD is committed to customer service and transparency.
- TCWD encourages and helps customers to use water efficiently at all times, especially during periods of drought and abnormally dry conditions.
- TCWD employees skillfully operate and maintain infrastructure and technology systems for water and wastewater delivery and treatment to benefit our customers.

## POTENTIAL RATE INCREASE KEY MESSAGES

To support TCWD in preparing for a potential rate increase, the RockSpark team was asked to develop suggested key messages. These are topline key messages. We also recommend developing additional messaging and proof points if this initiative moves forward.

- The costs to provide water and wastewater services to our customers and community have risen significantly over the last few years due to the increased cost of imported water, supply chain issues, and inflationary pressures increasing costs for parts, chemicals, energy and labor.
- A rate increase is needed to help fund critical TCWD infrastructure investments, operating costs and staffing needs.
- Our customers' rates enable TCWD to provide safe, reliable water to our community 24/7.
- Rates cover the costs to provide continuous 24/7 – 365 wastewater collection services to maintain community health and safety.
- Our revenues enable TCWD to leverage technology and infrastructure for water and wastewater delivery and treatment to benefit our customers.
- TCWD thoughtfully maps out future projects and investments in technology needed years in advance. The proposed rate adjustments are specific to meet these needs.
- TCWD is committed to financial transparency, and all our approved rates and budgets comply with state law.

# PHASE 3: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

This year-one implementation chart was created as a quick-reference road map of the Strategic Communication Plan’s priority tactics.

FIRST-YEAR ROAD MAP			
Objective	Tactic	One-time	Ongoing
Branding and Messaging	Brand Refresh	✓	
Branding and Messaging	New Color Palette	✓	
Branding and Messaging	Message Platform	✓	
Digital Communications	Website		✓
Digital Communications	Social Media		✓
Digital Communications	TCWD Photography	✓	
Print Communications	On-Tap Newsletter		✓
Print Communications	Bill Inserts		✓
Print Communications	Event Materials and Project Signage		✓
Community Relations and Partnerships	Community Events		✓
Community Relations and Partnerships	Speaker’s Bureau		✓
Internal Communications	Employee Newsletter		✓
Key Initiative Outreach, Including a Potential Rate Increase	Rate Increase Outreach Plan	✓	
Media Relations	Media Relations Program		✓

# PHASE 4: EVALUATION AND OPTIMIZATION FOR MAXIMUM RESULTS

This plan includes recommended data-driven evaluation measures for TCWD's team to use when evaluating the success of the plan's goals and objectives. Measuring qualitative and quantitative data will help determine whether our communications efforts are meeting the mark or if adjustments are needed to maximize results.

Sound evaluation of TCWD's communications should measure the following:

## **SMART Objective Achievement**

- The RockSpark team will continuously evaluate the progress toward achieving each SMART objective in service of the plan's goals.

## **Outcomes**

- Outcomes measure a change in knowledge, attitudes, opinions or behavior. Types of measurable communications outcomes may include a reduction in residential water use during a drought, customers applying for rebates or customers reporting

increased satisfaction with TCWD's communications, programs and services.

- Surveys: To measure outcomes, we recommend re-deploying the Internal Stakeholder Survey and the Customer Communications Survey approximately one year after implementing the plan to evaluate the plan's impact on stakeholders' views, attitudes and opinions.

## **Output**

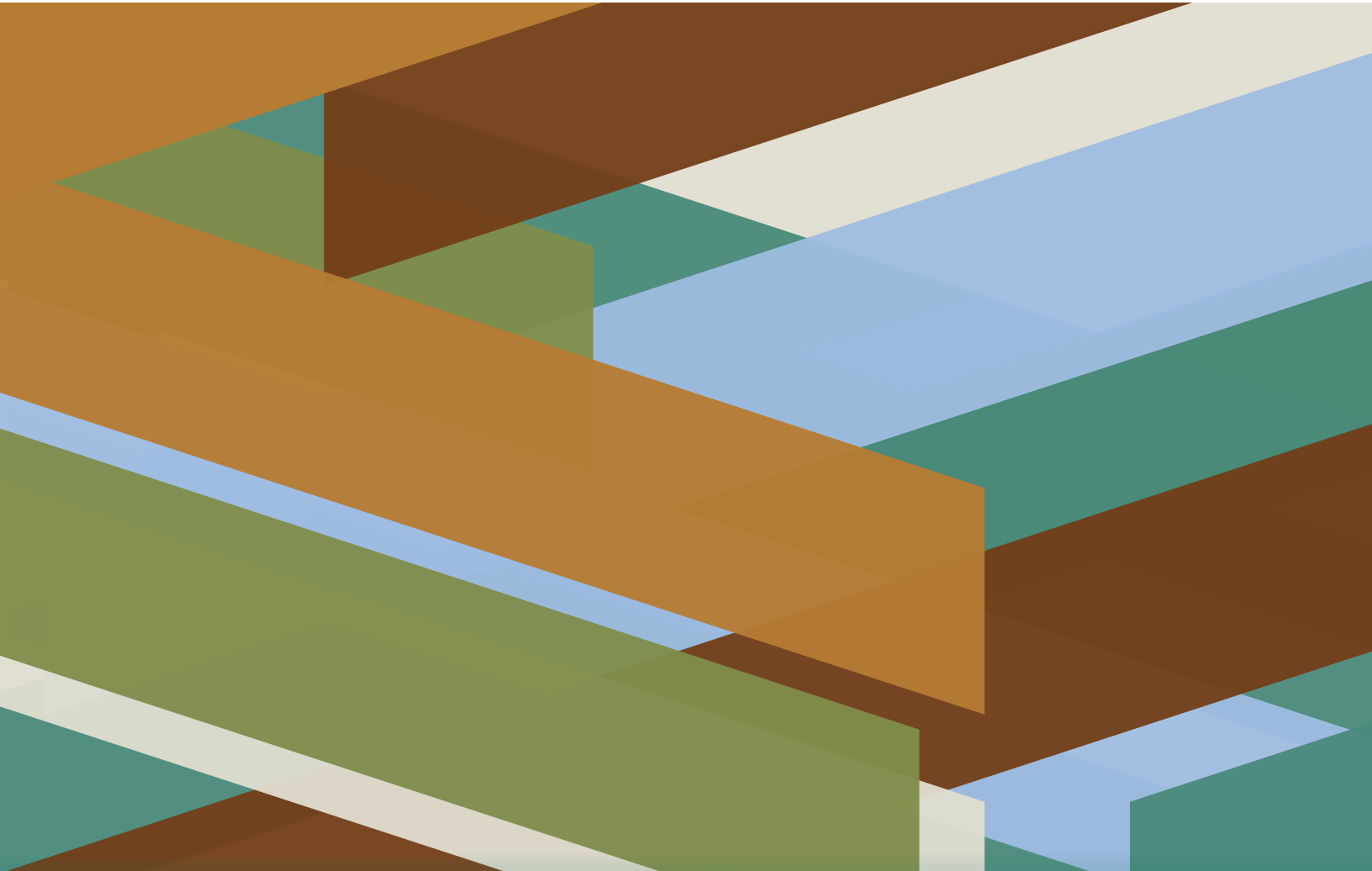
- Output measures work products produced (such as the number of newsletters, social media posts, news releases, bill inserts and special events).

## **Outtakes**

- Outtakes measure the reach of products produced (such as how many people visited TCWD's website, news release circulation, number of people who attended an event, how many people commented/liked a social media post, etc.).



# APPENDIX I: TCWD COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT REPORT



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## INTRODUCTION

Trabuco Canyon Water District has embarked upon a strategic communications planning effort. The strategic planning process will help TCWD create communications and engagement strategies to support the District's overarching brand enhancement goals to:

1. Convey the value of the wide array of services TCWD provides to customers.
2. Elevate the profile of the District and its local brand.
3. Increase trust, awareness and support for the District's actions, policies and priorities.

As part of this effort, RockSpark Communications + Marketing conducted a thorough research and discovery assessment as the backbone of TCWD's communications strategy. The data we gathered and analyzed will support the development of an effective communications plan that's tailored to TCWD's needs and that encompasses TCWD's mission, vision and values.

This report summarizes RockSpark's data findings of TCWD's overall communications and outreach efforts and sets the groundwork for TCWD's Strategic Communications Plan.

Following the presentation of these findings to TCWD staff, the RockSpark team will develop a comprehensive communications strategy and plan.

## METHODOLOGY

To create a solid foundation for TCWD's Strategic Communications Plan, the RockSpark team conducted an in-depth research and discovery process to identify TCWD's communications needs, assess opportunities, formulate strategies, craft compelling messaging and develop a baseline measurement for the plan.

Quantitative and qualitative research included:

- In-depth, information-gathering meetings/interviews with key TCWD staff
- Materials audit
- Website audit
- Internal strategic planning session
- Internal stakeholder communications survey completed by TCWD employees and Board members
- Customer communications survey completed by TCWD customers. Status: in progress.

# MEETINGS/INTERVIEWS – KEY FINDINGS

## BACKGROUND

RockSpark Communications + Marketing spoke with TCWD internal stakeholders General Manager Fernando Paludi, Assistant General Manager Michael Perea and Administrative Assistant Roseann Lejsek.

## GOALS

- Gain insight into how TCWD internal stakeholders view the District.
- Identify opportunities and challenges in communications and outreach.
- Identify opportunities to advance and strengthen TCWD’s communications and outreach efforts.

## KEY FINDINGS

### Audiences

During the discussions, the following audiences emerged:

- Primary audiences
  - TCWD customers
    - Residents within the District’s service area
    - Businesses and HOAs within the District’s service area
  - TCWD staff
- Secondary audiences
  - Media
  - Neighboring water districts and cities
  - Legislators, including local elected officials

### Strengths

- Overall Communication (External)
  - Reputation as a trusted organization that understands and advocates for the community’s unique needs.
  - On Tap newsletter publishes regularly.
  - District website, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn accounts have been established.
  - Water Awareness Day community event: This event is viewed as a great way to connect with the community and share information about TCWD and its services.
- Overall Communication (Internal)

The small number of staff and the family feel of the District are conducive to sharing information.

### **Opportunities/Solutions**

- Enhanced Communications
  - Elevate TCWD’s brand across all communications channels.
  - Develop a messaging strategy to communicate TCWD’s key messages based on top priorities and goals (e.g. preparing for a possible rate increase, etc.).
  - Enhance the current On Tap newsletter branding and content structure.
  - Strengthen social media program to amplify messages.
  - Develop a regular email customer newsletter.
  - Possible opportunities to build an internal communications program.

## **MESSAGING OPPORTUNITIES/SOLUTIONS**

- Develop a messaging strategy to highlight the value of TCWD’s services.
- Educate audiences about the value of water and the cost of providing services, including maintaining/upgrading infrastructure.
- Share the story of what TCWD does.
- Increase proactive drought outreach and education.
- Showcase TCWD team members to highlight the difference they are making by serving customers.

## **COMMUNICATION MATERIALS AUDIT & INSIGHTS**

### **BACKGROUND**

On behalf of Trabuco Canyon Water District, RockSpark Communications + Marketing conducted a materials audit of hard copy and digital assets.

### **GOALS**

- Gain insight into how TCWD is communicating with internal and external stakeholders.
- Identify opportunities to advance and/or strengthen TCWD’s communications efforts.
- Identify inconsistencies in branding, messaging and clarity.

### **METHODOLOGY**

- RockSpark Communications + Marketing reviewed TCWD’s communication assets, observing branding, best practices, messaging, tone and language.
- Communications and outreach efforts were reviewed using the 7 Cs of Communication: Clear, Concise, Concrete, Correct, Coherent, Complete and Courteous.

- Social media accounts, media placements, website, newsletters and collateral materials were included in audit.

## AUDITED MATERIALS

### Branding

- Overall TCWD branding
- Logo

### Digital Assets

- Website: [www.tcwd.ca.gov](http://www.tcwd.ca.gov)
- Facebook: @TrabucoCanyonWaterDistrict
- Twitter: @TCWDWater
- LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/company/trabuco-canyon-water-district/](http://www.linkedin.com/company/trabuco-canyon-water-district/)

### Hard Copy Assets

- On Tap newsletter (PDF versions)
- Meeting agendas
- Mailers
- Drought outreach materials

### Media Audit

- Review of media coverage from online, traditional and social media.

## Branding and Logo Audit – Key Findings

### Strengths

- Established logo and trusted organization name.
- Logo colors and tree image represent the service area and natural environment well.

### Opportunities/Solutions

#### Logo

- Consider creating an updated version of the TCWD logo. The logo could be modernized and simplified to stand out in digital and print assets while still reflecting the TCWD brand.
- Develop an all-white version of the logo to use in materials with a dark background.

#### Branding

- Conduct a brand refresh designed to elevate the District's brand and standardize the look and feel of TCWD's communications assets across all customer touchpoints.
- Improve consistency by creating a clear, modern, visual brand that's unique to TCWD.
- Develop a Trabuco Canyon Water District brand identity manual and style guide.

- Create a brand color palette and typography that can be used throughout communications materials.
- Create a TCWD branded PowerPoint presentation template for staff use.
- Develop TCWD branded Zoom/virtual backgrounds for employees and Board members to use during virtual meetings.
- Create a writing style guide to ensure consistent communication, grammar, voice and tone.
- Create branded templates for items including business cards, stationery, email signatures, memos, envelopes, apparel and specialty items.

## Hard Copy Asset Audit – Key Findings

### Strengths

- Informative content.
- Easy-to-read fonts.
- Good use of white space.
- Newsletter: Good use of photos of people and facilities.
- Newsletter: Good use of consistent header and Board of Directors sidebar.

### Opportunities/Solutions

- Update the design of all materials with clear visual branding, including a new custom color palette.
- Increase the content focus on infrastructure investments, the value of TCWD’s services and the increased cost of purchasing water to educate customers on the possible need for a rate increase.
- Use infographics to represent data visually and incorporate additional photos, illustrations and icons when possible.
- Newsletter: Create “news bite”-style articles that are short and easy to scan.
- Newsletter: Update “Board Meeting Highlights” title to “Moving TCWD Forward” or “Key Actions and Improvements” or something similar to indicate strategic progress and steps taken in service of customers/audiences.
- Increase the use of organic TCWD images and photography.

## Social Media Audit – Key Findings

### Strengths

- Established Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn accounts with lots of room to grow.
- Clear, concise post text.
- Informative, appropriate tone for each channel.

## Opportunities/Solutions

- Develop and implement a social media strategy to leverage the power of social media to expand TCWD’s messaging reach, increase customer engagement and strengthen customer relationships by meeting them where they live online.
- Social Media Policy is missing. Consider creating and adding a policy.
- Develop an Instagram presence to expand reach.
  - 47% of Americans adults use Instagram, according to Pew Research in 2022, making it the 4th most-used social platform in the world behind only Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp.
- Grow page followers/likes to expand messaging reach.
  - Currently fewer than 10 likes on each Facebook/Twitter post.
  - Current page likes/followers:
    - 266 Facebook page likes/292 page followers.
    - 102 Twitter followers.
    - 162 LinkedIn followers.
- Develop a distinct brand for social media posts across all platforms.
- Implement the PESO social media management model using Paid, Earned, Shared and Owned content.
  - Establish a content calendar and regular posting schedule. Current posting schedule is infrequent:
    - 2 total Facebook posts; 9 total Twitter tweets; 0 LinkedIn posts in 2022.
    - 3 total Facebook posts; 4 total Twitter tweets; 0 LinkedIn posts in 2021.
- Increase consistency of TCWD branding in graphics.
- Broaden the scope of topics covered. Content topics: billing error, holiday and voting hours, Water Awareness Day and wipes.
- Expand LinkedIn posts to include successes of TCWD to demonstrate thought leadership and increase engagement.
- Use Twitter for more newsworthy items, such as drought updates, during canyon fire evacuations or other high-profile topics.
- Opportunity for increased video across all platforms.

## Website Audit – Key Findings

- See Website Audit Report



## Media Audit – Key Findings

Media coverage from online, traditional and social media over the past year was reviewed using Critical Mention software. The audit showcased media mentions, type and time.

### Strengths

- Coverage in four media outlets:
  - Orange County Register, Voice of OC, Maven's Notebook (excerpt from OC Register article), ExcelsiorCalifornia.com (Spanish language version of OC Register article)
- The majority of coverage was positive or neutral. One mention (Voice of OC interview with OCWD Board candidates) seemed to have a negative sentiment:
  - What is your position on sharing North County aquifers and recycling with South County districts that are currently almost completely dependent on imports. Kelly Rowe: “South County districts should not suffer, as agreements are set to share North County groundwater supplies when needed. South County has ignored use of about 2 million acre-ft of groundwater contained within the Sespe Formation/Aquifer lying beneath Santa Margarita Water District **and Trabuco Canyon Water District** (identified 50 years ago by CA)”
- Topics covered: Drought, local water district elections

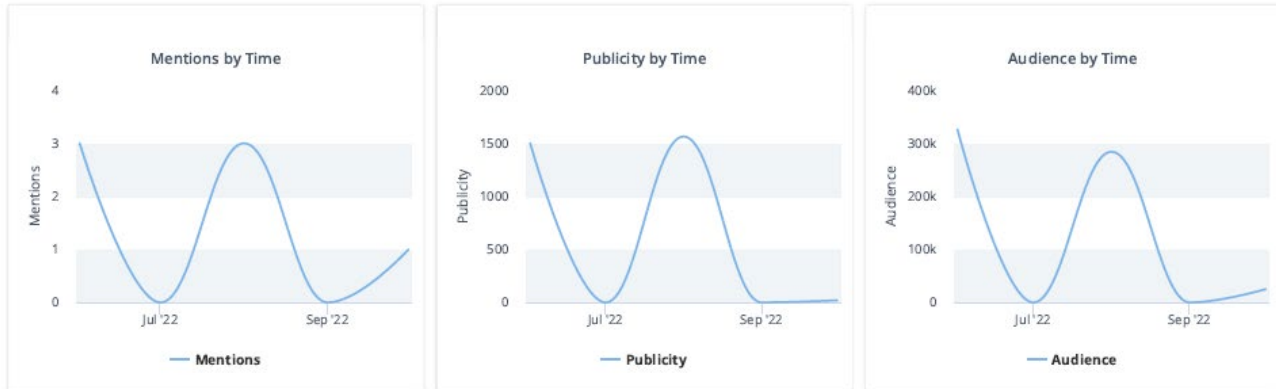
### Opportunities/Solutions

- Opportunities exist to earn more media coverage to elevate TCWD’s profile and reach target audiences with key messages.
  - Only 7 total media mentions earned in 2022.
- Solution: Implement a strategic media relations program.
  - Regularly create news releases/news stories to disseminate to the media and post on TCWD’s website. Versions of the news releases can be modified to use in the newsletter, as well.
  - Foster relationships with media and leverage opportunities to pitch positive news stories.
  - Regularly scan local and national media stories and sentiment to discern whether issues or concerns are building.

# Trabuco Canyon Water District 2022



## Mention Analytics




**Total Online + Print Audience**  
635,367

**Total Online + Print Publicity**  
USD \$3,087

Total Number of Clips 7

[Collapse All Clips](#)



Full Article

**They're Often in the Shadows of Elections. But Where Do Water District Candidates Stand on the Issues?**

**Date Collected** Oct 25, 2022 9:19 AM EDT  
**Category** Organization  
**Source** [Voice of OC](#)  
**Author** Nick Gerda

... ?


Rowe: "South County districts should not suffer, as agreements are set to share North County groundwater supplies when needed. South County has ignored use of about 2 million acre-ft of groundwater contained within the Sespe Formation/Aquifer lying beneath Santa Margarita Water District and **Trabuco Canyon Water District** (identified 50 years ago by CA)"

Hiemstra: "I oppose sharing our aquifer until it can be used sustainably by all. South Orange County needs to immediatly start focusing their efforts on greater water conservation and developing direct potable reuse so they can recycle enough water to establish ...

**Est. Audience** 25,106  
**Est. Publicity Value** USD \$20  
**Market** United States  
**Language** English

1

[Read Less](#)



Full Article

**¿Quiénes ahorran más y quiénes derrochan agua en Condado de Orange? Aquí está la lista**

**Date Collected** Aug 21, 2022 2:50 PM EDT  
**Category** Local  
**Source** [ExcelsiorCalifornia.com](#)  
**Author** Teri Sforza

... a seguir tratando.

LOS MEJORES Y PEORES

Los mayores ahorradores de junio fueron Mesa Water District, Seal Beach, La Habra, La Palma, Newport Beach, Huntington Beach y Brea.

Los mayores acaparadores y gastadores de agua de junio fueron Orange, San Clemente, San Juan Capistrano, Anaheim y **Trabuco Canyon Water District** (aunque este último tiene disputas con los números del estado).

En general, las agencias del Condado de Orange usaron menos agua en junio que en el mismo mes hace dos años. El consumo se redujo (no fue del todo horrible, pero ciertamente, tampoco espectacular) un 3.7% en promedio . Eso va en la ...

**Est. Audience** 1,068  
**Est. Publicity Value** USD \$8  
**Market** Riverside, CA  
**Language** Spanish

2

**Drought: OC trails much of California when it comes to saving water**



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[View Full Text](#)

(Requires Critical Mention login)



**Date Collected** Aug 14, 2022 11:24 AM EDT  
**Category** Local  
**Source** [The Orange County Register](#)

**Est. Audience** 80,000  
**Est. Publicity Value** USD \$445  
**Market** United States  
**Language** English

... have done that and better, right here in the O.C.! So let's get right to it.

June's biggest savers were Mesa Water District, Seal Beach,

La Habra, La Palma, Newport Beach, Huntington Beach and Brea.

June's biggest water hogs were Orange, San Clemente, San Juan Capistrano, Anaheim and the **Trabuco Canyon Water District** (though the latter has quarrels with the state's numbers).

Overall, O.C. agencies used less water in June than they did in the same month two years ago. Consumption was down (a not completely awful but certainly not stellar) 3.7% on average. That's going in the right direction at least! In May, ... folks way down south, must import almost every drop and may get a quicker wallop. The recent weather isn't helping.

"I am concerned that given how hot it has been in July and so far in August, that we might be challenged to show reductions in demand," said Fernando Paludi, general manager of the **Trabuco Canyon Water District**. "But as I've pointed out before, it also has a lot to do with the month/year you are comparing to in terms of temperature and precipitation. TCWD is roughly 95% single-family residential, and outdoor watering is a large part of the residential demand."

Savers and spenders

Many agencies have ...

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[Full Article](#)

**OC no match for much of state, especially the Bay Area, in conserving water**



**Date Collected** Aug 14, 2022 10:32 AM EDT  
**Category** Local  
**Source** [Orange County Register](#)  
**Author** Teri Sforza

**Est. Audience** 202,987  
**Est. Publicity Value** USD \$1,111  
**Market** Santa Ana, CA  
**Language** English

... agencies have done that and better, right here in the O.C.! So let's get right to it.

June's biggest savers were Mesa Water District, Seal Beach, La Habra, La Palma, Newport Beach, Huntington Beach and Brea.

June's biggest water hogs were Orange, San Clemente, San Juan Capistrano, Anaheim and the **Trabuco Canyon Water District** (though the latter has quarrels with the state's numbers).

Overall, O.C. agencies used less water in June than they did in the same month two years ago. Consumption was down (a not completely awful but certainly not stellar) 3.7% on average. That's going in the right direction at least! In May, we ... every drop and may get a quicker wallop. The recent weather isn't helping.

State Water Resources Control Board

"I am concerned that given how hot it has been in July and so far in August, that we might be challenged to show reductions in demand," said Fernando Paludi, general manager of the **Trabuco Canyon Water District**. "But as I've pointed out before, it also has a lot to do with the month/year you are comparing to in terms of temperature and precipitation. TCWD is roughly 95% single-family residential, and outdoor watering is a large part of the residential demand."

Savers and spenders

Many agencies have ...



Full Article

**DAILY DIGEST 6/14: Toxic algae blooms on the rise and expected to worsen: Why water use varies so widely across California: Land fallowing could reach more than 690,000 acres due to drought: Farmers worry water-rights proposal could affect food supply, a**

Date Collected Jun 14, 2022 1:54 PM EDT  
Category Blog  
Source MAVEN'S NOTEBOOK | Water news  
Author Maven

Market United States  
Language English

... April than in April 2020, even with the state's emergency regulations bearing down, urging us to shrink water use up to 20%. There are many reasons why this April was so much thirstier – more on that in a minute – but the agencies that saw the biggest jumps were: San Juan Capistrano, up 61.5%; **Trabuco Canyon Water District**, up 43.9%; Yorba Linda Water District, up 42.8%; Anaheim, up 33.7%; Irvine Ranch Water District, up 32.7%; and the Santa Margarita Water District and the city of San Clemente, both up 32.6%. Only one — Mesa Water District — reduced usage over those years, by 15.6%. ... " Continue reading at the ...

**Prepare to use less water in OC and, perhaps, pay more for the privilege**



View Full Text

(Requires Critical Mention login)

**drought: Prepare to use less water and fork over more money for it**

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LexisNexis

Date Collected Jun 12, 2022 11:43 AM EDT  
Category Local  
Source [The Orange County Register](#)

Est. Audience 80,000  
Est. Publicity Value USD \$375  
Market United States  
Language English

... April than in April 2020, even with the state's emergency regulations bearing down, urging us to shrink water use up to 20%.  
  
There are many reasons why this April was so much thirstier more on that in a minute but the agencies that saw the biggest jumps were: San Juan Capistrano, up 61.5%; **Trabuco Canyon Water District**, up 43.9%; Yorba Linda Water District, up 42.8%; Anaheim, up 33.7%; Irvine Ranch Water District, up 32.7%; and the Santa Margarita Water District and the city of San Clemente, both up 32.6%.  
  
Only one Mesa Water District reduced usage, by 15.6%.  
  
Restrictions on outdoor landscape watering are ... and tossed them out.  
  
"When it comes to the financial side, water agencies will be vulnerable to conservation-based reductions in demand as long as we are predominantly variable in revenue (water sales) and fixed in costs (infrastructure investment)," said Fernando Paludi, general manager of the **Trabuco Canyon Water District**. "Increasing our fixed revenue to minimize the impacts of selling less water will make us healthier financially and further encourage to do the right thing with respect to conserving precious potable water. TCWD is engaged in a new rate study and will be looking at different options along these ...  
  
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# COMMUNICATIONS SURVEY RESULTS

## BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

On behalf of TCWD, RockSpark Communications + Marketing created and deployed two online surveys in February 2023. The surveys included:

1. Internal stakeholder communications survey completed by TCWD employees and Board members.
2. Communications survey completed by TCWD customers.

## GOALS

- Gain insight into customers and internal stakeholder sentiment and opinions about TCWD and the District's current communications activities.
- Identify opportunities to advance and/or strengthen TCWD's communications and outreach efforts.

## Internal Stakeholder Survey - Key Findings

### Responses

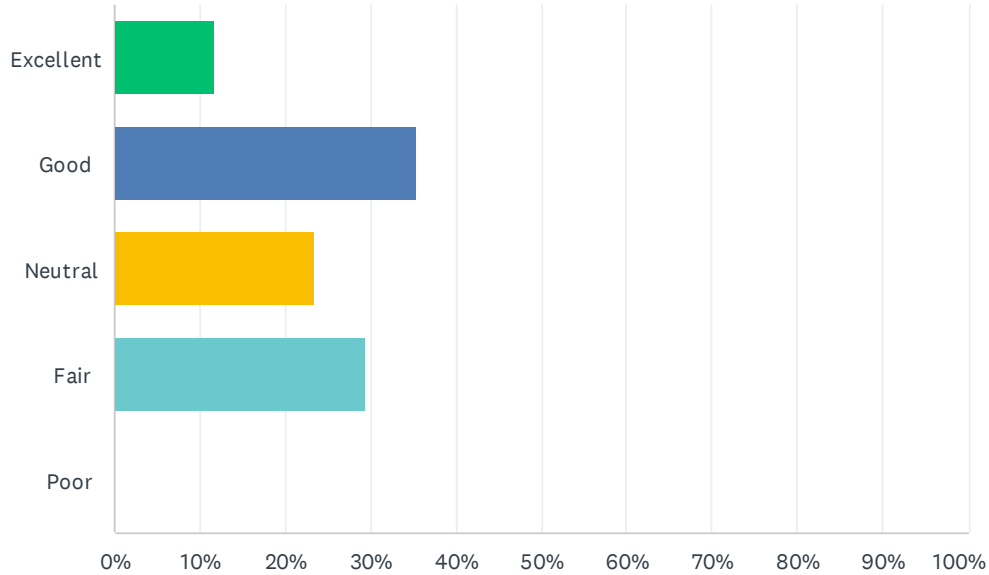
- 17 respondents took the internal stakeholder survey, a response rate of 65% of potential respondents.
  - 21 employees and 5 Board members

### Opportunities/Solutions

- Develop a strategic communications plan to address stakeholder wants and needs.
- Elevate TCWD's brand and amplify current messaging.
- Develop additional key messages and increase communication consistency to address topics that are important to stakeholders.
- Increase communication across multiple channels: print, digital and in-person.
  - Enhance social media presence, including Instagram.
  - Update current website and newsletter.
  - Develop an email newsletter.
- Enhance Internal Communications
  - Identify opportunities to strengthen two-way communication with staff.
  - Develop programming to ensure that staff are regularly informed about current projects and initiatives so they have the info they need to serve as knowledgeable ambassadors.

## Q1 What is your overall impression of TCWD’s communications program and the methods we use to inform and educate our customers and key stakeholders?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0

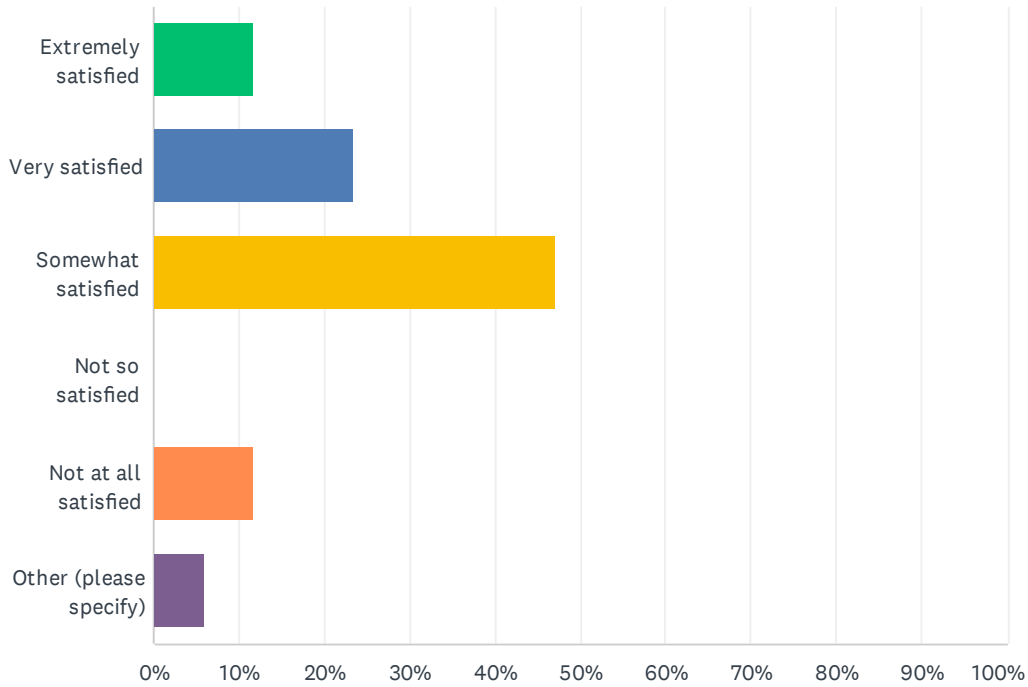


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Excellent	11.76% 2
Good	35.29% 6
Neutral	23.53% 4
Fair	29.41% 5
Poor	0.00% 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>

#	WHY?	DATE
1	It's not an area of focus for the District.	2/11/2023 3:05 PM
2	Newsletter and direct outreach to HOAs are positive efforts. Messaging on drought and water restrictions and investments needed on infrastructure need to occur.	2/7/2023 9:13 AM
3	Social media is important for relaying district related information to customers (Instagram)	2/6/2023 4:12 PM
4	The majority of customers seem informed about TCWD projects and changes.	2/6/2023 3:51 PM
5	monthly bill inserts/online updates	2/6/2023 3:40 PM

## Q2 How satisfied are you with TCWD’s communication efforts?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0

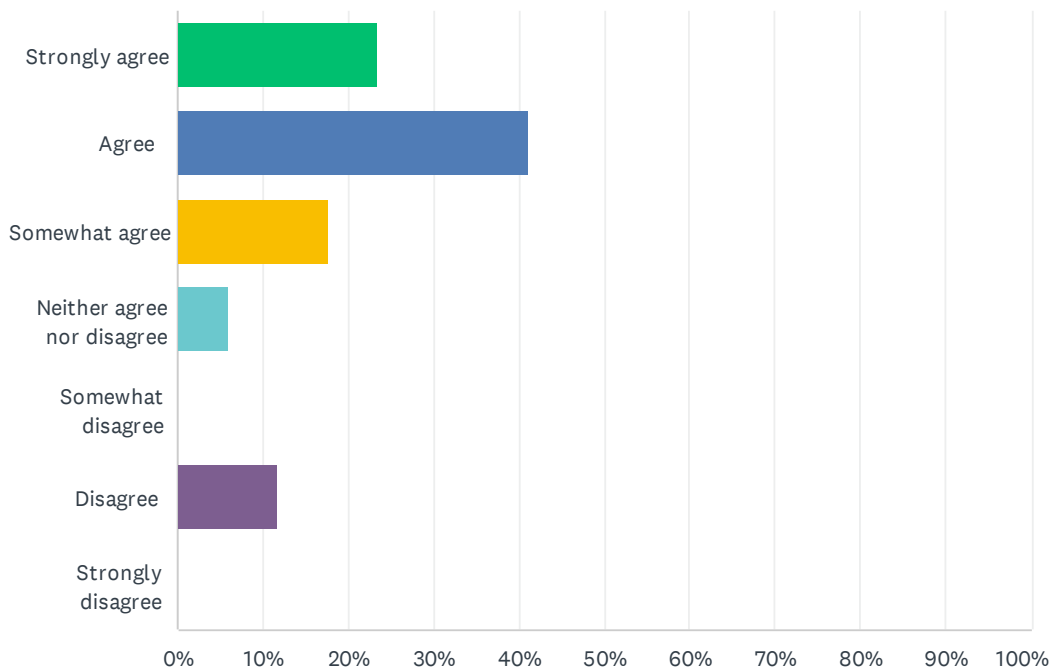


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely satisfied	11.76%	2
Very satisfied	23.53%	4
Somewhat satisfied	47.06%	8
Not so satisfied	0.00%	0
Not at all satisfied	11.76%	2
Other (please specify)	5.88%	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>17</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I do not receive communications from TCWD; Not a customer, unaware of current communication methods	2/6/2023 4:12 PM

### Q3 How much do you agree with this statement? "Information I receive from TCWD on water and sewer is timely and reliable."

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0

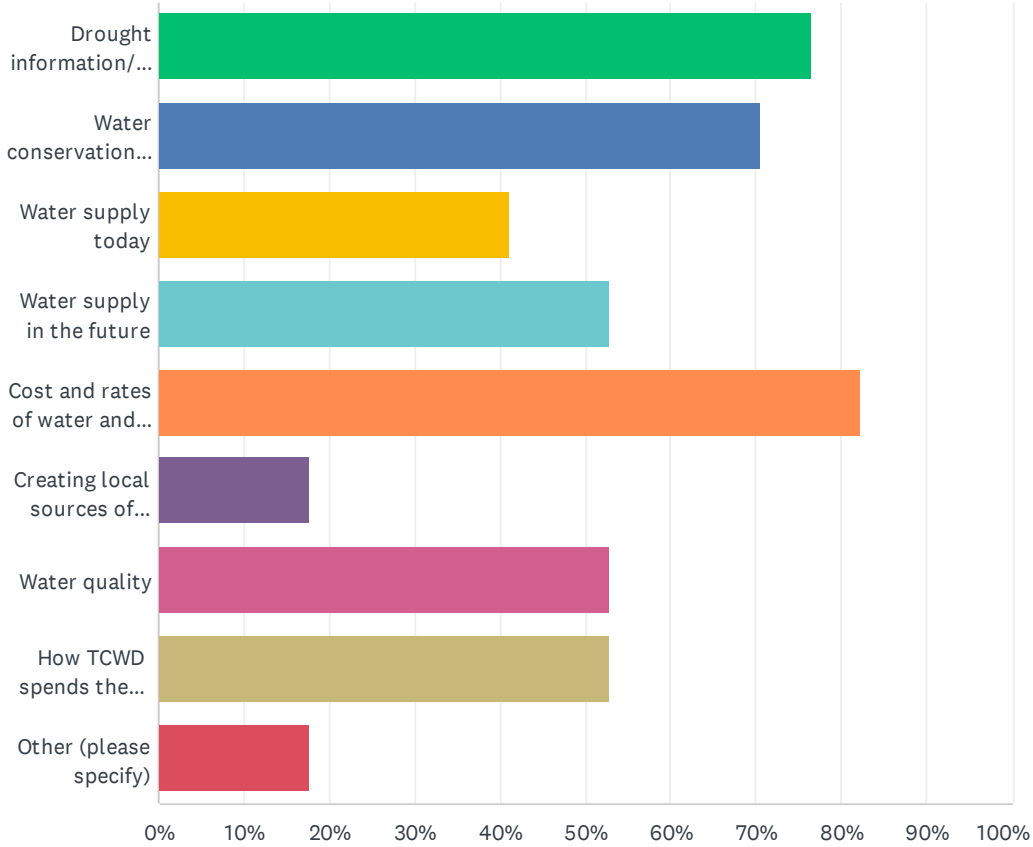


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	23.53%	4
Agree	41.18%	7
Somewhat agree	17.65%	3
Neither agree nor disagree	5.88%	1
Somewhat disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	11.76%	2
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>17</b>



### Q4 What issues related to TCWD's services are most important to communicate to our customers/stakeholders? Select all that apply.

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Drought information/water use restrictions	76.47%	13
Water conservation, including rebates and resources	70.59%	12
Water supply today	41.18%	7
Water supply in the future	52.94%	9
Cost and rates of water and sewer services	82.35%	14
Creating local sources of water	17.65%	3
Water quality	52.94%	9
How TCWD spends the money received from rates	52.94%	9
Other (please specify)	17.65%	3
Total Respondents: 17		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
---	------------------------	------

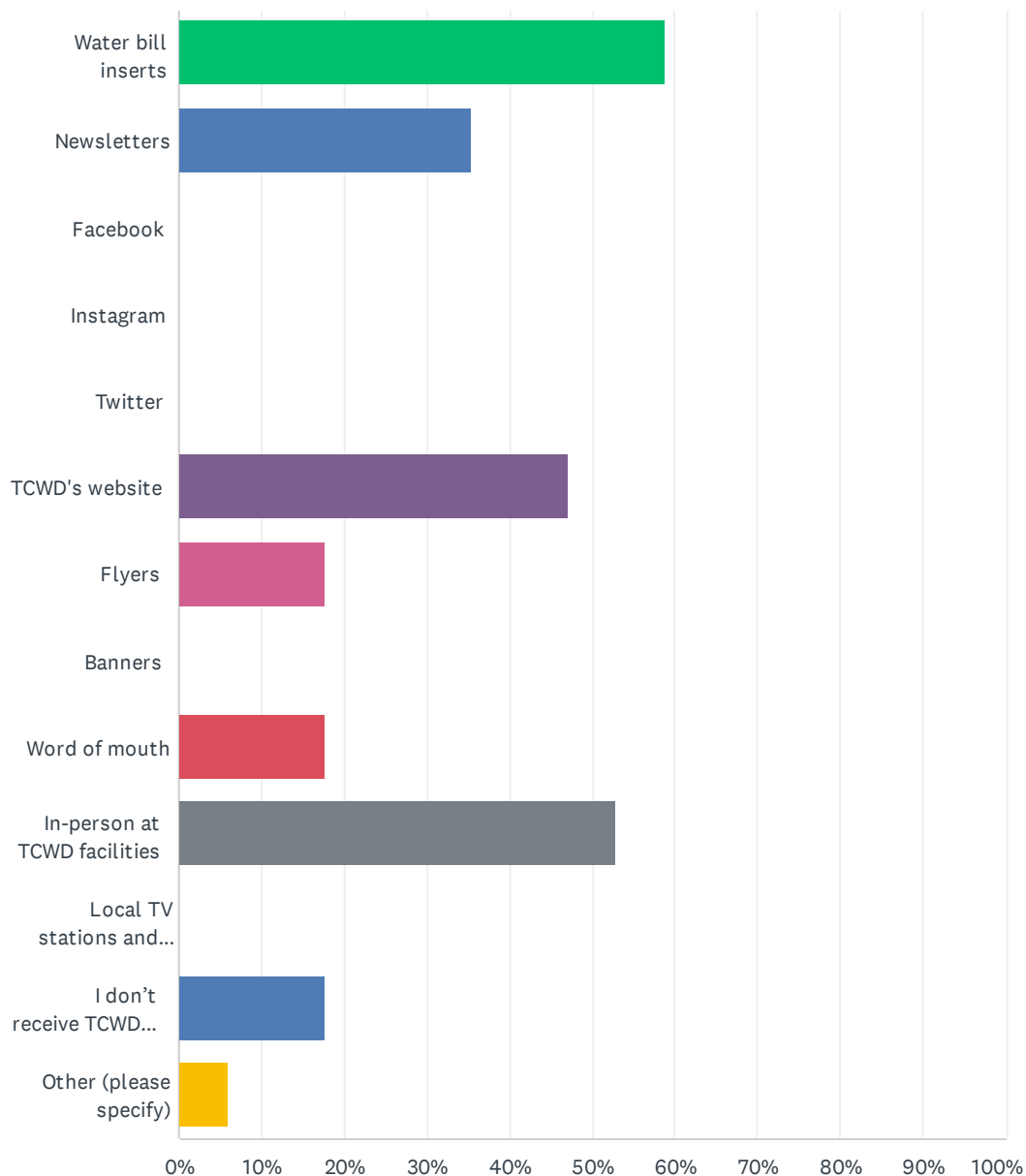
4 / 18

### Trabuco Canyon Water District Internal Stakeholder Communications Survey

1	Cost of water to the tap.	2/13/2023 7:49 AM
2	Critical need to address aging infrastructure	2/7/2023 9:13 AM
3	All can be valuable to customers; current work alerts in district service area and upcoming projects	2/6/2023 4:12 PM

### Q5 Where do you get information on TCWD's programs and projects? Select all that apply.

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0



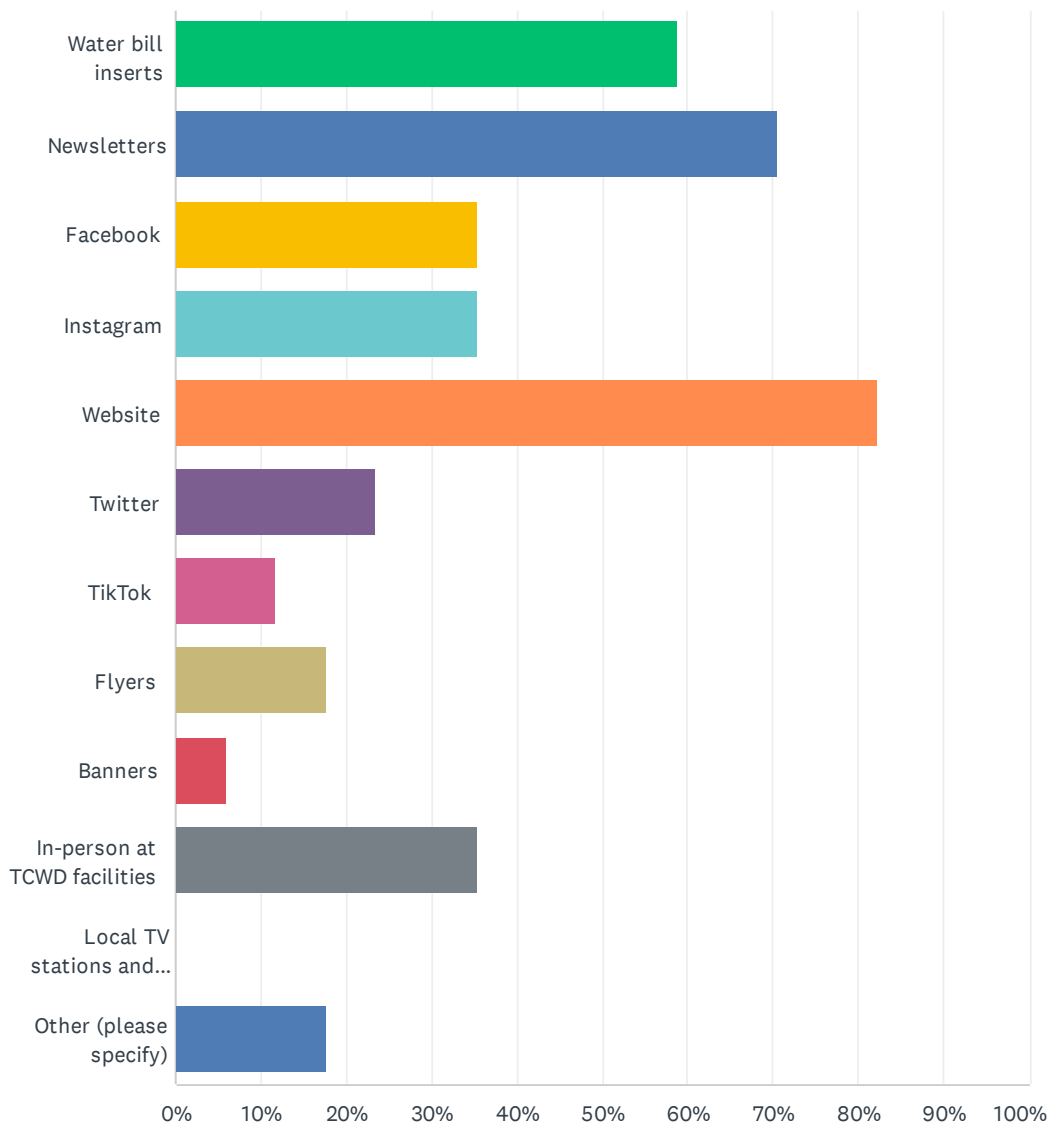
## Trabuco Canyon Water District Internal Stakeholder Communications Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Water bill inserts	58.82%	10
Newsletters	35.29%	6
Facebook	0.00%	0
Instagram	0.00%	0
Twitter	0.00%	0
TCWD's website	47.06%	8
Flyers	17.65%	3
Banners	0.00%	0
Word of mouth	17.65%	3
In-person at TCWD facilities	52.94%	9
Local TV stations and newspapers	0.00%	0
I don't receive TCWD's communications.	17.65%	3
Other (please specify)	5.88%	1
Total Respondents: 17		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Instagram is a viable option	2/6/2023 4:12 PM

### Q6 How would you prefer to receive information on TCWD's programs and projects? Select all that apply.

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0



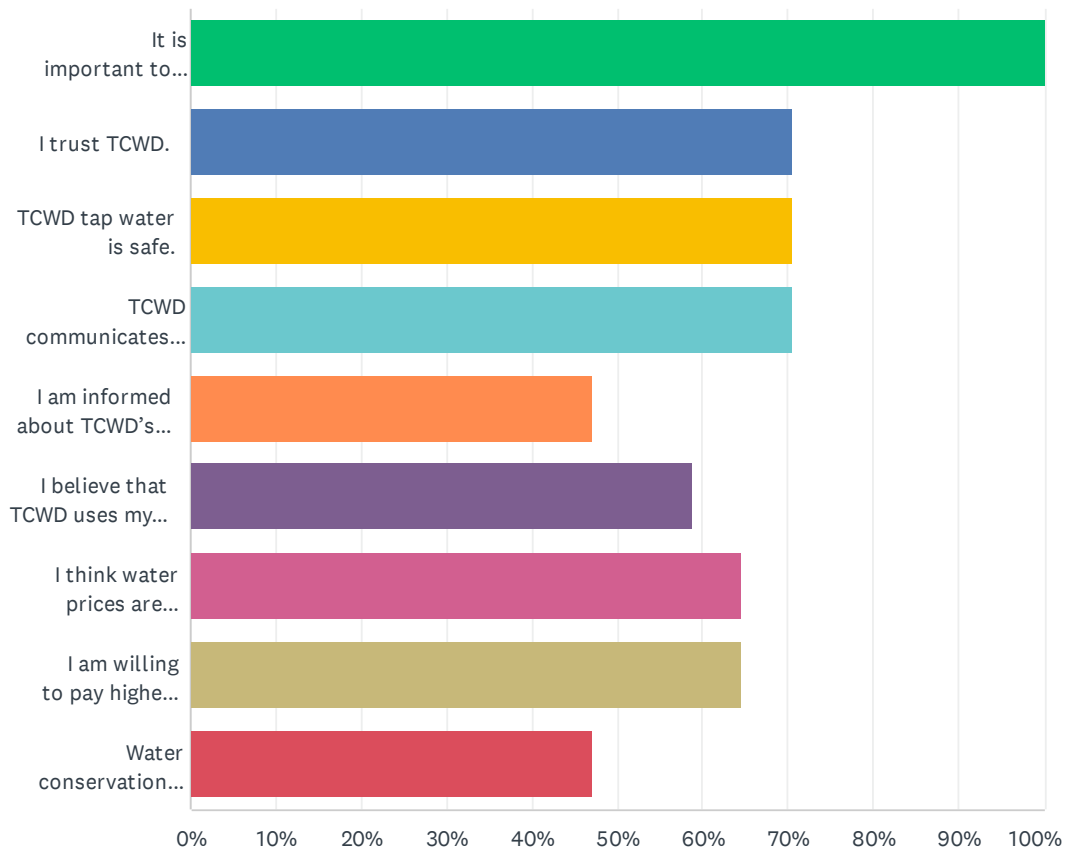
Trabuco Canyon Water District Internal Stakeholder Communications Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Water bill inserts	58.82%	10
Newsletters	70.59%	12
Facebook	35.29%	6
Instagram	35.29%	6
Website	82.35%	14
Twitter	23.53%	4
TikTok	11.76%	2
Flyers	17.65%	3
Banners	5.88%	1
In-person at TCWD facilities	35.29%	6
Local TV stations and newspapers	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	17.65%	3
Total Respondents: 17		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	EMAIL	2/14/2023 3:58 PM
2	LinkedIn	2/11/2023 3:05 PM
3	Email newsletter	2/6/2023 4:12 PM

### Q7 I agree with the following statements. Select all that apply.

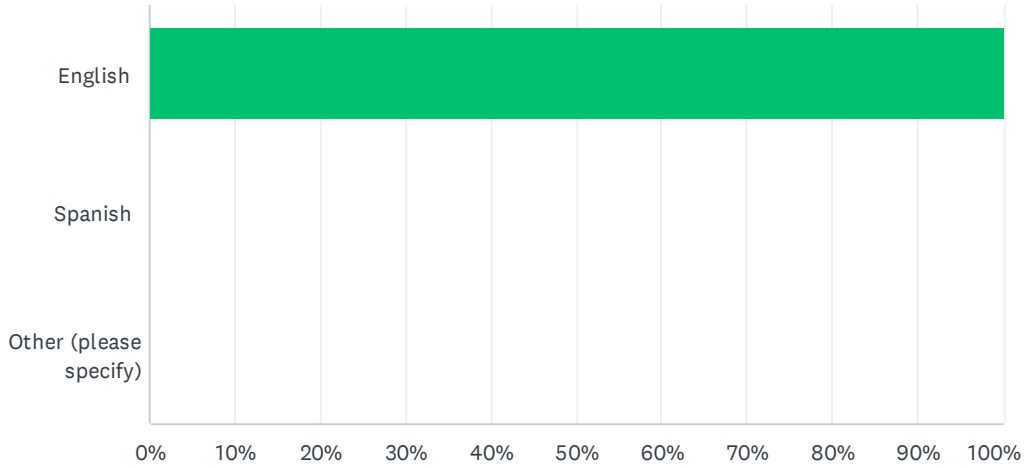
Answered: 17 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
It is important to invest in water and sewer projects and programs.	100.00%	17
I trust TCWD.	70.59%	12
TCWD tap water is safe.	70.59%	12
TCWD communicates transparently with its customers.	70.59%	12
I am informed about TCWD's projects and programs.	47.06%	8
I believe that TCWD uses my taxpayer revenues responsibly.	58.82%	10
I think water prices are fair.	64.71%	11
I am willing to pay higher rates for water/sewer to fund infrastructure improvements.	64.71%	11
Water conservation and efficiency are priorities.	47.06%	8
Total Respondents: 17		

## Q8 What language would you prefer to receive information from TCWD?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
English	100.00% 17
Spanish	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	0.00% 0
Total Respondents: 17	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	



## Q9 What would make TCWD communications better?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	MULTIPLE COMMUNICATION PLATFORMS.	2/14/2023 3:58 PM
2	Good as is	2/14/2023 10:39 AM
3	Add projects, standards to website. Emails to customers on what's happening at the District.	2/13/2023 4:39 PM
4	More newsletters	2/13/2023 3:45 PM
5	Banners at District projects "Your Rates Hard at Work"	2/13/2023 7:49 AM
6	Not needed	2/13/2023 7:45 AM
7	Highlight the good things the District is doing. Too often were silent.	2/11/2023 3:05 PM
8	Getting out in front of upcoming issues such as drought response.	2/7/2023 1:12 PM
9	Need to address aging infrastructure	2/7/2023 9:13 AM
10	Better communication and the whole truth	2/7/2023 9:03 AM
11	more communication	2/7/2023 8:52 AM
12	More public outreach through messaging and events	2/7/2023 7:00 AM
13	Establish a Instagram page with current/future project alerts, upcoming events/meetings	2/6/2023 4:12 PM
14	More engagement on website	2/6/2023 3:59 PM
15	An increase in social media communication.	2/6/2023 3:51 PM
16	MORE SOCIAL MEDIA POST	2/6/2023 3:40 PM
17	More newsletters	2/6/2023 3:31 PM

## Q10 What else should we keep in mind when developing TCWD's Strategic Communications Plan?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	SOCIAL MEDIA.	2/14/2023 3:58 PM
2	Zoom meetings	2/14/2023 10:39 AM
3	More communication and getting name out is helpful	2/13/2023 4:39 PM
4	All employees up to date on projects and water quality	2/13/2023 3:45 PM
5	Do not over communicate, avoid message fatigue.	2/13/2023 7:49 AM
6	Cost of extra communications	2/13/2023 7:45 AM
7	We should highlight our successes and how efficiently we perform our services.	2/11/2023 3:05 PM
8	It should be easy to read/understand, to the point and not too lengthy.	2/7/2023 1:12 PM
9	Frequency of communication	2/7/2023 9:13 AM
10	More of the important details	2/7/2023 9:03 AM
11	Strategically communicating	2/7/2023 8:52 AM
12	Understand the customers to convey the right message	2/7/2023 7:00 AM
13	Regular community interaction on social media	2/6/2023 4:12 PM
14	Making things simpler for customers to easily access information is key	2/6/2023 3:59 PM
15	Successful marketing strategies of other public utilities.	2/6/2023 3:51 PM
16	LOTS OF COMMUNITY POST AND CUSTOMERS TALKING ABOUT TCWD ON DIFF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS	2/6/2023 3:40 PM
17	Communication	2/6/2023 3:31 PM

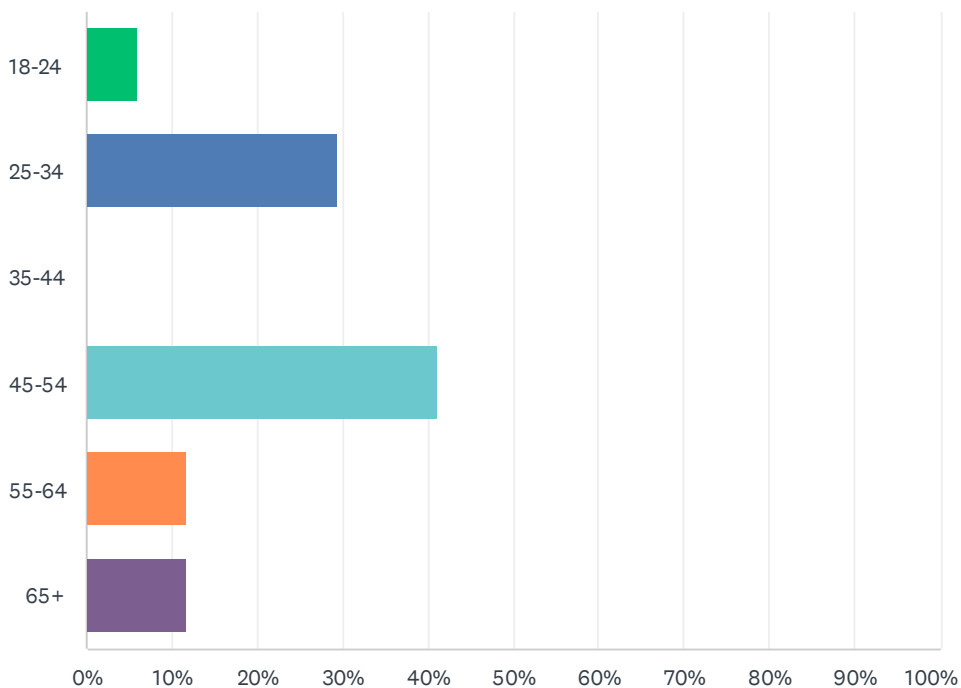
## Q11 What three words would you use to describe TCWD?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	INTEGRITY, HARD-WORKING, RESPONSIBLE	2/14/2023 3:58 PM
2	keep local control	2/14/2023 10:39 AM
3	Good work environment	2/13/2023 4:39 PM
4	Safe reliable timely	2/13/2023 3:45 PM
5	Hard Working Employees.	2/13/2023 7:49 AM
6	x	2/13/2023 7:45 AM
7	Reliable, transparent & efficient	2/11/2023 3:05 PM
8	Small, Complex, Responsive	2/7/2023 1:12 PM
9	Responsive. Transparent. Efficient.	2/7/2023 9:13 AM
10	Friendly, Small, Struggling	2/7/2023 9:03 AM
11	Water awareness day	2/7/2023 8:52 AM
12	Small but mighty	2/7/2023 7:00 AM
13	Lean, dependable, and integrity.	2/6/2023 4:12 PM
14	Honest, mindful, efficient	2/6/2023 3:59 PM
15	Believe and achieve	2/6/2023 3:51 PM
16	Run By Lisa	2/6/2023 3:40 PM
17	Reliable Water District	2/6/2023 3:31 PM

## Q12 What is your age?

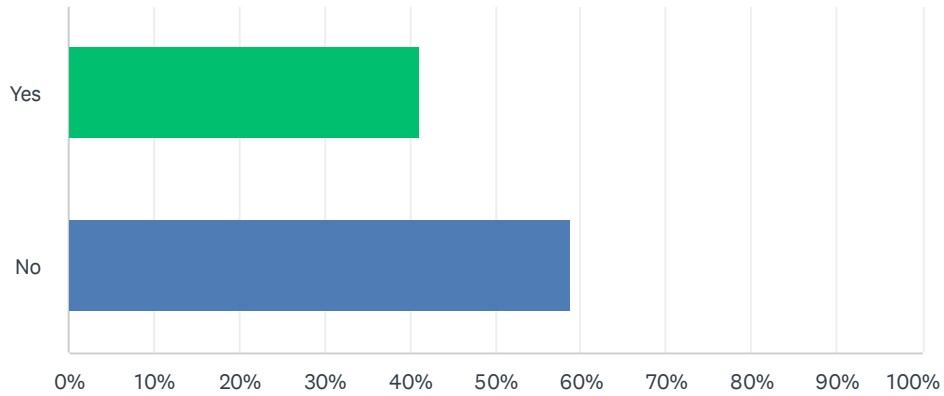
Answered: 17 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
18-24	5.88% 1
25-34	29.41% 5
35-44	0.00% 0
45-54	41.18% 7
55-64	11.76% 2
65+	11.76% 2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>

### Q13 Do you live in TCWD's service area?

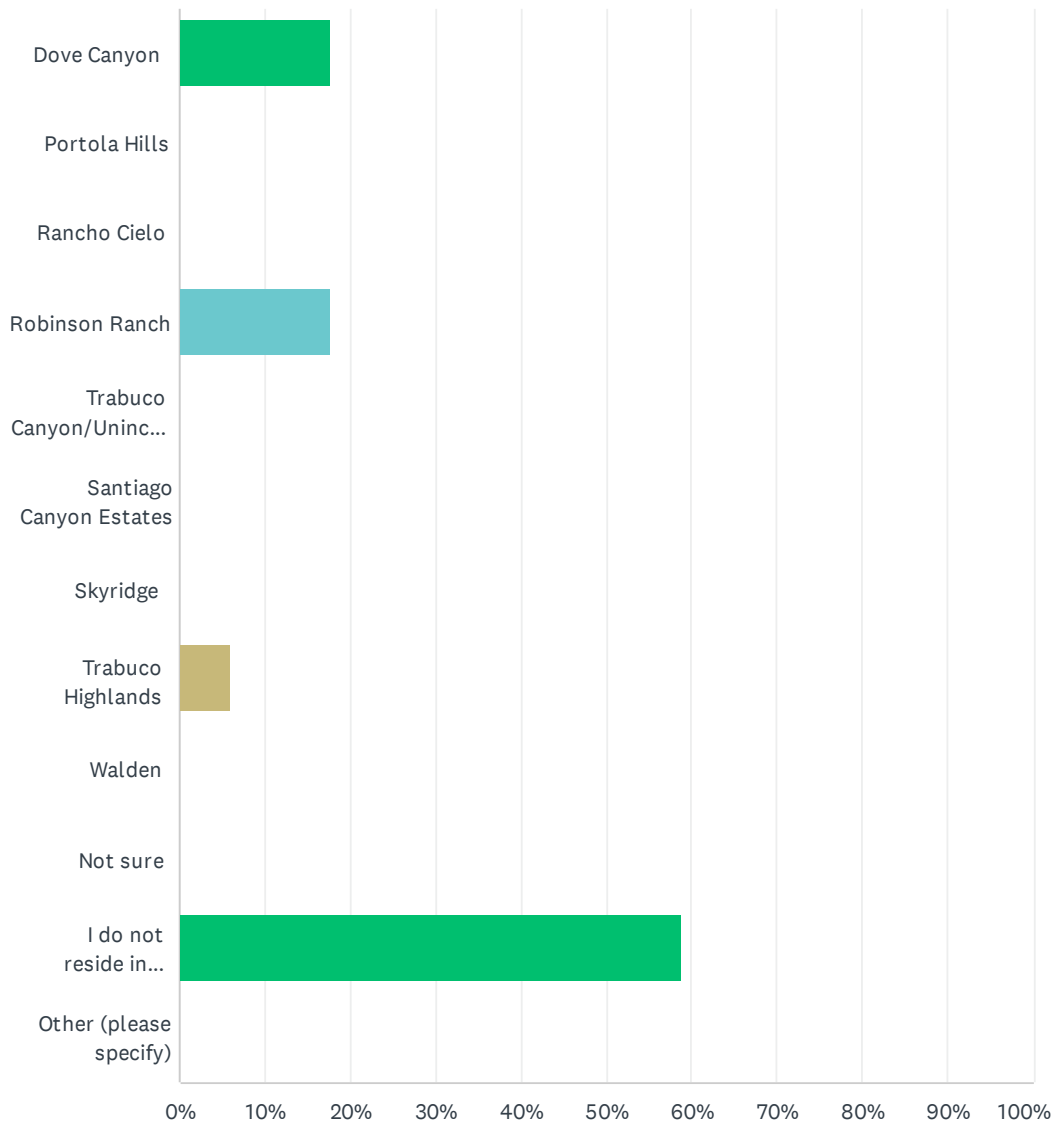
Answered: 17 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	41.18%	7
No	58.82%	10
TOTAL		17

### Q14 If so, which community within TCWD's service area do you live in?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0

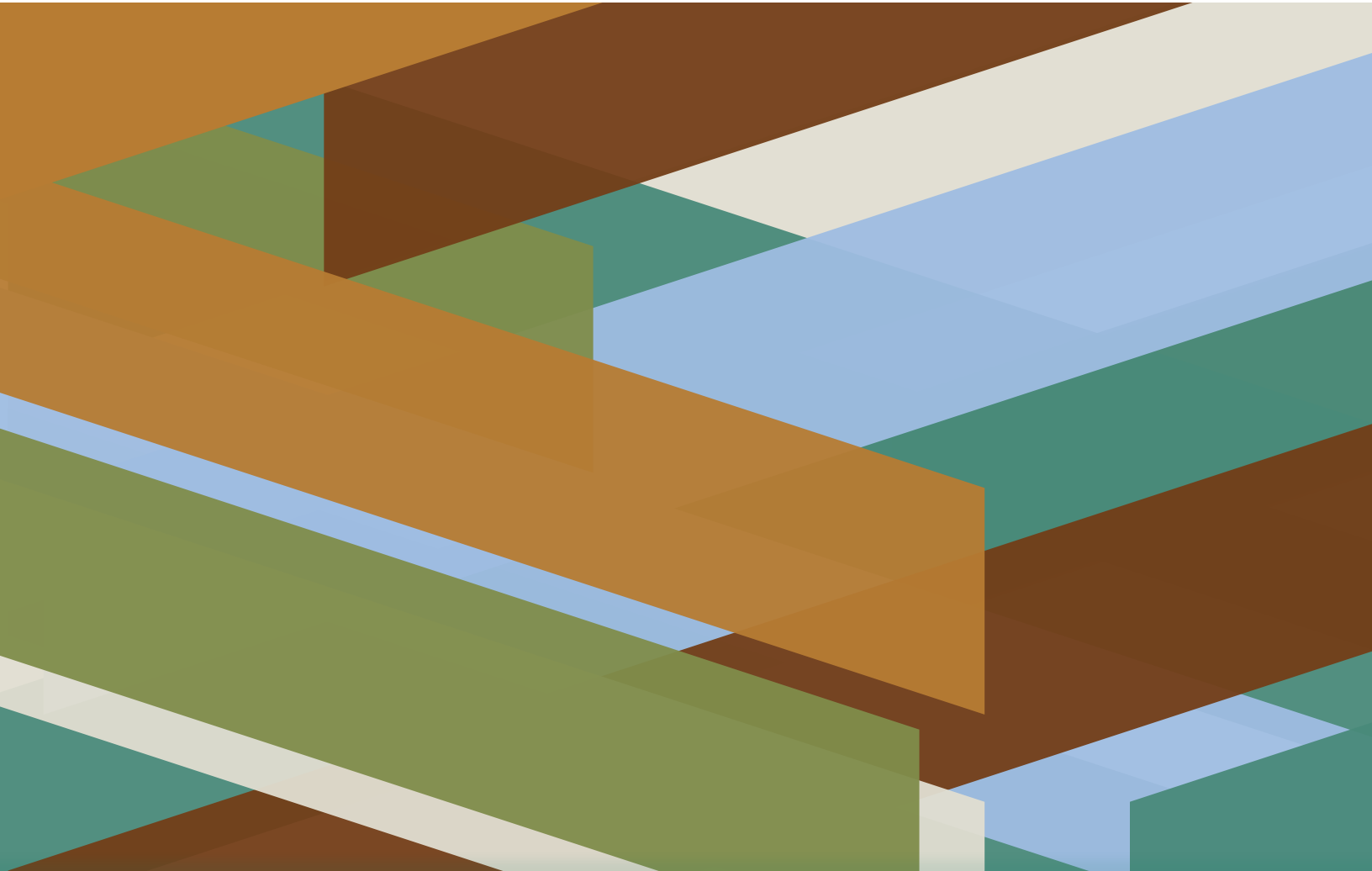


Trabuco Canyon Water District Internal Stakeholder Communications Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Dove Canyon	17.65%	3
Portola Hills	0.00%	0
Rancho Cielo	0.00%	0
Robinson Ranch	17.65%	3
Trabuco Canyon/Unincorporated County Areas	0.00%	0
Santiago Canyon Estates	0.00%	0
Skyridge	0.00%	0
Trabuco Highlands	5.88%	1
Walden	0.00%	0
Not sure	0.00%	0
I do not reside in TCWD's service area.	58.82%	10
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>17</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

# APPENDIX II: TCWD WEBSITE AUDIT REPORT





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# INTRODUCTION

Trabuco Canyon Water District is enhancing its communications program, which includes developing content and improving content visibility on TCWD's website. RockSpark Communications + Marketing conducted a comprehensive website audit to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement.

# METHODOLOGY

The RockSpark team thoroughly reviewed TCWD's website – [www.tcwd.ca.gov](http://www.tcwd.ca.gov). We also spoke with TCWD staff to gather input. This report summarizes our data findings. It also includes an initial content plan.

# KEY FINDINGS

## Website Strengths

- Easy to find contact information and hours on the homepage.
- Good placement of the online bill pay button. Paying a bill is generally the #1 reason users visit a utility website.
- Good use of "emergency banner." At the time of the audit, it was used to notify customers of accidental bill duplication.
- Easy-to-read fonts.

## Website Opportunities and Solutions

### DISPLAY - FAVICON

A favicon is a graphic image (icon) associated with a particular website. A favicon serves as branding for your website. Many recent browsers and newsreaders display them as a visual reminder of the website identity in the address bar or in tabs.

- Change the favicon so that the TCWD logo appears in search results, browser bar and tabs instead of the Granicus logo:



tcwd.ca.gov  
<https://www.tcwd.ca.gov>

## Trabuco Canyon Water District

### FOOTER

- Remove "Created By Granicus - Connecting People and Government" footer line. It's not needed.
- Remove the "P" in the footer here: **P: (949) 858-0277**. The format indicates that the text is a phone number, so the "P" is unnecessary.

### TOP NAVIGATION

- Examine the top navigation to see what items can be consolidated or removed.
- "District Rates, Charges, and Fees" is listed multiple times.
- Move "On Tap Newsletter" under "News."
- Remove "On Tap Newsletter Archives" from the top navigation and add a link to the "On Tap Newsletter Archives" page to the bottom of the "On Tap Newsletter" page.

### ADA COMPLIANCE

- Review website content to ensure it is ADA compliant for items such as the inclusion of alt tags with media and maps, descriptive hyperlink anchors for links and subtitles for video, etc.
- Remove images that contain extensive text. These images present accessibility issues because screen readers and other assistive technologies for visually impaired people often can't read text contained inside an image. We recommend swapping out these types of images on the homepage:

## YOUR WATER IS SAFE

Trabuco Canyon Water District wants to assure our customers that the water at your tap continues to be of the highest quality and 100% safe to drink.

We are also taking steps to ensure that service to our customers will continue uninterrupted so your drinking water is both available and plentiful.

If you have any questions about your service, please contact us.

Thank you



- Consider hiring a firm that specializes in ADA compliance to review TCWD's website.

## WEBPAGE STRUCTURE

- Review pages to make sure every page has text. The Engineering landing page is blank, for example. <https://www.tcwd.ca.gov/district-services/engineering>
- Widgets: Leverage available Granicus widgets and features to make the site more user-friendly. For example, add an Accordion Widget to the [FAQ's page](#) so users can click to expand each section. Also, change the name to "FAQ."
- Remove this section from each webpage: "Free viewers are required for some of the attached documents. They can be downloaded by clicking on the icons below." This feature is a holdover from older websites. Example here: <https://www.tcwd.ca.gov/community/on-tap-newsletter-archives>

## WEBSITE ANALYTICS AND ORGANIZATION

- Review the website analytics to make updates as needed to the site map structure/navigation.
- Restructure the website content to prioritize top-visited pages to make important information easier to find.

## WEBSITE TRAFFIC

- Increase visits to TCWD's website by driving traffic in social media, along with print and digital collateral. Social posts should include links to relevant TCWD webpages whenever possible.

## HOMEPAGE BUTTONS

- Remove the Transparency button from the middle section of the homepage since it's repeated in the top navigation.
- Review website analytics to determine whether a top-performing or top-searched page can replace the Transparency button.

## FEDERAL PLAIN LANGUAGE STANDARDS

- Regularly review the information on the website to ensure that it [follows federal plain language guidelines](#).
- Ensure that any new content created for the website adheres to the guidelines.
- Provide a link to the guidelines for all staff developing website content.

### About the Guidelines

Federal Plain Language Guidelines were developed to help agencies write clearly, so users can:

- Find what they need.
- Understand what they find.
- Use what they find to meet their needs.

Best practices include:

- Add useful headings to help people skim and scan the page.
- Use lists to break up the text and outline steps in a process.
- Avoid having lists within lists or several levels of information.
- Use tables to make complex material easier to understand.
- Write short sentences and short sections to break up information into manageable chunks.

# INITIAL CONTENT PLAN

## RECOMMENDED NEW PAGES AND FEATURES

1. Create a page that provides information to support the need for a potential rate increase.
2. Create text for the [Engineering landing page](#), which is currently blank.
3. Create landing pages with links to related individual pages to consolidate information. [See an example here](#).
  - a. Create a "Projects" page that links to both of these projects, so they don't have to be listed individually in the navigation: "Shadow Rock Detention Basin Facility" and "Alternate Raw Water Transmission Line."
4. Populate the homepage news section. At the time of the audit, the news section was empty. Repurpose newsletter articles or create new articles to populate that section.
5. Add photos of the Board of Directors and General Manager. [See an example here](#).
6. Create new content pages to highlight key programs and initiatives as they arise.
7. Consider adding new photos throughout the site.
8. Create content that includes descriptions of each facility.
9. Implement the solutions outlined in the audit pages two through six.