



The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

NEWS RELEASE

P. O. Box 54153, Los Angeles, California 90054-0153 • (213) 217-6485 • www.mwdh2o.com

Contacts: Rebecca Kimitch, (213) 217-6450; (202) 821-5253, mobile
Bob Muir, (213) 217-6930; (213) 324-5213, mobile

May 15, 2018

SOUTHLAND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO RACE WITH THE SUN AT SOLAR CUP Metropolitan Water District's solar-powered boat competition gives students hands-on learning opportunities in conservation, engineering, alternative energy

Students from 38 high schools across Southern California will show off their boat-building and racing skills this weekend as they compete in Metropolitan Water District's 16th annual [Solar Cup](#)[™].

The action-packed weekend marks the culmination of a seven-month program during which students used lessons in engineering and alternative energy to design and build one-person, solar-powered boats.

The more than 600 students participating in this year's competition will face off in sprint and endurance races at Metropolitan's Lake Skinner in southwest Riverside County's Temecula Valley beginning this Friday, May 18 and concluding Sunday, May 20.

Solar Cup is the nation's largest solar-powered boating competition, featuring students from Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego counties. The program gives students the opportunity to put to practical use their math and science skills and provides them additional hands-on lessons in water resources, alternative energy development and sustainability.

"We're creating future engineers, water resource managers and conservationists. We're helping build Metropolitan's future workforce," said Solar Cup coordinator Julie Kalbacher, a state-certified teacher with Metropolitan's education programs.

"But even more importantly, we're getting students thinking on their feet, working in teams to find practical solutions. Those are valuable skills in any field," she added.

To build their 16-foot, single-seat boats, veteran teams are given \$2,500 and rookie teams are given \$4,000, through sponsorships from Metropolitan's member agencies. Students spent afternoons and weekends for months building the boats, deciding which solar panels, batteries, motors, propellers and other components to buy for their boats, and then figuring out how to arrange those components—all with

more.....

the goal of creating the fastest boat possible. Boats are limited to 320 watts in their solar panels and face a handful of other technical restrictions, but there is a lot of flexibility in how they can be built, Kalbacher said.

“There is not one right way to do this. The answer requires creative and critical thinking. That’s the kind of challenge these kids will face in the real world,” she said.

“And sometimes once teams get to Lake Skinner and get their boats out on the water, they find themselves facing last-minute problems as the competition unfolds—a loose wire, the boat taking on unexpected water—and they have to troubleshoot while the pressure is on,” Kalbacher added.

But before they hit the water, teams are put through a series of qualifying events by Metropolitan and a technical advisory team from Occidental College to ensure boats meet the program’s requirements and are safe and seaworthy.

On Friday, May 18 the boats will be qualified and tested on Lake Skinner. The competition begins Saturday, May 19, when the teams face off in two 90-minute endurance heats around a 1.6-kilometer course and continues Sunday, May 20, with 200-meter sprint races in which the boats are powered by solar energy stored in batteries.

Solar Cup concludes with an awards ceremony on Sunday afternoon. Trophies are awarded in veteran and rookie divisions for teams with the highest points, as well as to teams honored for “Hottest-Looking Boat,” teamwork and sportsmanship. Among the 38 teams in this year’s Solar Cup are five schools participating for the first time. They will compete in a rookie division.

As part of the program, the teams also created social media campaigns on the importance of water conservation. Teams produced Snapchat-based videos and photo campaigns under the theme, “Water conservation: it’s not about the weather, it’s about forever.” Along with racing results, teams earn points from these public service messages, as well as technical inspections and completion of technical reports.

Over the past 16 years, more than 10,000 students have participated in Solar Cup. The program began in 2002 with eight teams and about 80 students. In the years since, it has grown into the nation’s largest solar-powered boat competition.

Learn more about Solar Cup at mwdh2o.com.

###

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is a state-established cooperative of 26 cities and water agencies serving nearly 19 million people in six counties. The district imports water from the Colorado River and Northern California to supplement local supplies, and helps its members to develop increased water conservation, recycling, storage and other resource-management programs.

List of 2018 Solar Cup Teams

<u>Member Agency Sponsor</u>	<u>Team/School Name</u>	<u>School District</u>	<u>City</u>
Anaheim Public Utilities	Anaheim High School	Anaheim Union HS District	Anaheim
Burbank Water & Power	Burbank High School	Burbank USD	Burbank
Long Beach Water Department	Cabrillo High School**	Long Beach USD	Long Beach
Las Virgenes MWD	Calabasas High School	Las Virgenes USD	Calabasas
Inland Empire Utilities Agency*	Chino High School	Chino Valley USD	Chino
Municipal Water District of Orange County*	Coast High School	Huntington Beach Union HS District	Huntington Beach
City of Compton	Compton High School	Compton USD	Compton
Municipal Water District of Orange County*	Costa Mesa High School**	Newport Mesa USD	Costa Mesa
San Diego County Water Authority	Del Lago Academy	Escondido Unified HS District	Escondido
Central Basin MWD	Downey High School	Downey USD	Downey
Western MWD*	Elsinore HS / Lakeside HS	Lake Elsinore USD	Wildomar
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Franklin High School	Los Angeles USD	Los Angeles
Three Valleys MWD*	Fremont Academy of Engineering & Design	Pomona USD	Pomona
Three Valleys MWD*	Ganesha High School	Pomona USD	Pomona
Eastern MWD	Hemet USD Team	Hemet USD	Hemet
San Diego County Water Authority	High Tech High North County	San Marcos USD	San Marcos
Pasadena Water & Power	John Muir High School	Pasadena USD	Pasadena
San Diego County Water Authority	+	San Diego USD	San Diego
Foothill MWD*	La Cañada High School	La Cañada USD	La Cañada Flintridge
Upper San Gabriel Valley MWD	Los Altos High School	Hacienda La Puente USD	Hacienda Heights
Inland Empire Utilities Agency*	Los Osos High School	Cucamonga School District	Rancho Cucamonga
Long Beach Water Department	McBride High School	Long Beach USD	Long Beach
West Basin MWD	Mira Costa High School	Manhattan Beach USD	Manhattan Beach
Upper San Gabriel Valley MWD	Mountain View High School	El Monte Union HS District	El Monte
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Narbonne High School	Los Angeles USD	Harbor City
Western MWD*	Norte Vista High School	Riverside USD	Riverside
Eastern MWD	Nuviev Bridge Early College HS	Nuviev Union School District	Nuevo
Municipal Water District of Orange County*	Oxford Academy	Cypress School District	Cypress
West Basin MWD	Palos Verdes Peninsula High School	Palos Verdes Peninsula USD	Rolling Hills Estates
Central Basin MWD	Paramount High School West	Paramount USD	Paramount
Eastern MWD	Perris Union High SD Team (Heritage HS; Paloma Valley HS; Perris HS)	Romoland School District	Romoland
Western MWD*	Riverside Poly High School	Riverside USD	Riverside
Three Valleys MWD	San Dimas High School	Bonita USD	San Dimas
Long Beach Water Department	Sato High School	Long Beach USD	Long Beach
Inland Empire Utilities Agency*	Upland High School**	Chaffey Joing Union High SD	Upland
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Venice HS STEM Magnet	Los Angeles USD	Los Angeles
West Basin MWD	Waterfront Education**	Los Angeles USD	Redondo Beach
Upper San Gabriel Valley MWD	West Covina High School	West Covina USD	West Covina

* = has co-sponsor(s)

** = Rookie