



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT  
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

# SUCCESSION PLANNING Workforce Excellence

## THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT'S MISSION STATEMENT READS:

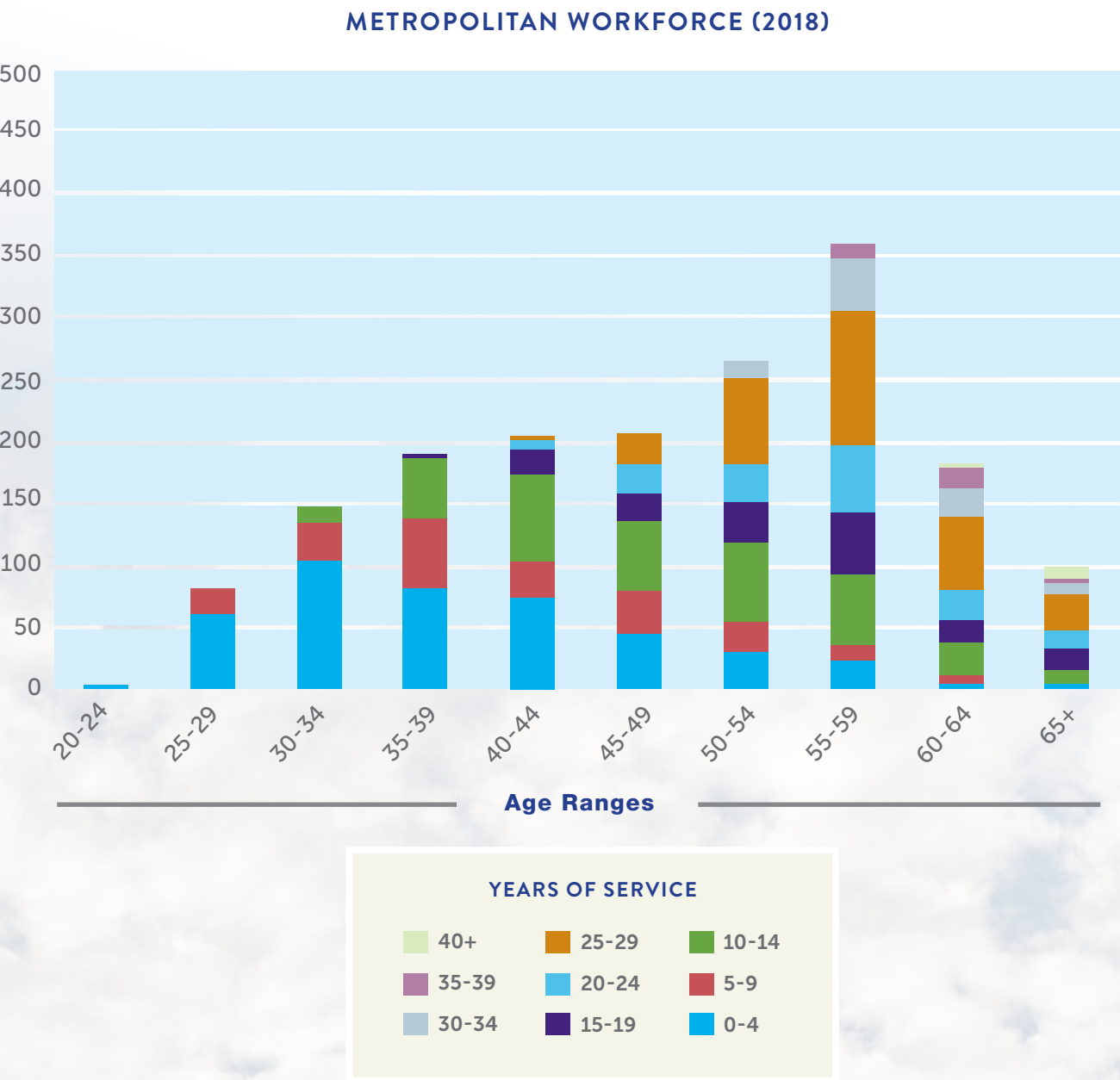
**“The mission of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is to provide its service area with adequate and reliable supplies of high-quality water to meet present and future needs in an environmentally and economically responsible way.”**

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Our job is not just to provide water today, but to ensure “reliable” supplies that can meet future needs. To do that successfully, requires an excellent workforce with employees who are fully prepared to meet future needs and challenges. Succession planning prepares tomorrow’s leaders and ensures a stable, professional, fully-trained workforce – critically important to the continued success of Metropolitan. This booklet details our philosophy and practice.



Metropolitan has an experienced workforce with many years of service and deep institutional knowledge. This provides stability and opportunity for growth and innovation. As valued employees near retirement, we must diligently prepare future generations to fill their shoes.



At age 50, with a minimum five years of service, **57 percent** of our workforce was eligible to retire in 2014. As of late 2018, that number has dropped to **48 percent**, signaling a trend towards a more age-diverse workforce and a continued need for workforce planning.

# SUCCESSION PLANNING

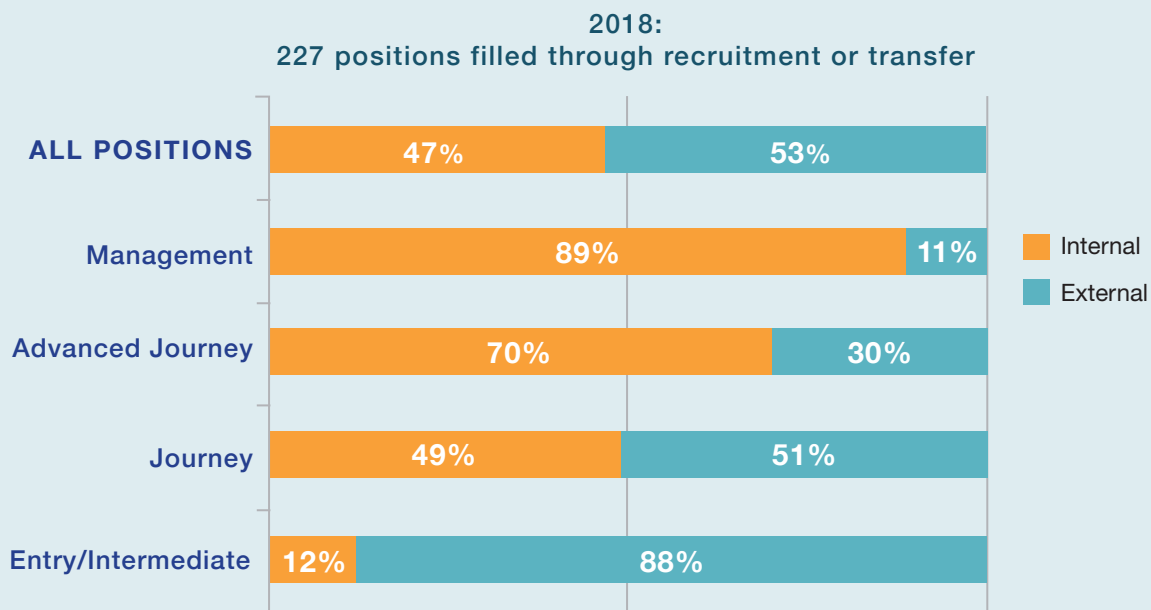
Succession planning at Metropolitan balances three elements: 1) tapping the best talent, 2) preparing tomorrow's talent today; and 3) developing leaders who are ready for the future. We are committed to developing existing internal staff as much as possible, as well as reaching into the communities we serve to seek additional talent.

Succession planning is an ongoing, dynamic effort that stays responsive to a shifting playing field. To be successful, Metropolitan remains flexible, adaptable, and creative in addressing our long-term workforce needs. Our Human Resources Group partners with others across the organization to provide custom services and solutions that address current and future gaps in skills, knowledge or abilities.



## METROPOLITAN SUCCESSION PLANNING

### PROFILE OF INTERNAL/EXTERNAL HIRING



\*Does not include 110 Management Requested Promotions

While just over half of all hiring is from outside of Metropolitan, 82% of management and senior level staff are hired from within. We remain committed to ensuring the strongest possible future for Metropolitan, and that often means a lifetime of training and preparation.

# TAPPING THE BEST

At Metropolitan, we work to attract the best employees by creating an environment that provides opportunity, empowerment, trust, and purpose. Our employees expect to play a significant role in planning and deciding how they accomplish their unique work requirements. We believe this environment will have a significant impact on work performance and employee engagement. Our approach will enable us to retain and attract the finest employees possible by providing employees access to job-related knowledge and skills, to innovative work processes, and by granting them the discretion to implement change. Our hiring decisions must consider not only a candidate's ability to perform initial job requirements, but also the potential to meet future Metropolitan challenges.



To attract the right people with the right talent into critical roles at the right time, we are expanding our outreach efforts, developing internal candidates and seeking the most qualified external candidates.

## Innovative Outreach

In the past, Metropolitan's hiring strategy focused on advertising and allowing candidates to showcase their interest and abilities through their applications. Today, we have shifted our recruitment strategies by using social media, the press, marketing techniques, and outreach to professional organizations, colleges, and universities with the goal of increasing the size and quality of our candidate pools.

## Internal Job Placements and Promotions

The majority of Metropolitan's talent pool comes from internal job bids and promotions of existing employees. We continuously strive to increase the availability of training and development opportunities for internal staff, including career coaching and enhanced staff experience, to help staff effectively compete for open positions.

## Student Internships

Working with "Hire Youth LA," Engineering and Operations "Cooperative Education Programs," our "Desert Student Intern" program, and others, we provide opportunities to roughly 30 student interns each year. These programs not only help us expand our talent pipeline by helping tap the best student talent, they also expose youth to potential careers at Metropolitan and offer real-world learning experiences in disciplines across the organization. Many of these interns continue to work at Metropolitan after graduation and are successful in securing regular employment.

# PREPARING TOMORROW'S TALENT, TODAY

Metropolitan has developed a robust and comprehensive learning and development program to retain talent and help us build on our existing foundation of knowledge and experience. In short, managers and staff alike must be able to think beyond today's needs to develop the skills and capabilities they will need tomorrow. In addition to traditional learning opportunities, we help employees successfully move into new roles within the organization by supporting cross-functional training and building collaborative partnerships. Our developmental efforts include formal classroom training, online training, mentoring, participating in projects to broaden experience, taking on rotational job assignments, or simply learning new skills through on-the-job training.

We also provide a vast array of online learning tools that supplement traditional classroom training and enable employees to learn new work-required skills. 24/7 access to online learning enables employees to meet critical learning need when they need it.

**ONLINE LEARNING** provides employees with work-related skills and reduces the need for employees to leave their job locations for extended periods to attend training. In addition, the Skillport learning portal offers 24/7 online access to training whenever an employee needs additional development.

**CLASSROOM TRAINING** offered at our various facilities, provides opportunities for peer interactions and hands-on learning experiences with top-tier instructors.

**TECHNICAL CERTIFICATIONS** are often essential to operations staff before they can access certain work locations or perform certain job assignments. Some Metropolitan employees require as many as 48 certifications! Almost two-thirds of Metropolitan's training hours cater to technical and safety training and refresher courses.

**METROPOLITAN'S STATE CERTIFIED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM** began with the goal of supplying Metropolitan with highly skilled journey-level Electricians and Mechanics. The Apprenticeship Program is a collaborative effort with AFSCME, Local 1902, and is overseen by a Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee. Two-thirds of the four-year program requires on-the-job learning with the remaining one-third spent in formal classroom training. Since the first class in 2007, 114 individuals have graduated from the Apprenticeship Training Program.

**DESERT ELECTRICAL/MECHANIC MAINTENANCE TRAINING PROGRAM** provides electrical skills development to journey level mechanics, which is a requirement for advancement in some positions in Metropolitan's remote desert locations. The program encompasses 1,200 hours of training and enables graduates to apply for other advanced positions.

**TUITION REIMBURSEMENT** provides an opportunity for employees who would like to complete a degree or enhance their skills for professional advancement. We collaborate with numerous local colleges and universities to offer discounts to these programs. Approximately 120 employees participated in the Tuition Reimbursement program in 2018.

**NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATIONS** effectively integrate new employees into Metropolitan and have proven to be an important development and retention tool. Every new employee participates in a New Employee Orientation, which provides them with an understanding of Metropolitan's role, history, benefits, and key policies and enables them to perform successfully. After completing a six-month probationary period, new employees are welcomed into Metropolitan at a second orientation where they hear from Executives and learn additional information about Metropolitan's benefits and policies.

**CAREER LAUNCH PROGRAM** initiated for new hires in the Engineering Services Group, provides cross-training designed to bring new employees up-to-speed in their roles and guide them toward a path of sustained high performance and collaboration. Engineering Services uses Career Launch to expose new employees to a cross-section of engineering specialties during the first few years of their career. We are continuing to expand this approach of integrating employees into their functional areas from the first day of hire because of its record of success.

**LUNCH AND LEARN OPPORTUNITIES** are organized in both Engineering (Brown Bag Series) and Water Resources Management (H2O University). These engaging presentations, provided by staff across Metropolitan, educate employees on projects and accomplishments throughout the District. The sessions provide employees with insights and knowledge about other areas of Metropolitan, and help to facilitate employee networking.

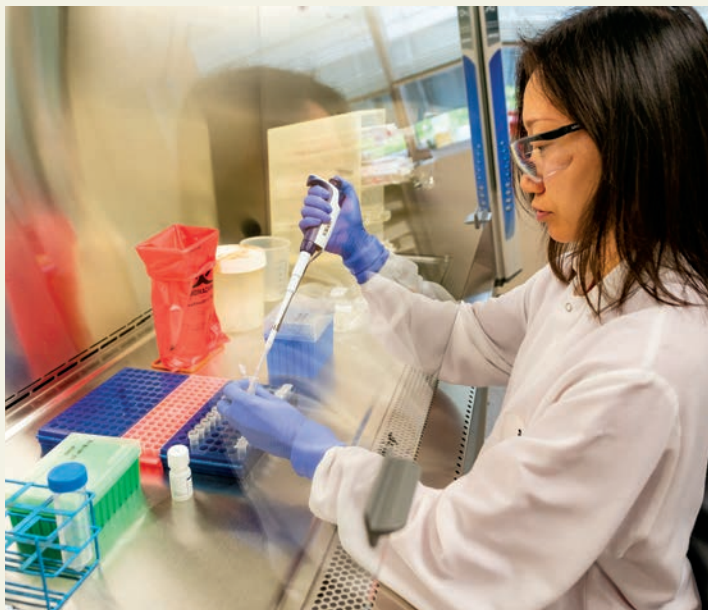


"When you come to work at Metropolitan,  
you come for a career."

ASSISTANT GM/CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER  
SHANE CHAPMAN

**MENTORING** increases staff access to sources of expertise and knowledge by enabling staff to learn directly from experts. A formal mentoring program has been successfully deployed in the Engineering Services Group and the Women at Metropolitan employee resource group launched a mentoring program for women in FY 18-19. These programs are being reviewed to determine opportunities for expanding to all of Metropolitan in 2019. These mentoring programs match employees with mentors who are subject matter experts and enable them to pursue their own development goals.

**JOB ROTATIONS** enable staff to gain a better understanding of other functions or roles. For example, the Water System Operations Group and the Engineering Services Group have implemented a Plant Engineer Rotation Program to provide improved, coordinated support on engineering projects. Many groups have provided temporary assignments to staff that allow them the opportunity to experience responsibilities they may not encounter in their normal position.





# LEADERS READY FOR THE FUTURE

## LEADERSHIP TRIDENT

Preparing leaders for a rapidly changing future where new projects, new technologies, and a changing workforce demographic are the norm, requires leaders who understand the importance of effective people management, innovation and creativity, collaboration, and sound financial decision-making. Metropolitan's "Management Trident" lies at the core of our management development efforts. The Trident consists of three essential values: Empowerment, Recognition, and Accountability,

### EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment provides employees with the information, learning, resources, and freedom they require to plan, act on, and meet their work objectives. It fosters an environment of innovation and creativity that has served Metropolitan well in the past. Empowerment recognizes that smart risk-taking allows for independent actions tempered by an understanding that mistakes and failures may occur, thus building a true learning environment.

### RECOGNITION

Meaningful, timely, and sincere recognition communicates to others that a person is valued and appreciated for his or her efforts and contributions. A simple thank you or a brief conversation or note can demonstrate an awareness of an employee's efforts and convey a real sense of appreciation for a job well done.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

Leadership accountability begins with managers taking personal ownership and responsibility in developing their employees. Managers must be communicators and advocates, and they must set an example of taking responsible executive management actions. Accountability also means being transparent and responsible for decisions, actions, policies, and use of funds that go toward achieving common objectives.





# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AT METROPOLITAN

To support Leadership Development and the values embodied in its Management Trident, Metropolitan offers a wide array of management training programs. Management Academies prepare individuals for future management opportunities, and Management Universities provide the specific tools needed to foster growth and learning across all levels. While such programs represent our current offerings, the curriculum is fluid and adjusted over time as the needs change.

- **Management Forums and Leadership Breakfasts** provide a platform for executive leaders to inform managers about current issues and challenges while enhancing cross-functional networking. Executive management and functional groups bring their management teams together for regular day-long meetings to hear from Metropolitan executives, review Metropolitan and group business plans, and discuss current Metropolitan initiatives.
- **Metropolitan Management University**, the foundational program for all managers, is a tiered-Leadership curriculum that enables new managers to develop their people management skills and business expertise. The graduate program of the university is for managers who supervise high-level technical experts or other managers. To date, 91 team and unit managers have completed MMU and MMU-Graduate programs..
- **External Leadership Programs**, such as those offered by Leadership California, the Southern California Leadership Network, and CORO Lead California, are readily available to Metropolitan's future leaders. These programs provide insights, networking opportunities, and deeper exploration into issues facing Southern California for mid- to senior-level professionals. In addition, regional universities and colleges offer programs addressing effective leadership, while CalPoly Pomona and CalState Los Angeles offer a Water Leadership Certification program available to Metropolitan employees.
- **Executive Development has two components**, 1) a formalized one-year assignment in Sacramento coupled with a short assignment in Washington to broaden participants' understanding of key legislative and political issues and processes, and 2) a program still in development that provides senior leaders with internal and external experiences required for key leadership positions. To date, two senior-level managers have participated in the first component, and more will be joining them in coming years.

"We are proud that Metropolitan is widely recognized as a first rate workplace that places a high value on recruiting, training, mentoring and retaining employees."

**GENERAL MANAGER JEFFREY KIGHTLINGER**



# MANAGEMENT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

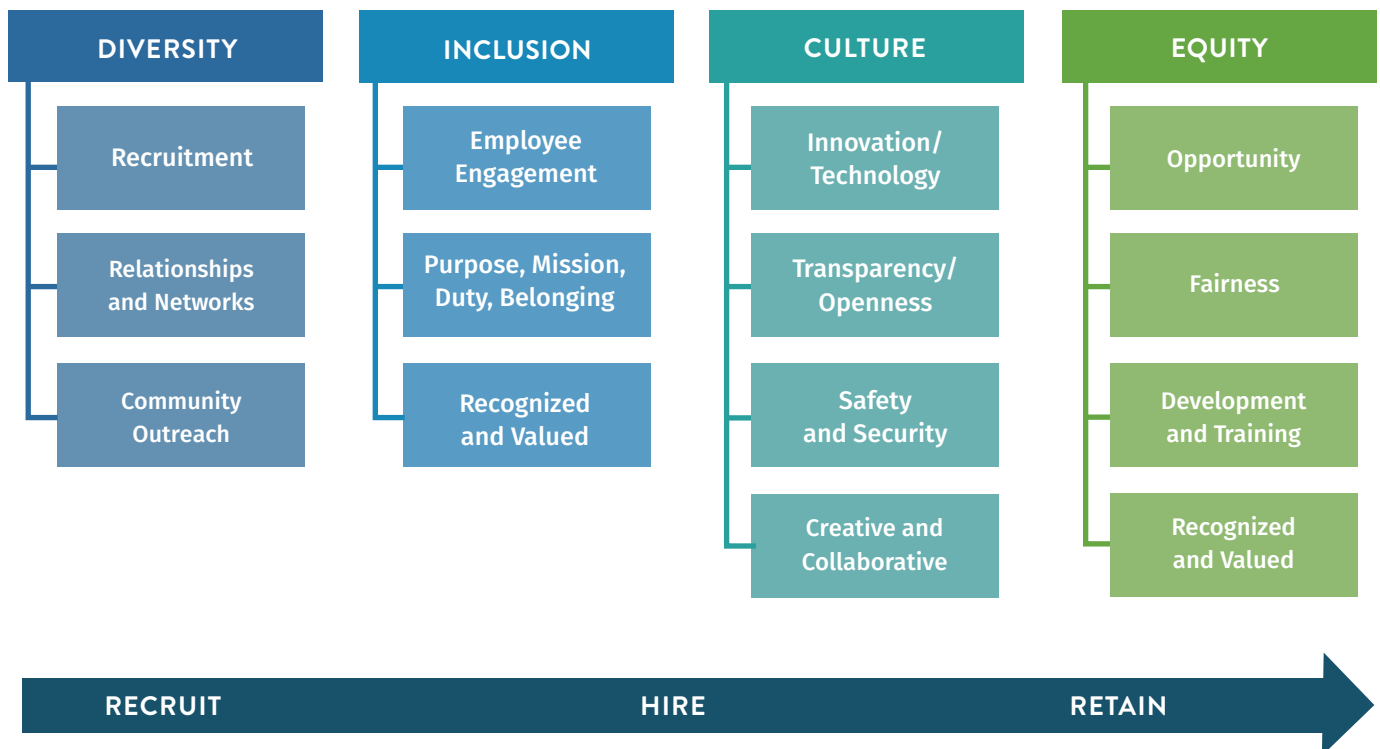


Collectively, Metropolitan has implemented a robust succession planning program focused on strategic professional advancement, knowledge retention and dissemination, learning development, and a bottom-up recruitment and retention approach. Metropolitan acknowledges that reliability comes in many forms and as such, invests in resources and initiatives that enable us to maintain a high caliber workforce for years to come. By building upon and expanding these approaches, Metropolitan will continue to meet current and future staffing challenges and, ensure continued success in supporting the people and businesses of Southern California.



# DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, CULTURE, EQUITY: DICE

Since 2016, our minority hires have out-paced our non-minority hires, which has resulted in more than **50%** of our workforce being minority for the first time. With one-third of the workforce in a male dominated field, in 2018, female hires in fields other than the trades increased to a rate of **34%**.



## RETENTION SUCCESS STATISTICS

- Average years of service: **14 years**
- Employees with more than 14 years of service: **43%**
- Employees with more than 20 years of service: **31%**
- Employees with more than 30 years of service: **7%**
- Voluntary Turnover Rate: **less than 1% in 2018**

"At Metropolitan, we believe the diversity of our workforce is what drives better insights, better decisions and better results. It is the backbone of our progress and innovation."

HR GROUP MANAGER DIANE PITMAN





Diamond Valley Lake Wildflower Trail

## ABOUT METROPOLITAN

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

## OUR MISSION

The mission of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is to provide its service area with adequate and reliable supplies of high-quality water to meet present and future needs in an environmentally and economically responsible way.



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