

Casitas Water Adventure is Now Open for the Summer Season

Bring your friends and family for a fun filled adventure in our Lazy River, Play Structure, Little Tikes Lagoon, and Splash Pad.

Hours of Operation*:

- ◆ Friday-Saturday 11am-7pm
- ◆ Sunday-Thursday 11am-6pm

Entrance Fee:

- ◆ \$14/Guest Saturday and Sunday
- ◆ \$12/Guest Monday-Friday
- ◆ **Late Day Passes:** \$6.50/Guest for the last 3 hours of operation.

Parking Fee:

- ◆ \$20 Weekends and Holidays
- ◆ \$10 Week Days



*To view the complete 2017 summer schedule including days that the Casitas Water Adventure is closed visit www.casitaswater.org/water-adventure/.

The Casitas Speakers Bureau: Provides an opportunity for customers and the community to learn more about water issues in the Western Ventura County area. Please contact Ron Merckling, Water Conservation and Public Affairs Manager, 805-649-2251, extension 118, to invite a speaker to your next community group or organizational meeting.

Please visit the Water Wise Gardening in Ventura County website at www.ventura.watersavingplants.com.

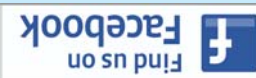


The Casitas Board of Directors is scheduled to meet at 3:00 p.m. in the board room located in the main office at 1055 Ventura Ave., Oak View, on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month.

Your Board in Action

- Bill Hicks, Division I
- James W. Word, Division II
- Pete Kaiser, Division III
- Mary Bergen, Division IV
- Russ Baggerly, Division V

Join the Casitas Municipal Water District Facebook page to get the latest updates on water conservation and the Lake Casitas Recreation Area at: www.facebook.com/fbsitecasitasmunicipalwaterdistrict.



1055 Ventura Ave.
Oak View, CA 93022
805-649-2251
www.casitaswater.org



CASITAS WATER NEWS

Summer 2017

Stage 3 Drought Continued for 2017-2018

In May 2017, the Casitas Board of Directors continued the Stage 3 drought condition based on Lake Casitas' low supply level. After experiencing five years of extremely low rainfall, Lake Casitas remains at approximately 43% of full capacity. With the 2017 rain season behind us, Western Ventura county will be in drought for at least the remainder of 2017. The 2017 winter rainfall was a series of smaller storms that began to saturate the watershed. The largest winter storm occurred on February 17th and brought surface flows of approximately 23,000 acre-feet into Lake Casitas. That represents about 9% lake volume or more than an additional year of water supply.



Lake Casitas – remains at fifty year lows. to take multiple years of above average rainfall before Lake Casitas fully recovers.

“We are asking that everyone continue to conserve at heightened levels for the rest of this year,” said Ron Merckling, Public Affairs Manager for Casitas. It is likely

Casitas Welcomes Ojai Customers

Casitas welcomed Ojai water service customers on June 8, 2017, the date Casitas became the water purveyor for the Ojai water service area. Casitas and Golden State Water Company agreed on a settlement for the purchase the Ojai water system after more than six years of discussions, decisions, and legal actions. Casitas developed a bond funding method to pay Golden State for the Ojai water system, which was approved by 87.3% of voters in the Ojai service area. The ground-swelling from local Ojai customers was based on water rate unfairness, governance concerns, and water system failures. With overwhelming public support, the Casitas Bond was approved under the condition that the purchase

and improvement costs for the Ojai water system would not be borne by existing Casitas customers. Ojai water customers will now be billed for water use at Casitas water rates.

Casitas is now starting to fix the Ojai water system problems, and is in the process of integrating the Ojai water system into Casitas operations. The \$34.4 million cost and \$9 million in improvements for the Ojai water system are funded by bonds that will be paid for on property tax bills by Ojai property owners over the next thirty years.

The Ojai water system includes groundwater wells that have served the Ojai community. Ojai customers will continue to rely primarily on the



Downtown Ojai

local groundwater sources with a supplement of water coming from Lake Casitas. This will leave water demand on Lake Casitas unchanged.

More information about the Ojai water system purchase can be found at www.Ojaiwater.org.

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Five Year Water Rate Increase Approved

Casitas Board of Directors approved a five-year water rate increase at the May 10, 2017, public hearing. The last water rate increase was in 2013. Casitas' water rates are near the lowest in Southern California. Casitas is committed to economical pricing and intends to maintain rates that are competitive with other regional water providers.

During the last ten years, Casitas expanded responsibilities across a variety of work areas. Several departments established during this time due to new regulatory requirements include Fisheries to address requirements under the endangered Species Act; Water Conservation to respond to evolving State requirements for water conservation; and, Safety to emphasize safe working habits in highly hazardous work environments. With each of these expanded areas of responsibilities,



Mike Gibson (L) and Scott Lewis, Casitas Fisheries staff in the field.



Maintenance work at the Pump plant.

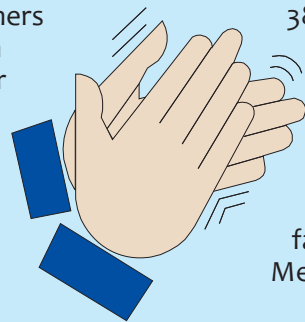
Casitas has hired highly trained professionals to complete the tasks.

Casitas continues to address the aging infrastructure by planning and performing preventative maintenance, replacing and modernizing facilities and equipment to meet current efficiency and safety standards, and addressing lake water quality issues.

A key example of Casitas' commitment to efficient and effective projects is the hypolimnetic aeration system. The new aeration system injects oxygen into the lower reaches of Lake Casitas resulting in a reduction of iron and manganese. This has reduced taste, color, and odor issues that had been prominent on a seasonal basis. Water quality complaints in the last couple of years have dropped from hundreds of calls to zero. More than half of the \$1.5 million project was funded by a \$0.9 million State Drought Grant from the California Department of Water Resources.

Casitas Retail Customers' Winter Reductions Best in State

Casitas' retail (those directly billed) customers in February of 2017, outperformed every urban water agency in the State of California in water conservation as compared to February of 2013. Casitas' customers used 73% less water in February of 2017 versus February of 2013. In December and January, Casitas' customers ranked number two in the State in water reductions, only behind Valley Center Municipal Water District in the San Diego area. Casitas remains in a Stage 3 drought with Lake Casitas as the primary water source remaining at fifty year lows with approximately 43% volume remaining in the lake.



38% above an average rainfall. Not nearly enough to counter five years of very low rainfall," said Ron Merckling, Public Affairs Manager for Casitas. "In fact, we continue to be at a couple of years of water deficit for this period. The drought may be over for most of California, but it is far from being over for the Casitas area," said Merckling.

Casitas is investigating a couple of alternatives to increase existing water supplies. Casitas is partnering with other water agencies in an effort to bring State Water Project supplies to Western Ventura county. Casitas is also researching the feasibility to tap into additional ground water supplies near Lake Casitas.

"For the Casitas area, this year's rainfall was about

Irrigation Required Myth Debunked

Garden Blooms with No Irrigation for 8 months

Last fall, Casitas' staff set out to debunk the myth that a lush and vibrant garden is not possible without an irrigation system. Casitas' district office garden is lush and blooming after the rainy season. The goal of the District's demonstration garden is to encourage the adoption of limited irrigation landscaping, which contributes to extending Lake Casitas' water supply. Casitas' water conservation staff wanted to create a model landscape with beautiful drought tolerant plants as an enticing example for Casitas' customers. A diversity of landscape styles are presented in the garden with several zones with different plant types that have no artificial irrigation.

"We wanted to challenge the myth that water customers needed to choose between an attractive high water landscape versus an unattractive low water landscape," said Ron Merckling, Public Affairs Manager for Casitas.

More than half of an average California



Matilija Poppies in Casitas' conservation garden at the Oak View Office.

homeowner's water usage is for outdoor use. Planting California friendly plants can take a little planning, but can result in a beautiful garden, with a lower water bill, and less maintenance than a traditional grass landscape.

Are you doing your part to save Lake Casitas?

If so, Please inquire about getting your Conserving Lake Casitas sign for your front landscape.

