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waternews



Your source for all things water

2020 Hindsight: A Decade of Waterful Progress

It's the dawn of a new decade. What better time to reflect on the "state of the water" in San Antonio? Here are a few milestones marking our city's rise as a national leader in water management over the past 10 years.

In 2010, SAWS became the first utility in the nation to **capture methane from wastewater treatment** to be sold for energy. SAWS reuses all three sewage byproducts: solids for compost, liquids for recycled water, and gas for energy.

Through an agreement with Schertz and Seguin, SAWS brought the new **Regional Carrizo water supply** on line in 2013. Leasing unused capacity in the Schertz-Seguin pipeline saved \$88 million in infrastructure costs.

SAWS also achieved the **highest bond rating in our history** by reducing costs and increasing efficiency, saving millions annually.



With this solid financial footing, SAWS was able to negotiate the largest public-private utility partnership in Texas history. In 2020, the **Vista Ridge pipeline** will become our biggest non-Edwards Aquifer water supply, to meet the demands of a growing San Antonio.

Even with new water on the way, SAWS continues to make the most of existing supplies. Our "water savings account" at the **Aquifer Storage & Recovery** facility now holds enough to supply all of San Antonio for more than 6 months, ready to use in times of drought.

Of course, **water conservation** continues to be a cornerstone of our **Water Management Plan**. San Antonio's daily water use per capita dropped to an all-time low of 117 gallons in 2016, thanks to programs like free irrigation check-ups and landscape coupons.

Another new water supply came on line in 2017. Our **brackish desalination plant** filters salty groundwater to supply up to 53,000 households each day.



SAWS also negotiated a consent decree in 2017 with the Environmental Protection Agency to **repair and improve our sewer system**. The agreement likely saved SAWS ratepayers hundreds of millions of dollars.

SAWS' fiscal responsibility includes keeping services affordable. To that end, the utility's investment in **assistance programs** has more than doubled, reaching out to more than 32,000 families in need.

Our commitment to financially vulnerable citizens extended to employees as well. In 2019 SAWS increased starting salaries to \$15.25 per hour, to better **recruit and retain a skilled workforce**.

That steady commitment to employee and community well-being is one reason SAWS was named to the city's **Top Workplaces** in 2019 — for the seventh time since 2011.

In what may have been the most ambitious achievement of the decade, the **Bexar Metropolitan Water District**, a utility the size of Corpus Christi, was seamlessly folded into SAWS without any disruption to BexarMet's 94,000 former customers.



So raise a refreshing glass of crisp, clear SAWS tap water. Here's to the next 10 waterful years — and beyond!

Join the MySAWS Conversation:



Second Saturday Habitat Cleanup at Mitchell Lake Audubon Center, Saturday Feb. 8. Help clean up migratory bird habitats across the 1,200-acre natural area. Details at mitchelllake.audubon.org/events.

Event Calendar

Asian Festival

Feb. 1

UTSA Institute of Texan Cultures
801 E. Cesar E. Chavez Blvd.
asianfestivalsa.com

San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo

Feb. 6-23

AT&T Center/Freeman Coliseum
3201 E. Houston St.
sarodeo.com

Sustainability Walk

Feb. 7

San Antonio Botanical Garden
555 Funston Place
sabot.org/walks

Texas Trail Roundup

Feb. 21-23

Holiday Inn-Downtown Market Square
318 W. Cesar E. Chavez
texastrailroundup.org

Mardi Gras Festival & River Parade

Feb. 22-23

Aneson River Theatre
418 Villita St.
thesanantonioriverwalk.com

Customer Service and 24-hour Emergency

210-704-SAWS (7297)
saws.org/waternews

Help Rescue a River at Basura Bash



Pull on your long pants and work gloves and come on out to help clean up San Antonio's rivers and streams during this one-day, all-volunteer event.

The annual Basura Bash is Feb. 15 from 8 a.m. to noon. Join Basura Bob, everyone's favorite trash-slashing, fish-faced mascot, and sign up to volunteer.

Visit basurabash.org for more information and to join the clean-up!

Don't Trash the Tree — Recycle It!

After the holidays, recycle your Christmas tree into nutrient-rich mulch for free.

Bitters Brush Recycling Center, 1800 E. Bitters Rd. and Nelson Gardens Brush Recycling Center, 8963 Nelson Rd. will accept Christmas trees for free throughout the month of January.

For more information, visit sanantonio.gov/swmd or call 311.



Make It Count: Census 2020 Is Coming

Get ready to be counted — Census Day is April 1.

Households will begin receiving invitations to participate in the census in March. Census data is used to determine what will be spent each year on infrastructure and essential services such as schools, hospitals and emergency services.

It is vital that every person living in the San Antonio area be counted alongside the rest of the nation.



Population statistics are often used as a basis for many factors — from the number of seats occupied in the U.S. House of Representatives to critical research and the allocation of billions of dollars in federal, state and county funds that directly affect our lives.

For the first time in history, you can respond to the census online. Of course, you can still respond by mail or phone. Fill out the form and give your community a voice. It's in your hands.

How Do You Access the Internet? San Antonio, Speak Up!

The City of San Antonio's Office of Innovation wants to know how you access the internet. How does it improve your life and your community? Share your experiences by participating in a short survey and be entered to win a \$25 H-E-B gift card. Use your smartphone camera to scan the QR code and start the survey or visit any San Antonio Public Library or BiblioTech location. To learn more, visit SASpeakUp.com and click the Digital Divide Survey.



¿Cómo accedes y usas el internet? ¿Cómo mejora tu vida y comunidad? Comparte tus experiencias participando en nuestra encuesta y podrás ser elegible para ganar una tarjeta de regalo de \$25 de H-E-B. Empieza la encuesta usando la cámara de tu teléfono inteligente sobre el código QR o visita cualquier Biblioteca Pública de San Antonio o sucursal de BiblioTech. Visita SASpeakUp.com y haz clic en la encuesta.

