

# DWANews

Let's make every drop count!

DESERT WATER  FALL 2024

## DWA BOARD APPOINTS ESTHER SAENZ AS NEXT GENERAL MANAGER!



Esther Saenz and DWA Board President Paul Ortega sign the contract appointing Saenz as next General Manager.

Desert Water Agency is pleased to announce the appointment of Esther Saenz as General Manager effective July 2025, following the upcoming retirement of Steve Johnson. Saenz will become the first female General Manager in the Agency's history, marking a significant milestone for DWA.

Saenz currently serves as Director of Finance at DWA and was selected to succeed Johnson based on her extensive fiscal experience, deep understanding of the Agency's operations and proven leadership. She has demonstrated strong commitment to the Agency's mission throughout her 14-year tenure at DWA.

Johnson, who became General Manager in February 2024 following the retirement of Mark Krause, said he is optimistic for DWA's future under Saenz' direction.

"Esther has been a key figure in our financial management and strategic planning. Her leadership will ensure a smooth transition and continued stability for Desert Water Agency. I'm confident that she will continue to drive our mission forward with the same dedication and expertise she has shown throughout her career," Johnson said.

Saenz will oversee the Agency's operations, including management of the community's water resources and compliance with ever-changing water and conservation regulations.

The DWA Board of Directors approved Saenz' selection during its regular board meeting on Sept. 17, 2024, well in advance of Johnson's retirement to guarantee a seamless transition.

Johnson's retirement in July 2025 caps a remarkable 30-year career with DWA. His leadership and devotion to public service have left a lasting impact on the Agency and the community it serves.

## NEW CONSERVATION REGULATION

Making Conservation a California Way of Life is a regulation approved by the State Water Resources Control Board in July 2024, that sets new water conservation goals for water providers. The goal of the new law is to achieve long-term water use efficiency and help the state adapt to climate variability.

The regulation sets a water budget, or water use objective for water suppliers, including DWA, not individual

customers. However, DWA needs customers' help to continue conserving and help us meet our water budget. The regulation goes into effect Jan. 1, 2025, but water suppliers have until 2027 to comply.

For more information and a helpful FAQ on the Making Conservation a California Way of Life regulation, go to [www.dwa.org/conservationregulation](http://www.dwa.org/conservationregulation).

## GO GOLD & SAVE

Desert Water Agency encourages customers to skip overseeding their lawns this fall! By going gold, you can:

- Save money! Seed and labor costs are expensive.
- Conserve water! Overseeding is water intensive. Going gold is the sustainable choice.
- Improve air quality! Less mowing or scalping means less dust and particles in the air.
- Maintain healthy grass! Overseeding can stress your lawn, causing it not to look as nice next season.

Customers who go gold can get a free We Went Gold sign to let neighbors know you decided to save water! Email us at [outreach@dwa.org](mailto:outreach@dwa.org) to request your free sign or have your HOA added to our We Went Gold list.

Tired of keeping up with your grass? Consider desert-friendly landscaping. DWA offers a turf removal rebate of \$2 per square foot for customers. An additional \$1 per square foot is available for residents of Palm Springs, for a total of \$3 per square foot.

Cathedral City also has a turf conversion program. For more details on that program, go to [www.cathedralcity.gov/home/showdocument?id=4120](http://www.cathedralcity.gov/home/showdocument?id=4120)

For more information on overseeding, go to [www.dwa.org/overseeding](http://www.dwa.org/overseeding). For details on incentives, including grass removal, go to [www.dwa.org/save](http://www.dwa.org/save).



## FALL GARDENING



Did you know October and November are the best months to plant trees, shrubs and perennials in the desert?

The temperatures are cooler and there's still plenty of daylight to help encourage growth. If you are interested in an edible garden, try planting broccoli, Swiss chard, kale, beets, lettuce, collards and cilantro.

For more gardening tips, check out this Coachella Valley planting guide at [www.dwa.org/plantingguide](http://www.dwa.org/plantingguide) or this landscaping guide at [www.dwa.org/lushandefficient](http://www.dwa.org/lushandefficient).

## GET SOCIAL WITH DWA!

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 X (formerly Twitter): @DWAwater  
 YouTube: @desertwateragency4898  
 Nextdoor: Desert Water Agency  
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## FAQ

### Why should I replace grass with desert landscaping?

Grass requires a lot of water, a resource we need to continue to conserve! Replacing your lawn with desert-friendly, low-water landscaping will help you save water and money.

Also, the state will soon enforce a law that requires the removal of non-functional turf from certain areas of the community, like commercial lawns and some HOA spaces.

DWA offers a grass removal program to help offset the cost of replacing grass. For more details on DWA programs and the ban on non-functional turf, go to [www.dwa.org/save](http://www.dwa.org/save).



## COOL WEATHER = LESS WATER



Fall is finally in the air! Cooler temperatures typically mean less water usage outdoors. Though you may be cutting back on irrigating your lawn this time of year, there are still plenty of ways to step up and save.

Here are some conservation tips to help you keep up the good work as temperatures start to cool:

- Check inside and outside your home for leaks. Even small drips can add up.
- Run only full loads in your dishwasher and washing machine.
- Install a smart irrigation controller to help you adjust your outdoor watering with weather conditions.
- Reduce the number of times you water. Use soil sensors to determine if plants actually need water.
- Check out DWA's indoor and outdoor customer incentives at [www.dwa.org/rebates!](http://www.dwa.org/rebates!)

For more water-saving tips, go to [www.dwa.org/save](http://www.dwa.org/save).

## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

The public is welcome to participate in our board meetings. They take place at 8 a.m. on the first and third Tuesday of the month, at 1200 S. Gene Autry Trail, Palm Springs. For a meeting schedule, please visit: [www.dwa.org](http://www.dwa.org).

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Paul Ortega, President (Div. 4)
- Jeff Bowman, Vice President (Div. 3)
- Gerald McKenna, Sec./Treasurer (Div. 2)
- Steve Grasha, Director (Div. 1)
- Kristin Bloomer, Director (Div. 5)

## CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information, please contact: DWA Public Affairs Manager Xochitl Peña at 760-323-4971, ext. 272, or [Xpena@dwa.org](mailto:Xpena@dwa.org). For more information on DWA's conservation programs, please visit: [www.dwa.org/save](http://www.dwa.org/save).