

LAS VEGAS VALLEY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Report to the Nevada Legislature

DECEMBER 2024

ABOUT

In 1997, the Nevada Legislature directed the Southern Nevada Water Authority to develop a program to protect and manage the Las Vegas Valley's primary groundwater supply which resulted in the creation of the Las Vegas Valley Groundwater Management Program.

PROGRAM GOALS

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| Protection: | Support activities to protect the aquifer from contamination. |
| Management: | Improve management of the groundwater resources to prevent over-drafting. |
| Information: | Provide information about the aquifer, water conservation and rules governing groundwater wells in Southern Nevada to well users. |
| Cooperation: | Increase understanding and cooperation among groundwater users and agencies involved in groundwater. |

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

The following program elements are funded through an annual groundwater management fee which is paid by all well users and holders of water permits or water rights:

Well conversion grant program: A financial assistance program that will reimburse up to 85 percent of conversion costs for well users to connect to a municipal water system.

Aquifer protection: Increased groundwater quality monitoring as well as the Las Vegas Valley Aquifer Protection Plan.

Septic conversion program: A financial assistance program that will reimburse up to 85 percent of costs to convert from septic to the municipal sewer system, helping protect the aquifer from hazardous nitrates.

Well user education: Information and outreach on wells, water laws and issues of importance to Southern Nevada residents.

Well plugging and abandonment grant program: Plugging and abandonment of unused wells in the Las Vegas Valley.

Conservation Education: Conservation incentives, such as rebates and coupons, for well users.

FUNDING

To fund activities to protect the Las Vegas groundwater basin, the Nevada Legislature authorized the Southern Nevada Water Authority to impose a fee on well users.

The Southern Nevada Water Authority distributes bills for the annual groundwater management fee to well owners and groundwater permit holders in the Las Vegas basin in late summer of each year.

The annual fee was adjusted in 2022 to keep pace with inflation and help fund additional program activities, including septic system conversions for well owners. The new fee structure was approved by the Southern Nevada Water Authority Board of Directors.

For domestic wells (a well that serves only one home) the fee is \$20 per year. For all other types of wells the fee is \$20 per acre-foot of permitted water use per year.

Approximately 60 percent of the fees are paid by municipal water purveyors and other government entities — the largest water-right holders in the valley.

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ANNUAL PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

As part of the Las Vegas Valley Groundwater Management Program, the SNWA holds at least one public workshop each calendar year to discuss issues related to the groundwater basin and the groundwater management program.

Workshops were held on May 1, 2023 and October 29, 2024 at the Las Vegas Valley Water District. At the workshops, staff gave informational presentations on the Groundwater Management Program and updates on hydrologic conditions in the Las Vegas Groundwater Basin.

Attendees also visited with representatives from the Nevada Division of Water Resources and SNWA Conservation staff.

PROGRAM STATISTICS

Well Conversion Grant Program

The program provides financial assistance to well owners that are required to connect to a municipal system by the State Engineer. The program also assists well owners who volunteer to connect. Since inception, **562 homes and businesses** have received financial assistance to connect to a municipal water system.

Septic Conversion Program

The program provides financial assistance to well owners on septic who volunteer to connect to the municipal system. Since inception in Fall 2023, **8 homes** have connected to the municipal sewer system and received over **\$300,000 in incentive reimbursements**.

Well Plugging and Abandonment

SNWA works to plug wells that have been abandoned and might pose a contamination risk to the aquifer. SNWA has plugged and abandoned **777 unused wells** since program inception.

Water Smart Landscape Program

Well owners may participate in SNWA's turf conversion program, which provides a rebate to residents and businesses that replace turf with water efficient landscaping. Since inception, well owners have converted more than **2,025,421 square feet of turf and received more than \$3M in rebates**.

Sub-meter Assistance Program

The program provides well owners a one-inch meter and \$150 rebate once the meter has been installed. The program has distributed **453 sub-meters** to well owners since 2008.



GROUNDWATER GUARDIAN

The Groundwater Foundation has designated the Las Vegas Valley Groundwater Management Program as a Groundwater Guardian Community for the Program's commitment to educational outreach on groundwater issues.

SUMMARY OF REVENUES & EXPENSES

Since Inception (1997) to Present
(Through September 30, 2024)

Revenues	\$36,029,475
Expenses	\$28,024,806
Balance*	\$8,004,669

Calendar Year 2023

Revenues	\$1,275,308
Expenses	\$373,921

Calendar Year 2024
(Through September 30, 2024)

Revenues	\$1,116,971
Expenses	\$631,017

*The program maintains a reserve balance in order to assist well owners with the cost conversions mandated by the State Engineer.

This summary report of the Las Vegas Valley Groundwater Management Program is a biennial requirement of Section 12(2) of Chapter 572, Statutes of Nevada 1997, as amended by Chapter 468, Statutes of Nevada 2011.

