

## California Department of Water Resources NEWS

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## More Than 1.7 Million People Visited DWR Facilities

More than 1.7 million people--including foreign visitors from more than 40 countries-- visited California Department of Water Resources facilities during the period July 1, 1991 through June 30, 1995.

This information is highlighted in a new report on DWR's Visitors Program during the last four fiscal years.

Most visitors came to learn about the State Water Project, operated by DWR. The State Water Project is a system of aqueducts, pipelines, reservoirs, pumping and hydroelectric plants that bring water from Lake Oroville in Northern California to people, industry and farms in the San Francisco Bay area, San Joaquin Valley and Southern California. It is the largest State-operated water system in the United States.

The State Water Project and California water issues are of interest to visitors from all over the world, as reflected by visiting dignitaries from such countries as Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Mongolia, People's Republic of China, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Switzerland and Turkey.

Visitors also came to gain information on such topics as management of California's water resources, State Water Project construction and repair activities, water banking and transfers, water pricing, dam safety inspections, water use and conservation, irrigation scheduling techniques, drainage issues, environmental concerns, water quality research, and flood operations activities.

Visitors touring DWR facilities included high-ranking ministers of foreign countries, legislators, academicians, researchers, farmers, water officials, school children and public members.

## Visitors Centers

Many of the 1.7 million visitors toured DWR's three visitors centers which are open to the public virtually every day of the year. Admission is free of charge.

The **Kelly Ridge** Visitors Center is located at Oroville Dam in Butte County, about 70 miles north of Sacramento. In addition to viewing the Lake and Dam, visitors can see films of the Dam's construction during the 1960s, and enjoy a variety of lake-related recreational opportunities--including fishing, boating and camping--in the Lake Oroville State Recreation Area, operated by the Department of Parks and Recreation. For information on visits, call the visitors center at (916) 538-2219.

**Romero Overlook** Visitors Center is located at San Luis Dam and Reservoir, a key storage facility for both the State Water Project and the federally-operated Central Valley Project. The Visitors Center was modernized during April and features new exhibits. For information on visits, contact the visitors center at (209) 826-0718, extension 253.

The new **Vista del Lago** Visitor Center is the largest water information and education center in California, with a variety of modern displays. This is the newest of the visitors centers, with modern exhibitry and a sweeping view of Pyramid Lake. For information on the Vista del Lago Visitors Center at Pyramid Lake, call (805) 294-0219.

## Other SWP Visitor Locations

Visits to the **Harvey O. Banks Pumping Plant** and the **A. D. Edmonston Pumping Plant** require advance planning, because neither facility has a staffed Visitors Center. Appointments for visits should be made by phone on weekdays before 3:30 p.m., prior to visiting these facilities.

Persons wishing to visit the Banks Pumping Plant in the South Delta--where water is pumped into the California Aqueduct--should call for an appointment at (209) 833-2044. Those wishing to visit the Edmonston Pumping Plant--where SWP water is pumped over the Tehachapi Mountains--near Bakersfield should contact the San Joaquin Field Division at (805) 858-2211, extension 253, to make arrangements prior to visiting.

For information on guided tours of DWR facilities or a copy of the Visitor Program Report, contact visit coordinator Norma Beck of the Office of Water Education in Sacramento at (916) 653-6963.

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*The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs. The State Water Project provides water to two-thirds of California's population.*

For more on-line information, see [Find DWR Info](#) or return to the [DWR California Water Page](#)