

MAY-JUNE 2022

# Helix Highlights



COMMUNITY

**NEW! Water Bill Assistance Coming in June**

The State of California received federal funding to help low-income households pay past due water and sewer bills. You may qualify for a one-time payment if your household income is at or below 60% of the state median income, or if someone in your home is a recipient of CalFresh or CalWORKS. Sign up to get notified when the program starts, and learn more at:

[www.csd.ca.gov/waterbill](http://www.csd.ca.gov/waterbill)



**Drought Plan Coming in May**

On March 28, Governor Newsom issued an emergency executive order for water agencies to implement level two of their individual water shortage contingency plans, regardless of local water supply conditions. The order also bans irrigation of non-functional turf at commercial and institutional properties. The State Water Resources Control Board has until May 25 to implement the order. Find updates at:

[hwd.com/blog](http://hwd.com/blog)

**\$177,230**

**We're Saving On Insurance**

The Association of California Water Agencies Joint Powers Insurance Authority presented a \$177,230 refund check to the Helix board on April 6 and recognized the district for fair employment practices, preventing workplace injuries, operating vehicles safely and reducing construction-related losses. *(cont.)*

Helix joined the JPIA soon after it was formed in 1979 because it had no stockholders, profit margins or sales commissions and immediately saved members up to 30% on insurance. Division 1 Director Dan McMillan represents Helix on the JPIA board. Read more at:

[hwd.fyi/rwj](http://hwd.fyi/rwj)



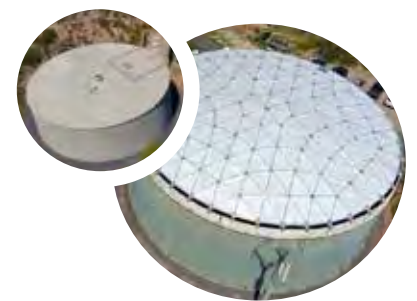
**We're Saving On Electricity**

For the last several years, Helix has seen double-digit savings on electricity. We accomplished this by working with San Diego-based Calpine Energy Solutions and negotiating contracts that allow us to lock in the price we pay. This limits our exposure to events that increase energy costs, like reduced hydropower production in California due to the drought. Calpine has also secured the renewable energy supply we need through 2030. This will protect Helix over the next eight years, as market prices respond to increased demand and competition for renewable energy. Learn more at:

[hwd.fyi/er6](http://hwd.fyi/er6)

**New Payment Kiosk**

On March 16, the board approved an outdoor kiosk at our administration office in La Mesa, where customers can pay water bills with a credit/debit card, check or cash. The 24/7 kiosk will record payments immediately and can help customers avoid shutoffs and late fees. We will complete design and construction by spring 2023.



**Tank Rehabilitation on Track**

Work on our two Tunnel Hill tanks in Lakeside began in early 2021. We added five feet to the wall of the large tank and installed an aluminum roof to reduce corrosion for the next 50-60 years. Next, we will recoat the interior and exterior of the large tank. We will complete the project this summer.

COMMUNITY

# What's Going On



### Helix Awards Mini-Grants to Three Schools

Fuerte Elementary School is using a \$250 mini-grant from Helix to teach 5th graders how to build water filters and manage water quality. Murdock Elementary and Bostonia Elementary also received mini-grants for water science projects.

**Photo:** Fuerte principal Kristen Goodrich, teachers Tina Bernal and Amy Miller, and Helix board president Kathleen Hedberg.

### Board Awards Scholarships

Steele Canyon High senior Nicole Swallow (pictured) and Grossmont Middle College High senior Ethan Garrett are the 2022 recipients of the Dr. Lillian M. Childs and Robert D. Friedgen scholarships. Nicole invests hundreds of hours in community service here and in Peru, and Ethan is a debate champion and active in local government. Read more at:

[hwd.com/blog](http://hwd.com/blog)



### Meet Our Contest Winners

At our May 25, June 1 and June 15 board meetings, we'll award prizes to the winners of our Water is Life Poster Contest, WaterSmart Landscape Contest and Lake Jennings Spring Photo Contest. Meet the winners and see their creativity at:

[hwd.com/blog](http://hwd.com/blog)



### Helix Hosts Environment & Infrastructure Day

Helix will partner with SDG&E and the San Diego County Water Authority on May 12 to brief east county's up-and-coming leaders on infrastructure and environmental issues. The event is part of the leadership program offered by the San Diego East County Chamber of Commerce.



### Going Virtual is Working

Over 2,000 5th graders tour our water treatment plant each year. When COVID hit, we created a virtual tour for fifth grade classrooms that we narrate live. Over 1,700 students have participated this year. Our 3rd grade dam-building activity is also a hit with teachers and students. Explore at:

[hwd.com/school-programs-2](http://hwd.com/school-programs-2)



### Demonstration Landscape is Turning Two

The Mediterranean, desert and California native gardens at our office at 7811 University Avenue in La Mesa are two years old and beautiful. Explore online then come and see!

[hwd.com/demonstration-landscape](http://hwd.com/demonstration-landscape)



### May 1-7 is All About Water

All of us at Helix are committed to the quality and reliability of the water in your shower and your coffee, and the water that east county businesses and jobs depend on every day.



### May 15-21 is Public Works Week

If you see a Helix crew working in the street the week of May 15, or a city or CalTrans crew, wave and give them a thumbs up!