

STAFF REPORT

To: Coastside County Water District Board of Directors

From: Mary Rogren, General Manager

Agenda: October 13, 2026

Report Date: October 9, 2026

Agenda Title: General Manager's Report

District's New Water Tank Featured in *Coastside Magazine*

The District's new 2.1-million-gallon prestressed concrete water tank is featured in the attached article from the October issue of *Coastside Magazine*. The article highlights the project and the District's ongoing investments in reliable, resilient water infrastructure for the Coastside community.

-



New Water Tank Built to Serve Coastside for Generations

\$13 million Carter Hill
project adds storage and
strengthens system
against earthquakes
and emergencies

By Emma Spaeth

Photos by Coastside County Water District

High on Carter Hill above Half Moon Bay, a new concrete structure holds enough water to fill more than three Olympic-size swimming pools.

The Coastside County Water District completed its new 2.1 million-gallon water tank in June, adding 1 million gallons to the district's storage capacity and replacing two steel tanks built in the 1950s. District officials said the approximately \$13 million project was completed within budget and 50 days ahead of schedule.

The district celebrated the new tank during a July 29 ribbon-cutting and tour of the site near the Nunes Water Treatment Plant.

For General Manager Mary Rogren, who plans to retire in March 2027, the project represents one of the most significant achievements of her time with the district.

"I really feel this is one of the greatest achievements that we've done for the water district," Rogren said. "It's monumental for the community because we have this asset that's going to be here for our children's children."

The Half Moon Bay Prestressed Concrete Tank and Seismic Upgrades Project is the second-largest undertaking in the district's history, surpassed only by the Crystal Springs pipeline project that brought Hetch Hetchy system water across the mountains to the Coastside.

At 97 feet in diameter and 55 feet tall, including its domed roof, the new tank required nearly 1,000 cubic yards of concrete and 21 miles of high-strength prestressing wire. It is expected to remain in service for 80 to 100 years.

Replacing aging infrastructure

The Coastside County Water District was established in 1947 with approximately 400 connections. It now has about 7,700 connections serving 19,000



people in Half Moon Bay, El Granada, Miramar and Princeton.

The district operates nine water storage tanks, six of which were constructed during the 1950s and 1960s. A 2020 assessment identified the two oldest tanks at Carter Hill—built in 1950 and 1955—as priorities for replacement.

Together, those tanks held approximately 1 million gallons.

The need to strengthen the system became especially clear following public safety power shutoffs that left the Coastsides without electricity for several days. The experience prompted district officials to consider how the water system would continue operating during prolonged outages and other emergencies.

Because the Carter Hill site is next to the district's primary treatment plant and can feed much of the system by gravity, officials identified it as the most valuable location for additional storage.

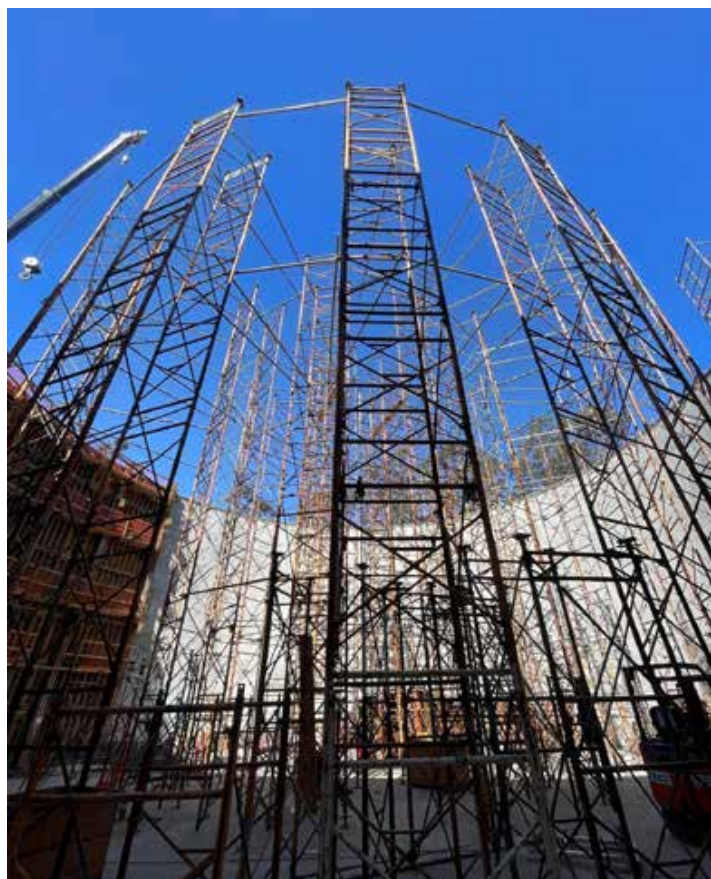
The new capacity will help the district meet periods of peak demand while maintaining a larger reserve for firefighting, earthquakes, power outages and other emergencies.

"A mountain range separates our community from nearby urban areas, making us relatively isolated," Rogren said. "That's why reliable, resilient water infrastructure isn't just important; it's essential."

Designed for earthquakes and coastal weather

The new tank was built to modern seismic standards using prestressed concrete, a construction method designed to withstand the enormous outward pressure created by millions of gallons of water.

After the concrete walls were poured, crews wrapped the structure with high-strength steel wire and covered it with a layer of shotcrete. The tension created by the wire





strengthens the walls, while the tank's domed roof helps distribute seismic forces during an earthquake.

When filled to capacity, the water inside weighs nearly 20 million pounds.

The concrete design also offers advantages in the Coastsides damp, salty climate. Steel tanks typically require recoating and rehabilitation about every 20 years as corrosion takes its toll. The new concrete tank will require substantially less maintenance.

Rogren said that although constructing another steel tank might have cost slightly less initially, the concrete structure is projected to save approximately \$7 million in today's dollars over an 80-year period.

"It really makes sense," she said. "We're trying to save money for the future."

Concrete also helps keep stored water cooler and provides a stable environment for maintaining water quality. New online monitors check the water as it leaves the tank, while upgrades to the district's supervisory control and data acquisition system allow staff to monitor operations remotely.

That technology is a considerable change from the district's earlier methods. Staff members once used a telescope at the district office to read gauges mounted on the sides of the Carter Hill tanks. If trees grew into the line of sight, crews had to trim them before employees could check the water level.

The new tank uses radar equipment to measure the water inside. Pressure sensors perform a similar job in the remaining steel tank.

Keeping the water flowing

The district began designing the project in 2021 and awarded the construction contract in July 2024. Construction began in January 2025.

One of the biggest challenges was replacing two critical tanks without interrupting service. Crews first installed a temporary bypass system, allowing water to continue moving through the site while the old tanks were taken offline and demolished.

After excavation and foundation work, crews poured the tank's seven wall sections over approximately seven weeks. Scaffolding filled the entire interior while the domed roof was constructed. Because the finished tank has no conventional door, the scaffolding and construction equipment had to be removed through roof openings measuring approximately 4 feet by 8 feet.

Crews then wrapped the exterior with prestressing wire, applied shotcrete and installed extensive underground piping. The tank was slowly filled according to the manufacturer's specifications before being disinfected and placed into service.

The project used \$8 million in bond financing, with the remaining cost supported through district funds, including revenue from water sales.

Director Ken Coverdell, who was unable to attend the July 29 ceremony, provided a prepared statement that was read in his absence. He credited district staff, engineers, contractors, suppliers and financing partners with keeping the complicated project on track.

"This complex project has been completed, not simply on time, but ahead of schedule by 50 days, with a significantly lower change-order percentage than most projects, totaling 2.3 percent," Coverdell wrote.

He said careful work during the design, permitting, site-management and construction phases contributed to the result.

Coverdell also thanked customers for supporting the district's capital improvement program and the water-rate increases used in part to fund infrastructure projects.

"This water storage tank is likely to last 80 years," he wrote, "and it truly is another physical symbol of our commitment to ensure the safety and security of coastal water supply for our children's children's children."

Planning the next replacement

The district is already looking toward its next major storage project.

A third steel tank remains at Carter Hill. Built in 1963, it holds 1.5 million gallons and is also approaching the end of its useful life. Rogren said the district hopes to begin design engineering for its replacement in fall 2026.

The preliminary plan calls for replacing it with a 3 million-gallon prestressed concrete tank around 2030 or 2031.

District staff anticipated that future project while building the new tank and installed some of the underground infrastructure that the second replacement will require. That should reduce the amount of piping and site work needed later.

If the project proceeds as envisioned, Carter Hill would ultimately hold 5.1 million gallons between its two concrete tanks—roughly twice the site's storage capacity before the current work began.

For Rogren, completing the first tank is both a milestone and a step toward a more resilient water system. Though much of the infrastructure is out of public view, it supports nearly every part of daily life on the Coastside, from homes and businesses to firefighting and emergency response.

The new tank is now expected to continue that work for the next 80 to 100 years, serving generations of residents who may never see it but will depend on the water it stores. **COASTSIDE**

Dependable Service to Meet Your Needs



INTERO
A Berkshire Hathaway Affiliate

Frank Vento is a Broker Associate/Manager with Intero Real Estate, a Berkshire Hathaway Affiliate, in the Half Moon Bay office. He has been serving clients for 25 years, primarily on the San Mateo County Coast and the San Francisco Peninsula. His main focus as Realtor is to put his clients' needs ahead of his own, which means "doing what's right" for the client. This takes precedence over making a sale.

Frank Vento, Real Estate Broker | DRE #01321362

(650) 888-9900 | fvento@intero.com

Cozy Up Your Spaces for the Holidays!



Take Advantage Of Our Special Winter Discounts
For Your Interior Projects!

PALLADINO PAINTING



*Real Quality ~
True Craftsmen*

650-728-4000

palladinopainting.com Serving the Coast Since 1989 CA Lic # 653826