

Water Watch

www.amwc.us

Atascadero Mutual Water Company

September 2008



A Celebration of Our Sustainable Landscapes

Save the date! The Atascadero Mutual Water Company is hosting the 3rd Annual North County Autumn Garden Tour on Saturday October 11th from 9 am - 3 pm. The self-guided tour will showcase Atascadero landscapes illustrating sustainable design principles.



This year's tour includes:

- Eight private and two public gardens
- Local organizations and landscapers at each garden to answer questions on sustainable gardening practices
- Local art and culinary tastings provided by North County Producers.
- Raffle and prizes

Tickets can be purchased beginning September 15th for \$10.00 at Bay Laurel Nursery in Atascadero. Tickets are also available on a first-come, first-served basis the day of the event between (9 am - 11 am) for \$15.00 at the Colony House in Atascadero. For more information, visit www.amwc.us or call 466-2428.

Free Home Water Survey

You are invited to participate in our highly successful Home Water Survey Program. The program is free and is designed to help our customers conserve water and manage their landscape irrigation more efficiently.

During your Home Water Survey, AMWC's water conservation staff will:

- Inspect each irrigation station
- Create a site-specific irrigation schedule
- Provide you with a checklist of improvements for your irrigation system

- Check toilets for leaks
- Show you how to read your water meter
- Provide other water conservation tips

Each appointment is tailored to meet your needs; a typical appointment takes between 60 and 90 minutes. We encourage you to take advantage of this free program by calling 461-7217, ext.17, —we look forward to hearing from you.

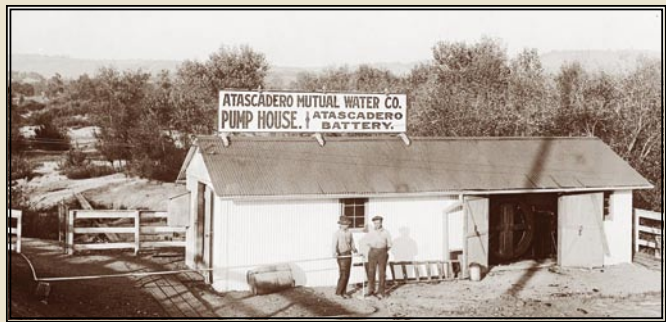


ATASCADERO MUTUAL WATER COMPANY

Supplying a continuous, safe and reliable supply of water at a reasonable cost, while providing the highest level of customer service since 1913.

Atascadero Mutual Water Company (AMWC) was incorporated August 12, 1913, by Atascadero's founder E.G. Lewis, and is the oldest continuous business in the Colony of Atascadero. Since its formation in 1913, AMWC has provided water for domestic and irrigation purposes at cost to its shareholders. AMWC is one of the largest retail mutual water companies in the state, and is responsible for meeting the water requirements of more than 30,000 people.

In 1914, 23 miles of water main, many made from redwood stave pipe, were laid out to deliver water from wooden water tanks constructed on Pine Mountain. We encourage you to stop by AMWC's tent during Tent City at Colony Days and discover more about Atascadero's unique history and E.G. Lewis's foresight in providing for today's water supply. We'll have a piece of the original redwood stave pipe on display as well as other items showing our unique history.



Above Photo: Atascadero Mutual Water Co. Pump House



*Left Photo:
Water company
employees mixing
concrete.
September 24,
1915.*

ATASCADERO NEWS, MAY 6, 1916

The Mutual Water System

While absolutely no charge what ever has been made for the use of all the water the residents have wished up to the present, of course some one has been paying for it, as this water under high pressure must be pumped by electric power to the pressure reservoirs, and then sent through the twenty-one miles of water mains to the residences in the residential section. May 1st the Atascadero Mutual Water Company began the reading of all meters in order to determine just how the cost of maintaining the system should be prorated. The Mutual Water Company received from the Colony Holding Corporation the deed to all mains, pumping stations, reservoirs, wells, etc., etc., comprising the system, which had been constructed by the Holding Corporation. The Mutual Water Company had no debt and the cost of maintaining the system and supplying all homes with unlimited water has been borne by the Holding Corporation up to the present time. An inquiry has been made to determine the cost of water in other parts of the state with the following result:

San Francisco charges its people 20 cents per 1,000 gallons. Oakland charges its people 25 cents per 1,000 gallons. Berkeley charges its people 35 cents per 1,000 gallons. The smaller cities and towns of Marin County charge the people 50 cents per 1,000 gallons.

Los Angeles under its hundred million dollar system, charges its residents 10 cents per 1,000 gallons. It is claimed however, that this charge is really much below cost, many things that should be a charge against the water costs being written into other channels so as to make the cost of water the lowest in the state. Whether this be true or not, certainly no other city or district where water is supplied through water mains under pressure in this state, that we have been able to discover, has been able to supply the water at less than 20 cents per 1,000 gallons.

It is probable that the water rate in Atascadero will therefore be fixed at 15 cents per 1,000 gallons and the charge begin with May 1st. This charge will be the best way of prorating the cost of maintaining the system, and while with the houses scattered and at considerable "distances from each other as they are, this charge will not begin to cover the present cost of maintenance and opera-

tion of the water system, yet the Holding Corporation will pay the difference and make up the loss to the Mutual Water Company for the rest of this year.

Three residents of the residential section on the Colony are to be elected members of the Board of Directors of the Atascadero Mutual Water Company this month, and the affairs of the water company will be managed by the resident owners themselves. With the exception of Los Angeles therefore Atascadero will have the lowest water rate of any city or town in the state, where water is supplied through mains under pressure. The residents of Atascadero, many of whom are from distant localities and new to California, probably waste fully half the water they use, because of lack of training in its use. Many are from the crowded cities, and the idea of having a garden with every sort of fresh vegetable certainly appeals to them, as does the idea of turning a hose on full blast and letting it run day and night, since the water is free. We are apt to abuse things that cost us nothing. A little care now in the use of water will be advisable. Don't just waste it, because your meter will register what you do, and it will be interesting to note at the end of May, just how the water WAS used.