



Government Affairs and Community
Outreach Committee Meeting and Special
Meeting of the Board of Directors

Wednesday, January 07, 2026
4:30 P.M.

Committee Members:

Anthony R. Fellow, Chair
Edward Chavez, Vice-Chair

*The Government Affairs and Community Outreach Committee meeting is noticed as a joint committee meeting with the Board of Directors for the purpose of compliance with the Brown Act. Members of the Board who are not assigned to the Government Affairs and Community Outreach Committee may attend and participate as members of the Board, whether or not a quorum of the Board is present. In order to preserve the function of the Committee as advisory to the Board, members of the Board who are not assigned to the Government Affairs and Community Outreach Committee will not vote on matters before the Committee.

Communications

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment

Discussion/Action

3. Legislative Update
 - a. Washington D.C.
 - b. Sacramento
4. Policy Manual Review for Sections 3.9 and 5.1 (*Staff memorandum to be distributed*)
5. 2026 Legislative Priorities Update (*Staff memorandum to be distributed*)

Oral Reports

6. Pure Water Southern California Outreach Update
7. 2026 Upper Water Marketing Strategies

Other Matters

8.

Adjournment

Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 04, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.

American Disabilities Act Compliance (Government Code Section 54954.2(a))



To request special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the District office at (626) 443-2297.



MEMORANDUM

ITEM 4 ACTION

DATE: January 7, 2026

TO: Government Affairs and Community Outreach Committee

FROM: General Manager

SUBJECT: Policy Manual Section 3.9 AI Policy and 5.1 Public Outreach Program

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board of Directors approve proposed Policy No. 3.9 – AI Policy and amendments to Policy No. 5.1 – Public Outreach Program of Upper Water's Policy Manual.

Background

Staff has completed a review of Policy Manual Section 5.1, Public Outreach Program, and identified proposed changes to this policy that aligns with current FPPC reporting standards. In addition, staff proposes the adoption of a new, standalone AI Policy to address the growing and widespread use of artificial intelligence and the need for clear regulation governing its use in agency operations. Additional comments were received from legal counsel which have been incorporated in the proposed amendments for committee consideration. A red-lined version of the changes is provided as Attachment 1.

Attachment

SECTION 3: ADMINISTRATIVE~~ON AND FINANCE~~

- 3.1 General Manager Authority & Duties
- 3.2 Training, Education and Conferences~~Investment Policy~~
- 3.3 Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Provisions~~Purchasing Policy—
General Supplies, Materials and Equipment~~
- 3.4 Harassment~~Purchasing Policy—Professional Services~~
- 3.5 Vehicle Use Policy~~Purchasing Policy—Construction Projects~~
- 3.6 Medical Benefits~~Petty Cash Fund Policy~~
- ~~3.7 Credit Card Policy~~
- ~~3.8 Vehicle Use Policy~~
- ~~3.9 Surplus Assets Policy~~
- ~~3.10 Groundwater Remediation Policy~~
- 3.7+1 Whistleblower Policy
- 3.8+2 Retention Policy~~Social Media Policy~~

Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District
Manual of Policies

Policy Number & Subject Name	Date Adopted	Date Revised

3.9 AI Policy

Purpose

3.9.1 The intention of the policy is to establish a framework for responsible, ethical, and secure use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies within the District. AI/Generative AI is a tool, and the District remains responsible for its outcomes.

Background

3.9.2 The District acknowledges the benefits of AI and ensures its aligns with the District's mission to meet our region's² need for reliable, high quality and affordable water. The District also acknowledges the importance of ; meanwhile upholding safety, transparency, accountability, and public trust, and minimizing risks around AI usage, including but not limited to, inaccuracy, AI bias, discrimination, ownership of AI created content, security and privacy concerns.

3.9.3 Artificial Intelligence is a set of are technologies capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence, including but not limited to machine learning, natural language processing, and predictive analytics.

3.9.4 California Government Code Section 11546.45.5 defines

- (a) Artificial intelligence (AI) as “[a]n engineered or machine-based system that varies in its level of autonomy and that can, for explicit or implicit objectives, infer from the input it receives how to generate outputs that can influence physical or virtual environments.”
- (b) Automated decision system means a computational process derived from machine learning, statistical modeling, data analytics, or artificial intelligence that issues simplified output, including a score, classification, or recommendation, that is used to assist or replace human discretionary decision making and materially impacts natural persons. Automated decision system does not include a spam email filter, firewall, antivirus software, identity and access management tools, calculator, database, dataset, or other compilation of data.

3.9.5 Definitions:

- (c) Automated Decision Making: The use of AI systems to make decisions with little or no significant human intervention.
- (d) Generative AI: AI systems that use computer algorithms to create, produce or generate outputs (such as text, images, video, audio, code or synthetic data) based on the data on which it was trained or other prompts or inputs with human intervention.
- (e) Personal Data: Any information that relates to an identified or identifiable individual.

Policy

3.9.6 The policy applies to: all departments and personnel (staff employees, directors, contractors, and consultants); all AI systems, tools, or services developed, procured, or used by the District; and any third-party AI service providers interacting with district data or systems.

3.9.7 The policy and principles are to create a scope of AI involvement and also acknowledge its limitations and any assumptions or interpretations are communicated.

3.9.8 The District's principles for AI use will follow under the five principles:

(a) Lawful and Ethical

- Compliant with California and federal laws, including privacy (e.g., CPRA/CCPA), water quality, labor, and public records laws.
- Aligned with the District's ethical standards.

(b) Transparent

- The use and purpose of AI will be documented, and significant decisions influenced by any form of AI must be explainable to stakeholders.
- Where AI is used in public-facing tools or services, notice will be provided.
- AI-generated content or decisions must be clearly identified.

(c) Accountable

- Employees remain responsible for AI assisted outputs and must ensure accuracy and compliance with this policy.
- Human oversight will remain critical in all decision-making processes.
- Departments using AI must identify responsible personnel for oversight and governance.
- Regular audits may be conducted to identify and mitigate unintended outcomes.

(d) Private and Secure

- AI systems must include safeguards for the protection of customers, employees, and operational data.
- Personal data used in AI systems must be minimal, anonymized when possible, and securely managed.
- AI systems must meet District cybersecurity standards.

(e) Equitable

- AI systems must be used in a manner that is justifiable, transparent, and does not replace human judgement.
- AI tools must be evaluated for bias and fairness, particularly in areas that could impact employment, service delivery, or community equity.

3.9.9 Current permitted AI uses:

(a) Operational optimization: Agenda and minutes

(b) Data analysis

(c) Workforce efficiency: Grammar and style improvements, basic research, summarization of documents and memos

(d) Creative Tool: Social media and content creation

Any AI future implementations must undergo a risk and impact assessment prior to deployment and permitted for use by management.

3.9.10 Prohibited or Restricted Uses and AI may not be used for:

(a) Fully autonomous decision-making that affects hiring, discipline, or service eligibility

(b) Any use that violates civil rights, privacy laws, or public trust

(c) No confidential, restricted, personal, proprietary, or protected data of any kind, including data that is not owned by the District, may be shared (copied, typed, interfaced, etc.) with any AI tool, unless previously authorized by District management.

3.9.11 Procurement of AI Solutions

- Notify District management before procuring or integrating any AI tool.
- Include AI evaluation criteria (Explainability, risk mitigation, data handling)

3.9.12 Training and Monitoring

- The District will provide ~~the~~ an accessible copy of this ~~AIe~~ policy and provide ongoing staff training on AI ethics, responsible use, and data privacy.
- This policy shall be reviewed by management (and/or a designated working group)

3.9.13 Policy Violations

- Violations of this policy may result in revocation of AI tool access, disciplinary action consistent with the District's HR policies and procedures, and/or termination of contracts for noncompliance.

5 SECTION 5: PUBLIC OUTREACH

- 5.1 Public Outreach Program
- 5.2 Bottled Water Program
- 5.3 Certificate of Recognition
- 5.4 Groundwater Remediation Policy
- 5.5 Social Media Policy

Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District
Manual of Policies

Policy Number & Subject Name	Date Adopted	Date Revised
	05-03-11	12-18-19

5.1 Public Outreach Program

Purpose

3.1.15.1.1 Situations arise where a member of the ~~Upper~~-District Board is requested to have the District participate in a public outreach program that is not a District organized program, but which is organized by an outside organization. If staff has adequate advance notice of the request, and the proposed program meets the criteria described below, participation will be presented to the Board for consideration, sufficient information on the program, such participation will go through the Board Member approval process. However, Board Members ~~would like to may~~ exercise limited discretion to ~~authorize approval of requests~~such events in a more timely fashion.

Background

3.1.25.1.2 Each Upper ~~Water District~~-Director may exercise discretion for ~~Upper the~~ District to pay participation fees and/or sponsorships not to exceed a certain amount, for events that are not prohibited based on this policy. All expenditures pursuant to this policy must further the interest of the District.

Policy

3.1.35.1.3 Under the following guidelines, each ~~Upper District~~-Director may exercise discretion for the ~~Upper~~-District to pay participation fees and/or sponsorships not to exceed a total of \$5,000 per ~~district division per~~ fiscal year, ~~which shall include all materials and supplies~~ for events in their respective ~~D~~ivisions:

- (a) ~~Upper District sponsored e~~Events may not be political and/or partisan. Example: Board Members may not sponsor a fundraiser for a political candidate or campaign activity using discretionary public outreach funds.
- (b) ~~Proceeds from an Upper District sponsored e~~Events may not be used to sustain campaign type activities, a political party or religious education. Example: A Board Member may not use funds to print literature urging his/her reelection to the water board.
- (c) Director outreach accounts may be used for purchasing media advertisements to promote water conservation messaging or ~~Upper~~-District programs or events.
- (d) The ~~Upper~~-District will only issue payment through checks paid directly to the host organizations which meet ~~these policy~~ guidelines. No cash disbursements or reimbursements will be made for events that have not been reviewed under covered by these guidelines. Example: Board Members may not request reimbursement for activities

he or she may have supported; payments must be paid directly from the Upper District to the sponsored event.

(e) Directors may not “loan” or “transfer” allocated money to each other or carryover funds from year-to-year.

(f) Directors may allocate their respective funds to sponsor a common event, ~~if it is appropriate in terms of relevance to their respective Divisions and the Upper District at large.~~ Example: Board Members may jointly sponsor an event within the Upper District’s service area.

~~(g) Directors may partner on regional events.~~

~~(h)(g)~~ Invoices for such payments must be submitted at least one month prior to the requested event.

~~(i)(h)~~ Staff shall give each Director a monthly summary of their discretionary outreach fund balance found in the board packet of the first meeting of the month.

~~(j)(i)~~ Directors must submit sponsorship requests to the Assistant General Manager, and/or General Manager within 30 days of the requested event date, to the best extent possible. All requests will be reviewed for compliance with policy guidelines. ~~to the Board for approval monthly summaries of any disbursement of funds within thirty days following the end of each month. Failure to submit the monthly summaries will result in the temporary suspension of the sponsorship.~~

~~(k)(j)~~ Directors that are up for election/re-election in an election year shall not participate these outreach ~~in such public awareness activities from the date of filing for office until the second business day following the election~~ or as currently prescribed by FPPC regulations. Example: From the date a candidate must file for office until the second business day following the election. Sitting Directors that are not seeking re-election but who are seeking election to another elected office shall not participate these outreach ~~in such public awareness~~ activities from the date of filing for office.

~~(l)(k)~~ Events sponsored by religious/church organizations are not eligible for Upper District-sponsored ~~shiped or support funds~~ unless the event is open to the general public and is for a non-sectarian purpose.

(l) Events sponsored must be open to the public at large.

(m) Outreach funds may not be used for the purchasing of individual dinner tickets for a Director’s spouse or guests. For sponsorship tables, guest lists must be provided to follow FPPC reporting requirements.

MEMORANDUM

ITEM 5 ACTION

DATE: January 7, 2025

TO: Government Affairs and Community Outreach Committee

FROM: General Manager

SUBJECT: Upper Water's Updated 2025-2026 Legislative Priorities and Policy Principles

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Board of Directors adopt the updated 2025-2026 Legislative Priorities and Policy Principles and authorize the General Manager and/or the Assistant General Manager to direct advocacy consultants on positions consistent with these principles.

Background

These principles will provide general guidance by which the General Manager and/or the Assistant General Manager are authorized to direct resources to advocate for policy positions that are consistent with advancing the District's mission and strategic goals.

The priorities and principles lay out a collaborative approach to managing our local watershed, water resources, and water infrastructure to ensure long-term resilience and reliability for the San Gabriel Valley. Once adopted, staff will use this document to recommend policy positions to the Board for their approval and direct advocacy for these priorities and principles at the state and federal level.

The 2025-2026 Legislative Priorities and Policy Principles consider the legislative focus of: Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Association of California Water Agencies, San Gabriel Valley Water Association, WaterReuse, and California Special District Association.

Upper Water Legislative Priorities

Recognizing the need to adopt priorities that reflect the needs of the San Gabriel Valley and demonstrate a regional approach to water sustainability, Upper Water will work to support administrative/legislative actions and funding for the following priorities:

1. Support initiatives and funding that will advance long-term supply reliability improvements and the development of local water resources including recycled water projects such as MWD's Pure Water Southern California, increase groundwater storage and local stormwater projects that improve regional reliability.
2. Support administrative/legislative actions and funding to facilitate watershed restoration projects in the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument.
3. Ensure water reliability by coordinating organizations to prevent the spread of golden mussels and other invasive species through strong policy, dedicated funding, and a comprehensive control plan that includes inspection, pretreatment, monitoring, remediation, and application of the polluter-pays principle.

4. Support legislation and administrative actions that strongly protect existing water rights and oppose policies that would infringe upon existing water rights or is inconsistent with water rights priorities/adjudications.
5. Continue support for imported water supply resiliency and reliability, including progress on projects like the Delta Conveyance Project, Sites Reservoir Project, Agreements to Support Healthy Rivers and Landscapes (Voluntary Agreements), this support includes support of legislation and administrative actions to achieve this goal.
6. Protect drinking water quality and ensure access to safe and reliable drinking water by upholding the polluter pays principle and supporting legislation, administrative action, and funding for water quality projects that treat, monitor and/or remediate per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances.
7. Support tax exemptions for water conservation/efficiency incentives including, but not limited to, turf removal, long-term conversion of non-functional turf, local stormwater capture, and other water use efficiency devices and measures.
8. Support continued funding for water efficiency and infrastructure programs including but not limited to U.S. EPA's WaterSense program and U.S. Department of Interior – Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART program.
9. Support legislation and funding for U.S. ACOE projects including but not limited to sediment removal and dam safety.
10. Improve water affordability, especially for disadvantaged communities, without burdening existing ratepayers.

Legislative Policy Principles

The Legislative Policy Principles will guide Upper Water's engagement on state/federal legislative and regulatory activities. These principles consider a broader state and regional approach to drought response; drinking water safety, reliability and affordability; water resource management; imported water supply; environmental sustainability, and resiliency.

A. Water Resource Management

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions and funding to expedite the development of new local resources (including recycled water and direct potable reuse, groundwater storage, stormwater capture, and desalination projects) that augment local and regional supplies.

SUPPORT the advancement of groundwater storage and/or recovery programs in collaboration with partner agencies.

SUPPORT and promote integrated water resources development by advocating for clear, concise, and expedited regulations/policies that are easily understandable by the regulated community and public.

SUPPORT groundwater storage policy that is implemented in a way that protects existing water rights, water users and adjudications.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions that help achieve the state's recycled water goals while limiting one-size-fits-all mandates on the uses of recycled water and specific reductions of wastewater discharges.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions that require consideration of cost/benefits, local uses for recycled water and stormwater capture projects, and available state funding to implement programs that mandate reduction or reuse of ocean discharges.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions and funding to help enhance local watershed management in the San Gabriel River Watershed that provide water quality benefits, reforestation measures, enhanced reliability and mitigates the effects of wildfires.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions that support advancing direct potable reuse projects in California, including but not limited to streamlining the planning, development, and implementation of local and regional potable reuse projects, as well as addressing research gaps, advancing scientific knowledge, and strengthening partnerships and outreach to further the development of potable reuse.

B. Conservation

SUPPORT tax exemptions and/or credits, legislative/administrative actions and funding for water conservation and efficiency incentives for measures including, but not limited to, turf removal, long term conversion of non-functional turf, rain barrels, cisterns, and other devices to reduce consumption of water or enhance water use efficiency.

SUPPORT funding for water conservation and water-use efficiency programs such as the U.S. EPA WaterSense program, the U.S. Department of Interior – Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART program, and other water resource projects.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions that support wholesale water agencies and water retailers' ability to meet the objectives of Conservation as a California Way of Life in a manner that maintains flexibility and local/regional control of water resources management decisions.

SUPPORT legislation/administrative efforts to ensure new conservation mandates and/or regulations are based on science, recognize regional distinctions (such as climate, land use, population, and hydrology), consider water affordability, and assess potential impacts to wastewater operations and recycled water projects.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions and funding to reduce system water loss and support the development and implementation of flexible water loss standards for both retail and wholesale water systems.

C. Imported Water Supply

SUPPORT legislative/administrative action and funding that advances Delta Conveyance Project and support the state's coequal goals of water supply reliability, water storage, Delta ecosystem restoration and the Governor's California Water Resilience Portfolio and Water Supply Strategy.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative action and funding for new and/or expanded water infrastructure that compliments the State Water Project, such as the advancement of Sites Reservoir Project, and Voluntary Agreements.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions to modernize and effectively administer the California water rights system in the Delta, including protecting stored water releases.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions and funding for the Colorado River System water conservation projects, including implementation of the local drought contingency plans in areas of the state that have increased concern about wholesale water system delivery constraints.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions and funding that advance binational water conservation programs that benefit Colorado River supply augmentation and habitat restoration objectives.

D. Drought/Climate Change Related Legislation

SUPPORT legislation/administrative actions that provides funding and regulatory assistance for local and regional drought resiliency and improve system flexibility; facilitate the integration of existing and planned local water supplies, distribution, and regional water facilities.

SUPPORT legislation/administrative actions and funding to accelerate new local supply development (including, but not limited to, recycled water, direct potable reuse, stormwater, groundwater storage/remediation, desalination, water loss detection and repair without compromising the operational, financial, water quality, regulatory, environmental, and customer interests of the District and other water and wastewater agencies.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions and funding that support research into the accelerating effects of climate change on water resources and water quality.

E. Environmental Planning/Sustainability

SUPPORT legislative/administrative action to improve clarity and workability of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions and funding to enhance watershed management in the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument, the Bay-Delta, and Colorado River watersheds that provide broad public benefits, including water quality and water supply reliability, reduced wildfire risks, greater scientific understanding, reforestation, and other environmental improvements.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions and funding for control and eradication of invasive species including, but not limited to, quagga and golden mussels.

F. Water Quality

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions and funding to protect and improve water quality from various constituents such as chromium 6, nitrate, perchlorate, salinity, uranium, MTBE, per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances and pharmaceuticals/personal care products and other constituents of emerging concern.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions that utilize best available science, occurrence and health affects data, appropriate cost benefit analyses or economic feasibility to protect public health and improve water quality; support the application of these principles when setting maximum contaminant levels (MCLs), setting health advisories, or public notification/response levels, in addition to assessing laboratory capacity, analytical methods, and other regulatory standards or guidance levels.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions and funding that apply the "polluter pays" principle of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), and other environmental laws, to addressing contamination treatment and mitigation measures to comply with new regulatory standards.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions to secure funding to help public water systems defray the costs of monitoring and/or remediation of contaminants to ensure drinking water and wastewater facilities are not held liable for the cleanup of contamination.

G. Emergency Preparedness

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions that assist the water industry to prepare, respond, and recover from natural disasters, catastrophic events, as well as cyber and physical sabotage. Support funding that provides resources for emergency response, planning, and restoration of service.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions and funding opportunities to support retail and wholesale water agencies' cyber network security.

H. Fiscal Policy

SUPPORT authorizations and appropriations to support and develop local projects through federal infrastructure programs such as the Bureau of Reclamation's Title XVI, Large Scale Water Recycling, and WaterSMART programs, the Army Corps of Engineers' programs, and the Environmental Protection Agency's programs.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions to reduce the local cost of financing water projects such as: grant programs, tax-credit financing and tax-exempt municipal bonding; expanded Water Infrastructure Finance Innovation Act (WIFIA); and Water Resources Development Act (WRDA).

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions efforts that encourage local agency discretion to develop and implement programs that provide safe and affordable drinking water including the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP).

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions to initiate, expedite and secure funding to defray the costs of planning, financing, constructing, repairing, and rehabilitating water infrastructure projects, including but not limited to general obligation bonds, tax-exempt municipal bonds, grants, low-interest loans, and direct appropriations.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions that meaningfully improve water affordability throughout the state at both the individual and the water system level without burdening existing ratepayers or implementing a public goods charge.

I. Water Governance

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions that improve the governance and long-term sustainability of non-compliant water systems and provide assistance for voluntary consolidations that improve their technical, managerial, or financial capacity.

SUPPORT legislative/administrative actions to ensure that all receiving public water systems are consulted on potential consolidations and protect local agency flexibility in determining fees for service and assessment amounts.

SUPPORT and provide active monitoring of, and engagement in, the implementation of the California Water Plan to ensure alignment with the District's mission.