



# SWCD 2026 News

## *Manager's Update*

Greetings to all our valued Patrons,

As we enter the 2026 irrigation season, I want to thank you for your continued cooperation and engagement with the Santiam Water Control District. The Board of Directors and District staff remain focused on providing reliable water delivery while balancing operational demands, regulatory requirements, and the economic challenges currently facing our agricultural community. In response to these conditions, the Board decided to absorb increases in our costs by utilizing reserve funds to keep rates steady for this year. In addition, the Board has adopted a temporary emergency payment option for the 2026 assessment year.

The cost of operating the District is influenced by our collective commitment to shared responsibility, remaining informed, contributing to routine maintenance, properly caring for your irrigation systems, preventing soil from entering ditches, and preparing for changing water conditions all play a role in ensuring reliable service for all Patrons. While regulatory compliance expenses are beyond our direct control, you can assist in maintaining reasonable irrigation rates by valuing both your water resource and the benefits it provides.

We are increasingly using our website, [www.santiamwater.gov](http://www.santiamwater.gov), as our primary platform for sharing important updates, notices, and information. Please visit the site for more information on these and additional topics.

Drought planning; NRCS watershed plan (piping); 2025 Biological Opinion (Detroit drawdown); Oregon DEQ requirements (TMDL Plan); Flood of 2026.

Warm regards,  
Brent Stevenson  
General Manager

## *2026 Emergency Assessment Payment Plan*

The District Board has adopted a resolution allowing ALL patrons a special payment option for the 2026 assessment year. **Participation requires a signed 2026 Emergency Assistance Payment Agreement.** Patrons that submit a signed agreement may pay their 2026 assessment in two equal payments:  
Key components;

- 50% due April 15, 2026
- 50% due August 15, 2026
- No interest if paid in full by August 15, 2026

As required by ORS 553.540, the full assessment amount will be liened against the property regardless of payment option selected.

For details or an agreement form: [www.santiamwater.gov](http://www.santiamwater.gov) | [office@santiamwater.gov](mailto:office@santiamwater.gov) | 503-769-2669

## ***Water Delivery Rate – Patron Reminder***

The District calculates its annual assessments based on the total number of district water rights certificated to water your land (acres). In accordance with the District's water right certificate, every assessed acre is allocated a standard water delivery rate of 5.6 gallons per minute (GPM) throughout the regular irrigation season. This means that if you, for example, have 10 assessed acres, your property is entitled to receive up to 56 GPM when the system is operating under normal conditions. Another way to look at it is that the district is only allowed to divert 56 GPM from the N Santiam River in order to irrigate your 10 acres.

It's important to understand that this delivery rate is designed to ensure fair and equitable water distribution among all Patrons, especially during times of high demand. One benefit of a District is that you enjoy the fact that a rotation occurs when all users are not irrigating at the same time. Please ensure your irrigation system is set up to accommodate your rate, and avoid exceeding your allotted volume, as doing so can impact water availability for others in the District. This is especially true given the likelihood of a very low snowpack and low flows within the District for 2026.

If you have questions about your specific allocation or need assistance in determining the flow rate to your property, please contact District staff or visit [www.santiamwater.gov](http://www.santiamwater.gov) for more information. Thank you for your cooperation in helping us provide reliable service to all users.

## ***Detroit Drawdown and Biological Opinion***

The District remains actively concerned about the Detroit Lake drawdown and its potential impacts on water availability and delivery. We are engaged in ongoing discussions and monitoring the federal process governing the drawdown. We strongly advocate for the interests of our Patrons, seeking to minimize disruptions to irrigation services and increased costs related to federal actions. As the federal agencies move forward, we are participating in the review and comment periods to ensure local voices are heard and to support balanced decisions that protect both water resources and community needs. Please stay informed as we continue to represent your interests in this critical matter.

## ***Looking Ahead***

Looking ahead, the District is focused on practical planning and effective management to ensure farmers and landowners have the water they need when they need it. We are always working to improve our delivery systems, address changing conditions like low flows or drought, and keep costs manageable for all our Patrons. Our small, dedicated team works extremely hard to maintain these standards and keep expenses down for everyone. Our goal is to support your farming operations and help you succeed by providing dependable water service and fair access for every acre. We are here to serve your needs today and into the future.

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