



# Frequently Asked Questions

## San Lucas County Water District

Updated February 26, 2026

### Background

State and local agencies are working together diligently to resolve ongoing water quality issues with the San Lucas County Water District (“San Lucas CWD”).

The purpose of this document is to update the public and answer common questions received since the most recent FAQ document published in 2025. This document is separated into the following topics: **Current Status**; **Consolidation Process**; **Drinking Water**; and **General**.

### Current Status

#### 1. What's wrong with the drinking water quality in San Lucas?

The community of San Lucas has experienced historical water quality issues including nitrate, iron, manganese, and sulfate contaminants violating California drinking water standards.

The current drinking water treatment system is no longer adequate to mitigate these issues. In addition to water safety, San Lucas CWD has struggled to sustainably provide a safe and affordable drinking water supply.

#### 2. What was done to help fix this?

The State Water Resources Control Board (“State Water Board”) provided funding for technical assistance providers to complete a Water System Improvements



engineering report, published February 25, 2025. This engineering report's purpose was to help the San Lucas CWD board assess the most sustainable options to provide safe and reliable water to San Lucas residents.

Additional technical assistance funded by the State Water Board includes but is not limited to: Community information sharing and outreach provided by the Rural Community Assistance Corp (“RCAC”); legal assistance provided by UC Davis Legal; existing water treatment assessment provided by California Rural Water; and technical assistance to rehabilitate the existing water treatment system.

### **3. What did the San Lucas County Water District decide?**

On June 10, 2025, the San Lucas CWD board voted to adopt "Alternative No. 4" (wellhead treatment and new well drilling) with "Sub-Alternative B" (managerial consolidation with California Water Service King City District) as the proposed solution to address long term drinking water quality.

This proposed solution will drill a new second well and remove contaminants by treating the water from the wells in San Lucas so that water provided from the system meets all state and federal standards for drinking water. This proposed solution will also have California Water Service King City District (“Cal Water”) manage the water system and all San Lucas CWD customers will instead become Cal Water customers.

## **Consolidation Process**

### **4. How long will the consolidation process take? How long will it take for San Lucas CWD customers to become Cal Water customers?**

Cal Water and the San Lucas CWD are committed to the consolidation and are currently working to identify a timeline for consolidation that is both as quick as possible and sufficiently addresses all important consolidation details.



**5. If we consolidate with Cal Water, when will we know what our new water rates will be? When will a water rate study be completed?**

A drinking water rate study is currently underway by Technical Assistance Provider MKN.

A rate study is a study designed to analyze how much a water system must charge customers to cover the costs and expenses of providing that water. This includes situations like adding new customers to the water system and adding new drinking water infrastructure to the water system.

**6. If we consolidate with Cal Water, what assistance options are available for low-income rate payers in San Lucas?**

Cal Water offers a Customer Assistance Program ("CAP") to customers who meet income guidelines. Qualifying customers receive a discount on their monthly service charge. If San Lucas CWD consolidates with Cal Water, all San Lucas CWD customers will become Cal Water customers and have access to the CAP application.

You can visit the Cal Water website to see more information on how Cal Water's CAP works: <https://www.calwater.com/customercare/customer-assistance-program-cap/>

**7. If we consolidate with Cal Water, who will be responsible for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) costs? Who will be responsible for fixing our water if there are any issues in the future?**

If San Lucas CWD managerially consolidates with Cal Water, all San Lucas CWD customers will instead become Cal Water customers. Cal Water would be responsible for all operation and maintenance costs. Note that any operation and maintenance costs not funded by outside sources would be included in water rates.



- 8. Cal Water provides King City with both drinking water and wastewater services. If we consolidate with Cal Water and become Cal Water customers, will our wastewater services change here in San Lucas?**

San Lucas wastewater will remain separate from Cal Water's drinking water services. San Lucas customers will continue to have wastewater services paid via property tax.

- 9. If we consolidate with Cal Water, will our water come from a well in King City or a well in San Lucas? If it comes from a well in San Lucas, will the water be safe to drink?**

The proposed solution of "Wellhead Treatment with New Well Drilling" (Alternative No. 4) will remove contaminants by treating the water from well(s) in San Lucas so that water provided from the system meets all state and federal drinking water standards.

## **Drinking Water**

- 10. How long will it take for the water to be safe to drink and use? How long will it take to complete the proposed solution?**

The proposed construction scheduling is still a work in progress due to the availability of additional construction funding being unknown. But with the proposed solution of "Wellhead Treatment with New Well Drilling" (Alternative No. 4), it is estimated that construction will finish around the first quarter of 2030.

- 11. When this proposed solution is complete, will water in San Lucas be safe to use for everything? Including drinking, cooking, and showering?**

Yes. The proposed solution of "Wellhead Treatment with New Well Drilling" (Alternative No. 4) is designed to bring San Lucas' drinking water into compliance with state and federal drinking water standards.



**12. Previous studies claim it is dangerous for pregnant women and babies to consume water with nitrate levels above 5 mg/L (“milligrams per liter”). What are the options for short-term water supplies for pregnant women and babies in San Lucas if nitrate levels reach above 5 mg/L?**

The proposed solution is designed to bring San Lucas’ drinking water into compliance with state and federal drinking water standards. There are no requirements to provide replacement water supplies for drinking water that meets state and federal standards.

It is possible for the proposed solution’s wellhead treatment to be adjusted to remove nitrate levels to below 5 mg/L using a "bypass and blend" method. Note that this method may increase some costs for Operations & Maintenance over time.

## **General**

**13. Will the proposed solution also fix the water lines going into people’s homes?**

Yes. The proposed solution includes cleaning the water service lines connecting people's homes to the main pipeline in the street (also called "distribution system rehabilitation").

This distribution system rehabilitation is expected to fix the lines connecting people's homes and fully replacing them is not expected to be required.

**14. What amount of the project's construction costs will be paid by San Lucas residents compared to the “Responsible Parties” (those who the Water Boards’ Clean-up and Abatement Order list as responsible for nitrate contaminants)?**

The amount of construction costs to be paid by the San Lucas community depends on multiple factors, including:

- Negotiations between the San Lucas CWD and the Responsible Parties (for nitrate contaminants only);
- Available funding provided by the State Water Board; and



