



## Tapping Into Our Ancient Supply

Deep below Costa Mesa lies an aquifer with tinted groundwater from remnants of the ancient redwood forests that once blanketed the Orange County coast more than 30,000 years ago. Over time, the ancient redwood trees were buried underground through mountain erosion carried by rivers, leaving behind organic compounds that give a distinct amber color to some of the water that Mesa Water District (Mesa Water®) treats and provides to customers. We lovingly call it “redwood tea.”

Mesa Water taps into this unique water source through two deep groundwater wells approximately 1,000 feet underground at the Mesa Water Reliability Facility (MWRF). The water is naturally soft and meets all drinking water quality standards. However, the MWRF uses a three-step treatment process—sand separators, cartridge filters and nanofiltration membranes—to remove the amber color. Once treated, this high-quality drinking water is delivered to Mesa Water customers. From pumping to treatment to delivery, the process takes about one hour—meaning many Mesa Water customers unknowingly enjoy this ancient treat every day!

This facility enables Mesa Water to achieve a 100% local water supply, serving all customers exclusively with groundwater and eliminating the need for higher-cost imported water—something all customers can be proud of. The “redwood tea” accounts for 15% of Mesa Water’s total supply, while the remaining 85% comes from shallower wells pumping replenished water from the principal aquifer in the Orange County Groundwater Basin. The deep aquifer is a reliable, long-term resource with hundreds of years of amber water.

To honor the ancient forest that helps supply water daily, a small redwood forest—routinely misted to simulate coastal fog—is located at the site of the MWRF and Mesa Water Education Center. It’s a living tribute that connects the community to the fascinating ancient origins of our water.



## 2025 Water Quality Report Now Available

Mesa Water conducts extensive water quality testing to ensure your water is clean and safe. To read the 2025 Water Quality Report, visit [MesaWater.org/WaterQualityReport](https://MesaWater.org/WaterQualityReport).

To request a printed copy, email [Info@MesaWater.org](mailto:Info@MesaWater.org) or call 949.631.1201 and include your name and mailing address.







## Staff Splash: Meet Kaitlyn Norris, Senior Public Affairs Specialist

*Kaitlyn is the face behind communications and outreach initiatives, including our website and social media!*

### What does a typical day look like for you in Public Affairs?

I love my role because no day looks the same. I enjoy the variety I have in my job. Some days I am out in the community at an event, and the next day I might be in the office drafting a press release or newsletter and editing photos. Then later that week, I might be hosting a field trip or tour at the Mesa Water Education Center or at a Board meeting. I have never been bored in my role—there is always something new to explore in the water world.

### If you could swap jobs with another Mesa Water team member for a day, who would it be and why?

If I could swap jobs at Mesa Water for a day, it would be with our Operators in the water distribution department. They are out in the field, maintaining our underground infrastructure and ensuring customers have a reliable supply of water. Each day, they maintain fire hydrants and valves for fire protection, replace critical infrastructure and respond to service calls at all hours. I find it fascinating how our underground infrastructure works. I also enjoy being out in the community and in the sunlight, so that would be a bonus of working as an Operator.

### What's a water myth or misconception you wish more people understood?

I wish more people understood how safe tap water is to drink and that tap water has much more stringent water quality standards than bottled water does. Mesa Water tests your water 30,000+ times per year and it meets and exceeds all state and federal standards. Tap water is also the most cost-effective option costing about one penny a gallon—you can't beat that compared to grocery store bought and bottled water!

### How would you describe your "hydration personality"—slow sipper, frequent filler, or the person with three drinks on their desk?

I am a three-drink person through and through, but cold tap water with lemon is the first thing I reach for each morning. I am known to always come to meetings with a drink in hand, whether it be tap water, matcha or coffee (all made with Mesa Water of course).



## So Long, Summer (Events)

Did you catch us out in the community this summer? We enjoyed another great season connecting with the community during the Lions Club Fish Fry and Concerts in the Park series—and we hope you stayed cool with our chilled water refill stations at the OC Fair. Thanks for making a splash with us!



[MesaWater.org](https://www.MesaWater.org)

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Produced by Mesa Water's Board of Directors, **News On Tap** is a bi-monthly publication to inform Mesa Water's customers and community about water issues and events.

### BOARD MEETINGS

Mesa Water Board meetings are held the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 4:30 p.m. at 1965 Placentia Avenue, Costa Mesa, and are open to the public. For more information, call 949.631.1206.

### Public Affairs Department

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