

# The Portola Valley Post

Fall 2012



## [Blues and Barbecue Raises \\$25,000 for Open Space](#)

After a two-year hiatus, residents join together to have some fun and raise some money.



## [Thank You, Leslie!](#)

Former Planning Manager Leslie Lambert retires after 20+ years of Portola Valley service.



## [Beautiful New Field Next Year](#)

Fundraising campaign continues for new baseball field; support your local future Giants team member!



## [Three Seats Available on Planning and ASCC Commissions](#)

Residents are encouraged to become a part of Portola Valley's historical heritage of volunteer service.



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## Blues & Barbecue Raises \$25,000 for Open Space

On Sunday, September 16, Portola Valley residents welcomed the return of Blues & BBQ and enjoyed spectacular weather, food, wine and entertainment. Six hundred meal tickets were sold, and with many folks picnicking it was a great turnout. Thanks to all who donated goods and services for the auction, over \$13,000 was raised in auction proceeds. Combined with ticket sales and cash donations, over \$25,000 will

be added to the Open Space Acquisition Fund.

This event could not have taken place without those who volunteered their time and talent to make it happen. A big thank you goes to the Community Events Committee's team, which included: Alison Alston, Karen Askey, Michael Bray, Sue Chaput, Sharon Driscoll, Wendi Haskell, Elizabeth Holmes, Todd Johnson, Nancy Katz, Jane Lewis, Nancy Lund,

Jane Mackey, Judith Mendelsohn, Vivien Moyer, Laura Stec, Meghan Sweet, Jeanie Treichel, and Sandra Welch.

We need people to join our Community Events Committee to ensure the future of Town events such as this one. Visit [www.portolavalley.net](http://www.portolavalley.net) to submit an application.

*Blues & Barbecue co-chairs,  
Diana Raines & Karen Mobley*

## Thank You, Leslie!



Leslie and Terry Lambert

What makes Leslie Lambert, the Town's recently retired Planning Manager, so highly regarded by those who worked with her?

When asked, the Planning Commissioners were eager to praise Leslie. Alex Von Feldt put her kindness right at the top of the list of positive qualities. "Leslie worked with so many people, and her open and considerate interactions with staff, the Council, applicants, neighbors and residents made people feel appreciated and heard. She saw both sides of a situation and found a workable solution."

"In addition to her professional skills, Leslie brought crucial people skills to the job," Leah Zaffaroni stated. "She handled the role deftly. In her interactions with both the public and Town officials, she was helpful, tactful, and informative. It is a challenge to bridge Town bodies, volunteers, and residents, but she did so with grace and professionalism, and developed uniformly positive relationships. Additionally, Leslie sidestepped the politics and gossip that can color small town culture. She followed the highest standards of ethics and professionalism and never let on to bias or partiality with respect to an application or Town matter. "

Leslie's visibility and frequent face-to-face interactions with residents made her the "Face of Town Hall," according to one Council Member. "And she projected an image of Town government that was accessible, competent and responsive to residents."

The Mayor described her as "graceful, authentic, unassuming, upbeat, sympathetic, always ready to listen or help, and "the best face" of Portola Valley – not to mention her "killer wardrobe and great shoes." She was adept at dealing with thorny, intractable issues between applicants and the Town, and sometimes nasty problems among neighbors. Everyone ends up loving Leslie," stated the Mayor.

Finally, another very important quality mentioned by many is Leslie's ability to laugh. And what could be more important than that? Town staff, elected officials, volunteers, consultants and residents all wish Leslie the very best in all her future endeavors.



## Beautiful New Field Next Year

Portola Valley is fortunate to have a beautiful Town Center with newly renovated fields and facilities. However, there is one field that hasn't been renovated for over thirty years. Ford Field was built over fifty years ago and is home field for Alpine West Little League and generations of Portola Valley families.

The Town now has a plan to refurbish the field and its facilities. The improvements to the field will include replacing the grass infield and outfield, installing a new irrigation system, building new dugouts and bleachers, installing a new

backstop and fencing around the field, and a new batting cage.

As the costs quoted by the contractors were higher than projected, the Town recently revised the project scope. There will be public reviews of the revised plan at the Parks & Recreation Committee meetings to gather community input, and when fundraising has been completed the Town will move forward with construction. The Parks & Recreation Committee meets on the third Monday of the month at 7:30 pm in the Historic Schoolhouse and future agendas are made available via the Town's website, [www.portolavalley.net](http://www.portolavalley.net)

Nearly half of the funding for this improvement project is from a California parks improvement grant. The remainder is being funded by a grant from the Ford Family and donations from Little League and the community.

Would you like to show your support for the next Giants team member(s)? Please visit [www.portolavalley.net/fordfield](http://www.portolavalley.net/fordfield) to make a donation to the Ford Field renovation project via PayPal. Your support of local sports is greatly appreciated.

*Jon Myers, Chair, Parks and Recreation Committee*

## Three Available Seats on the Planning Commission

The Town Council is seeking qualified individuals to serve on the Town's Planning Commission for a four-year term through January 2017. There are three seats available.

The Planning Commission consists of five members appointed by the Town Council and meetings are held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month. The role of the Planning Commission is to fulfill the needs of the community as they are identified by the Town Council and to enhance the quality of life for residents, and to retain the rural character of Portola Valley. The commission is charged with the review and approval of conditional use permit applications, subdivisions, variances and larger site development permits pursuant to the provisions of the zoning and site development ordinances. The Planning Commission also reviews appeals of Architectural & Site Control Commission and administrative staff decisions and provides recommendations to the Town Council on legislative actions such as amendments to the Zoning Code and the General Plan.

If you are interested in serving on the Planning Commission, please submit a letter of interest to the Town Council as soon as possible. The Town Council has tentatively determined to conduct the interviews for the open Planning Commission positions on November 28, 2012.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Steve Padovan, Interim Planning Department Manager at [spadovan@portolavalley.net](mailto:spadovan@portolavalley.net) or by phone at (650) 851-1700, extension 212.



## Three Available Seats on the ASCC

The Town Council is seeking qualified individuals to serve on the Town's Architectural & Site Control Commission (ASCC) for a four-year term through January 2017. There are three seats available.

The ASCC consists of five members appointed by the Town Council and meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month. The objective of the ASCC is to promote the preservation of the visual character of Portola Valley. The commission is charged with the review and approval of design review applications and site development permits pursuant to the provisions of the zoning and site development ordinances, including but not limited to, applications for all commercial buildings, new single family dwellings, guest houses, additions over 400 square feet, and second story additions. The ASCC also provides comments on conditional use permits, variances, lot line adjustments, subdivisions and on matters referred by the Planning Commission, Town Council and Town Staff.

If you are interested in serving on the ASCC, please submit a letter of interest to the Town Council as soon as possible. The Town Council has tentatively determined to conduct the interviews for the open ASCC positions on November 28, 2012.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Steve Padovan, Interim Planning Department Manager at [spadovan@portolavalley.net](mailto:spadovan@portolavalley.net) or by phone at (650) 851-1700, extension 212.

## Stop Junk Mail, Portola Valley!



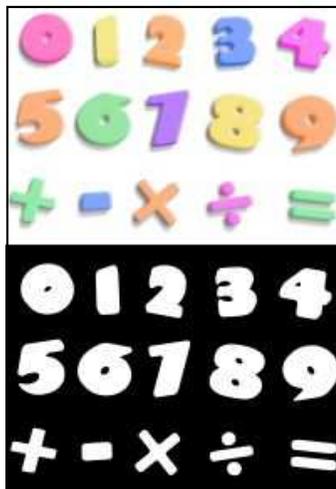
The Town of Portola Valley now sponsors a **free**, online service that lets you opt-out of unwanted catalogs, coupons, yellow pages, donation requests, credit card offers and other junk mail.

Use it at your home and office to reduce waste in Portola Valley!

<https://portolavalley.catalogchoice.org>

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## Mathematics Series



Coming up this winter will be a unique three-evening colloquium series on mathematics, covering topics such as irrational and imaginary numbers, fun with pi, zero, and other similar topics. Tentative dates are planned for January through March with more details to follow. Watch for more information at [www.portolavalley.net](http://www.portolavalley.net).

*Yvonne Tryce, Nature and Science Committee*

## Is it a Match?

Are you seeking a creative, unique volunteer opportunity? If your interests include writing, drama, literature, theatre, music as well as fine arts, photography and crafts ...it's a match! The Cultural Arts Committee brings the community together through the arts, and we would welcome your ideas, creativity and involvement.



### PV HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE December 1, 2012

The Committee meets on the second Thursday of each month at 1:00 PM for about one hour, in the Historic Schoolhouse at the Town Center. The team has developed successful events and programs for the community, such as the upcoming Holiday Boutique on December 1st, the Summer Music Series (under Paige Fulkerson) and art shows and events featuring Portola Valley artists.

There's fun in the works, so come share your talent with us. For information, email the chair, Linda Olson [linda@lolsonassociates.com](mailto:linda@lolsonassociates.com). Working artists and all art lovers are welcome!

*Cultural Arts Committee*

## Ice911 Project Update



Global climate change is occurring. Are there any short-term, yet reversible measures we can take to reduce future ecological damage while longer-term solutions are researched and developed?

**Dr. Leslie Field will give an update on the project on Tuesday December 4<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM in the Community Hall of Portola Valley's Town Center.**

Sometimes humorous, always determined (and dare we hope, inspiring to others), the ongoing Ice911 project illustrates what a small band of concerned, scientifically literate volunteers can accomplish in the pursuit of an "Inconvenient Hobby" to combat some of the effects of climate change by slowing down the melt of polar and glacial ice.

## Star Party and Geology Discovery Day

The Nature and Science Committee had a busy weekend in October with their Star Party on Friday evening, October 12, and Geology Discovery Day on Sunday afternoon, October 14.

At the Star Party and under the direction of Andrew Pierce, amateur astronomers set up large telescopes on the road beside the soccer field, where about 150 visitors viewed distant stars and galaxies in deep space. The Alder Room was filled with folks both young and old enjoying activities related to astronomy and viewing posters explaining fascinating astronomic phenomena. Librarian Kathy Wiszowaty brought astronomy books to share, and she and Treena Joi had astronomy-related projects for children.

Geology Discovery Day was held in the Community Hall with at least 300 folks attending. Treena Joi had many activities for children and wonderful displays of fossils and the creatures which lived in prehistoric times. Local geologists Rowland Tabor, Chet Wrucke (assisted by son, Robert Wrucke), Sheldon Breiner, and Paul Heiple explained the geology of the area and the history of rocks from near and far. They also helped folks who brought in their own rocks to learn a bit more about their treasures. Leslie Field provided hands-on glacier and volcano activities outside the hall, and Linda Lohse and Robin Toews shared their knowledge of igneous rocks, geodes, and crystals. There were also photographic exhibits set up by Town Historian Nancy Lund, showing scenes from the 1906 earthquake. The amazing specimens from our collections and the authentic equipment displayed contributed to making it a thoroughly enjoyable and exciting afternoon for geology enthusiasts of all ages.

*Yvonne Tryce, Nature and Science Committee*

## Wandering Our Trails



We are truly fortunate that the founders of Portola Valley recognized the importance of having an extensive trail and path system in the community. Through their vision, Portola Valley currently has nearly as many miles of trails and paths as it does roads. These trails and paths vary in character and location, and allow residents to enjoy a pleasant stroll with others along our newly renovated Dwight Crowder Memorial Path on the weekend, or to seek solitude by hiking along a trail on Coal Mine Ridge. Around each bend, residents can discover a quiet oasis, beautiful seasonal blooms, or wildlife. We encourage you to explore!

Because we all share these wonderful trails and paths, it is good to remind ourselves periodically of certain rules intended to allow safe and enjoyable use by pedestrians, runners, dog walkers, bicyclists (where permitted) and equestrians. A few polite reminders follow.

### DOGS

Dogs are very important Portola Valley residents, but they must enjoy the trails and paths while on leash, and there are certain trails upon which they are not allowed (in the Portola Valley Ranch area). Please check the town trail map and trail signs to confirm whether our canine friends are welcome on a given trail, and please show consideration for other trail users by removing your dog's waste.

### HORSES

We honor our equestrian heritage, and work to preserve it. It is easy to forget that horses are not like other pedestrians. They have different sensitivities, they need more room walking on a trail, and they are most comfortable with a good line of sight. Horses do not welcome surprises, such as a swiftly traveling bicycle or a dog running across a path. To travel safely along our trails and paths that are used by equestrians, all pedestrians and bicyclists (where permitted on those trails and paths) must give way to equestrians, and dog owners should take extra care to control their pets while traveling on trails frequented by equestrians.

### MAPS

Trail maps and related information can be found online at <http://www.portolavalley.net/index.aspx?page=71>.

We look forward to seeing you on our trails and paths soon. Happy wanderings!

*Judith Hasko, Chair, Trails and Paths Committee*

## What the Bicycle, Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Committee Has Learned So Far

The Portola Valley Bicycle, Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Committee has been in operation for eight months, listening to members of the community. What have we learned so far? There are three recurring issues:



### SPEEDING

Speeding at crosswalks and in school zones is a common and loud complaint. We all do it occasionally but some of us test the limits frequently. The Town has asked the sheriff's deputies to be vigilant in citing offenders along the Alpine and Portola Road corridors, and also in the residential streets around schools. Deputies will also ticket for illegally passing on the right. But let's face it, law enforcement and traffic calming measures (like signs or speed bumps) can only do so much. Remember: the child, or grandparent, or teenager in that crosswalk could be yours.



### ROADWAY CONDITIONS

We are blessed to have some of the best-maintained roads in San Mateo County and a highly responsive public works team. Still, there are occasional requests for additional road striping or signs from the community that seem simple on the surface, but raise issues of effectiveness and aesthetics. Our approach? Work with residents to gather data for an analysis that will support a recommendation, and apply consistency in implementation throughout the Town.



### SAFE ROUTES TO ANYWHERE

How do we get more of us out of our cars and on our feet or bicycles for daily trips to the store, school, work or recreation areas? The success of Safe Routes to School programs at our two schools demonstrates how we are teaching our youth to get out on the trails for their daily commute to school. Stay tuned for beginning cycling classes for adults, bike clubs for kids and more. Our goal is simple – make sure people from 8 to 80 feel safe enough to use our roads and trails every day.

Please join us the first Wednesday of every month at 8:15 am in the Historic Schoolhouse. On the agenda for November: bike lanes. The Town Council recently asked us to consider the concept of bike lanes on Alpine and Portola Roads. We'd love your input.

*Steve Marra, Chair, and Leslie Latham, Bicycle, Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Committee*

## Revised Resolution for Formation of Underground Utility District

Back on July 28, 2010, the Town Council approved Resolution No. 2499-2010 to establish an Underground Utility District (UUD) on Alpine Road between Nathorst Avenue and the Town limit at Ladera. However, early this year, PG&E changed its Rule 20A procedures and requirements, so that the Town needed to submit a revised Resolution.

Bob Bondy, a retired PG&E field supervisor, recently joined our committee, enabling us to work closely with PG&E to refine the UUD plan and produce cost estimates. As a result, the Committee proposed two phases to underground utilities starting from Nathorst and terminating at Golden Oak. Together, these two projects would underground a particularly entangled section of main road in Portola Valley. Trees (including a historic redwood in front of PV Garage) would no longer need to be trimmed around poles. The demonstrated beautification and increased reliability during windstorms could inspire further progress towards undergrounding.

Phase 1 construction is tentatively scheduled for 2015 and will finally put our accumulated Rule 20A allocation to good use. However, if the Town waits for Rule 20A funding to re-accumulate, Phase 2 could not be completed until 35 years later in 2050. Instead, the Committee asked the Council to consider privately funding Phase 2 in the 2015-2020 timeframe.

On October 10, 2012, the Town Council discussed the Committee's plan and directed the Town's Public Works Department to work on the new Resolution to enable Phase 1. While the Council was enthusiastic about Phase 1, the Committee needs to do more investigation around Phase 2 funding and development.

If you have questions or feedback about the Committee's proposal, please contact us at [cabletv@portolavalley.net](mailto:cabletv@portolavalley.net).

For more information about PG&E Rule 20A funding, see

<http://www.pge.com/myhome/customerservice/energystatus/streetconstruction/rule20/>

*MJ Lee, Co-Chair Cable and Utilities Undergrounding Committee*

**tuesday harvest**  
presents

Cultivating fresh and local ideas, every second Tuesday of the month.

- ★ **NOVEMBER 13**  
GreenSense for Your Home: We Can't Afford NOT to Build Green Buildings with *Eric Corey Freed*
- ★ **FEBRUARY 12**  
Lighting Technology Changes and Green Design with *Linda Sanford*
- ★ **MARCH 12**  
Our Homes: Getting to Net-Zero Energy with *Ann Edminster*

@ 7:00 pm  
Portola Valley Town Center  
Community Hall



**Town of Portola Valley**

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(650) 851-1700  
[townhall@portolavalley.net](mailto:townhall@portolavalley.net)

**Portola Valley Town Council**

Maryann Moise Derwin, Mayor  
John Richards, Vice Mayor  
Jeff Aalfs  
Ted Driscoll  
Ann Wengert

**The Portola Valley Post**

Editor: Julia Dillingham  
([julia8925@sbcglobal.net](mailto:julia8925@sbcglobal.net))

## Town Center: Then



The Town purchased the Portola Valley School in 1975 from the PV School District. The concrete block buildings straddled the San Andreas Fault.



Over 180 residents met in the Multi-Use Room of the old Town Center and worked to layout eight site plan alternatives that formed the basis for design alternatives for the new Town Center.



Skip Struthers removes the Portola Valley sign from the old school administration building.



Town Hall moved from the school buildings into temporary office trailers.

*Continued*

## Town Center: Now



The new Town Center is truly the heart of the community. It has been the recipient of numerous design awards, and the subject of many articles relating to sustainability and green building. The Town Center is one of only a handful of municipal projects in the nation to have earned Platinum certification under the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards of the US Green Building Council.



Photo: © Cesar Rubio

Town Hall houses the Town staff including the building and planning department, and government functions. The Town Center also includes the Maintenance Building that houses the Town's maintenance staff and Sheriff's deputies, with a corporation yard to accommodate tools and equipment.



The inviting library offers a comfortable place to read, wi-fi access and a children's reading room.

## Portola Valley Women's Club Now 250 Strong

Formed in the summer of 2011, the Portola Valley Women's Club (PVWC) (<http://www.pvwomensclub.com/>) has now grown to nearly 250 members. We have quarterly social gatherings, and a constant stream of member-driven activities, including movies, restaurant outings, card games, hikes, lectures, and anything else our members are interested in doing! There's no commitment required, but the Club succeeds only if members initiate and participate in events. All ages are welcome.

To join or if you have any questions, please send an email to [join@pvwomensclub.com](mailto:join@pvwomensclub.com) or to Dale Lachtman, [dale@pvwomensclub.com](mailto:dale@pvwomensclub.com) with your name, address and phone number

Another group that may be of interest is the Dining for Women (<http://diningforwomen.org/>) chapter that started in PV last Spring. Ginger Creevy was really the one who got things going. We formed our chapter through the help of the PVWC and we met for the first time in April. Each month we meet at a different chapter member's home in PV and donate to a charity the amount we would have spent going out to dinner. The dinner is a potluck so you bring a dish...and a donation! It's another great way to meet women in the community and support a cause. To join, please send an email to Ginger Creevy at [gcreevy@yahoo.com](mailto:gcreevy@yahoo.com).

*Meghan Sweet, PVWC Member and Board Member*

It is the best feeling I've ever had - learning about serious women's issues throughout the world and contributing to their long term betterment through focused, well-established programs, as well as the new and continuing friendships of local, like-minded women with so much to share.

Jennifer Hammer



## Well, Yes, You Can Go Home Again

The year was 1975 and a group of young people stood on the steps of Portola Jr. High School (PVS, which is now the Portola Valley Town Center) singing the Seals and Crofts song “We May Never Pass This Way Again” as part of their graduation ceremony. I believe I wore a Gunny Sack dress and platform shoes.

Today I realize how wrong we were. As I walk our son Thomas to class at Ormondale, I am stunned to recognize how many of the parents have a previous association with the area that has drawn them back when they decided to raise their own children. Whether the association was through the Portola Valley School District, through the Sequoia High School District (which brought many friends into our small town), or as part of the Stanford community; once one sees the wonders of this valley, you just know it is where you want to raise your own children. From Skyline to Ford Field we all know how fortunate we are to have this safe haven of love and hope where a child is still the most valued member of our society. And in this way, so many of us are passing this way again.

So what exactly is it about Portola Valley that makes it such a great place to be young? Of course, the trails are a fantastic place to play, and the proximity of wildlife is both dramatic and inspiring. Then there is the access to a myriad of cultural activities from the San Francisco symphony to various theater opportunities, museums, and classes of all kinds. Moreover, one cannot dismiss the sports facilities and activities. We are so lucky to have world class professional teams within easy driving distance that can also be accessed by mass transit. Locally we have a wonderful bunch of coaches and volunteers that spend countless hours with young soccer players, baseball players, swimmers and tennis players. Finally there is the unparalleled opportunity for biking walking and horseback riding.

We are blessed with all these advantages. And yet I would contend that there is one factor that, more than any, pulls this community together and makes it a great place to be a kid. That one thing is our nurturing, caring school district. PVSD is an institution that has been the backbone of Portola Valley

for over 150 years and still brings to the community a sense of being and place. The evidence for this fact was clearly demonstrated by the PVSD150 celebration of last year.

Literally, hundreds of people reconnected through the efforts of the many dedicated people from our Town who ran Internet groups, multiple parties and wonderful events at the Town Center (aka PVS). Folks pushing the age of 100 mingled with local kindergarteners. And what did we all have in common? What connected us and brought us home? Well, of course, it was our love for our old school and the friends we made there. I still marvel at seeing so many old playmates again.

Throughout the years people have often commented on the fact that I appeared to have had a very happy childhood. I am grateful for my years in the Portola Valley School District, and that the District is now able to offer that same sense of joy and ease of youthful being to our son. I know that the feeling of belonging will be the thing that sticks with him as the years go by. I see my own happy childhood replayed in him and in all his friends, and feel sure that we are all home.

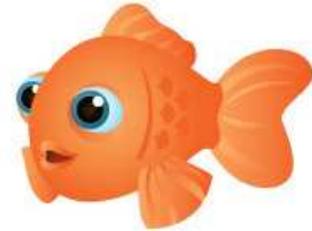
One final note; the other day I was asked for some mentoring by a very young woman in 4” platform shoes. I almost said “Lose the shoes before you hurt your ankles or even worse get photographed in them.” Then I thought to myself that we all need a few regrets because they are character building. So instead I suggested she strive to enjoy the next few years in front of her knowing that the memories will be with her for the rest of her life.

*Meg Abraham*



Thomas and Meg

# Summer Water Bills Left you **Blue?** Check Out CalWater's Residential Programs & Rebates!



## Smart Irrigation Controller rebate

Smart Irrigation controllers automatically adjust their watering schedule in response to changing weather conditions. Smart irrigation controllers can save you water and money by more efficiently applying the right amount of water necessary to maintain your plants. See the rebate application for restrictions and qualifications.

*Amount:* Up to \$450

*Eligible Devices:* [http://www.calwater.com/conservation/smart\\_controller\\_list.pdf](http://www.calwater.com/conservation/smart_controller_list.pdf)

*Rebate Application:* [http://www.calwater.com/conservation/application\\_res.pdf](http://www.calwater.com/conservation/application_res.pdf)



## Free Sprinkler Nozzles

To help you save water around your home, CalWater is partnering with [FreeSprinklerNozzles.com](http://www.freesprinklernozzles.com) to make water-saving Toro Precision Series Spray Nozzles available at no charge to their customers. Single-family accounts are eligible to receive up to 25 free nozzles.

*To receive a voucher for free spray nozzles,* have your CalWater account number available and go to [www.freesprinklernozzles.com](http://www.freesprinklernozzles.com). For more information, visit the Free Sprinkler Nozzles page: <http://www.calwater.com/conservation/nozzles.php>



## Residential Water Use Survey Program

On the day of your appointment, a trained water conservation specialist from WaterWise will come to your home to evaluate your indoor and outdoor water use. In addition to surveying your water use, your surveyor will provide information about how to read your meter, request water-efficient plumbing fixtures, take advantage of available rebates, and more.

*Contact WaterWise* at (866)685-2322 to confirm your eligibility and schedule a date and time for your survey.

### Important information

*Programs and rebates are available until funds are depleted. CalWater does not warrant any devices offered or installed as part of a program to be free of defects or warrant the quality of the workmanship and is not responsible for the suitability of the premises for the device. CalWater, its directors, officers and employees are not responsible for any loss, damage, expense and liability resulting from the loss, destruction or damage to property arising out of or in any way connected to the installation of these devices.*