

This recruitment is managed by



# WATER QUALITY MANAGER

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$149,413.68-\$205,968.36 DOE/DOQ\***  
*\*An additional 3% COLA is anticipated for July, pending Board approval*

**SANTA MARGARITA WATER DISTRICT  
RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, CALIFORNIA**



C A R E E R O P P O R T U N I T Y

**T**HE SANTA MARGARITA WATER DISTRICT (SMWD) is seeking an experienced and technically strong Water Quality Manager to lead the District's water quality and regulatory compliance efforts within a complex and evolving water agency. With a diverse service area, SMWD is recognized for its commitment to operational excellence, environmental stewardship, and proactive regulatory leadership. This role provides centralized oversight of the District's water quality programs and strengthens coordination among laboratory services, operations, engineering, and planning teams. The Water Quality Manager ensures regulatory requirements are clearly interpreted, consistently applied, and effectively communicated across the organization to support informed decision-making and protect the reliability and safety of the District's water systems. *Lead water quality and regulatory excellence in service of the community; apply today!*

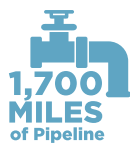


# THE COMMUNITY

**N**ESTLED IN THE CANYONS OF SOUTH ORANGE COUNTY and not far from the bustle of the Los Angeles metro area, Santa Margarita Water District is headquartered in beautiful Rancho Santa Margarita. The District serves ten distinctive communities, including the cities of Mission Viejo, Rancho Santa Margarita, and San Juan Capistrano, as well as the unincorporated communities of Coto de Caza, Las Flores, Ladera Ranch, Talega in San Clemente, and the Rancho Mission Viejo villages of Sendero, Esencia, and Rienda. With year-round temperate weather, proximity to ocean beaches, and set against breathtaking canyons, these communities offer a slower pace than the northern end of the County, while still providing easy access to all the amenities of the second-largest metro area in the US.

Residents enjoy access to parks, trails, and nearby natural areas that support an active, outdoor-oriented lifestyle year-round, along with highly regarded educational institutions and an engaged community culture. From the meandering streets, period architecture, and quaint historic downtown of San Juan Capistrano; to family-friendly Mission Viejo, with its excellent schools and beautiful recreational lake; and Rancho Mission Viejo's meticulously master-planned communities, incorporating thoughtful touches from wellness centers to summer camps, the District's service area reflects a diverse mix of historic neighborhoods and modern amenities. These communities are also characterized by responsible growth and a strong emphasis on environmental stewardship and long-term sustainability—values that align closely with SMWD's mission.

## SMWD BY THE NUMBERS



Industry First  
Advanced Recycled  
Water Treatment Plant

Click here  
for more  
details about  
SMWD's  
complex  
infrastructure.



# THE ORGANIZATION

**T**HE SANTA MARGARITA WATER DISTRICT (SMWD) is a fiscally healthy and sustainability-focused retail water district located in southern Orange County, California, providing high-quality drinking water, recycled water, and wastewater services to 200,000+ residents across a 111 square mile service area. Governed by a five-member elected Board of Directors and with an annual budget of approximately \$170 million, the District is at a pivotal moment as it works to build and align a new organizational structure focused on innovation, collaborative leadership, and long-term sustainability. With a mid-sized workforce of over 200 employees, the District has added a number of strategic new positions for this fiscal year, with the goal of centering operational agility and targeted growth to meet current demand and future needs. Leveraging meaningful regional, state, and federal impact in water policy and resource management, SMWD is recognized for its award-winning conservation efforts and campaigns, and places a strong emphasis on leadership development through a well-received internal leadership training program. As the District continues to grow as a cohesive, high-performing organization, it seeks team-oriented leaders who value accountability, collaboration, and service excellence in advancing SMWD's mission and public trust.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE DISTRICT



# THE WATER QUALITY DIVISION

**T**HE WATER QUALITY DIVISION, OVERSEEN BY THE WATER QUALITY MANAGER, is responsible for protecting the integrity and safety of the District's water systems through comprehensive monitoring, compliance management, and technical oversight. The division manages water quality programs across potable, recycled, and wastewater operations, coordinates closely with laboratory services for testing and analysis, and ensures adherence to evolving state and federal drinking water standards. Serving as a key technical resource within the Planning & Water Resources Department, the division works collaboratively with Engineering and Operations to address treatment performance, emerging contaminants, and system risks before they impact service. Through proactive management and regulatory expertise, the Water Quality Division helps maintain public trust while supporting the District's operational reliability and long-term resource strategy.



## THE JOB

**R**EPORTING TO THE DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & WATER RESOURCES, the Water Quality Manager plans, organizes, and oversees the District's water quality, environmental compliance, and sustainability programs across drinking water, wastewater, recycled water, and related regulatory areas. The position supervises approximately 7-9 staff, including laboratory and regulatory personnel, and establishes consistent standards for compliance reporting, documentation, and agency coordination. Key responsibilities include evaluating emerging contaminants such as PFAS and PFOA, interpreting regulatory changes, and determining appropriate operational and policy responses. The Water Quality Manager works closely with the District's technology team to improve data systems and reporting processes and serves as the District's representative in regulatory and regional forums.

# THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

**THE IDEAL CANDIDATE IS AN EXPERIENCED AND PROACTIVE** water quality professional who serves as a trusted internal expert and external liaison, advocating for sound policy and representing the District effectively with regulators, regional partners, and the public. They bring practical expertise in drinking water, wastewater, and recycled water systems, along with familiarity with evolving state and federal requirements. The successful candidate exercises sound judgment in interpreting regulatory standards, communicates effectively with technical staff and regulatory agencies, and maintains consistent, high standards for documentation and compliance. They provide steady leadership, clear communication, and sound judgment to support consistent compliance and informed operational decisions.

Santa Margarita Water District is building an intentional culture of collaboration, innovation, and forward momentum. Leaders who combine vision with execution will thrive in this environment, and those with the genuine desire to work together, communicate, and build consensus will find a like-minded team, and the opportunity to shape the future of water resource management in this dynamic region.

## Core Competencies of the Ideal Candidate will include:

**Strategic Thinking:** Anticipates long-term organizational needs, aligns operational goals with larger priorities, and creatively approaches problem-solving.

**Team Orientation:** Approaches challenges and day-to-day tasks as an opportunity to collaborate with talented colleagues and staff.

**Communication:** Listens actively and seeks to understand; maintains an intentionally high-volume, real-time communication flow with executive leadership team to ensure shared context and strategic alignment.

**Relationship-Building:** Builds trust and credibility with executive leadership, the Board of Directors, staff, and external partners.

**Innovation:** Acts as a driving force advancing service excellence, forward-thinking projects, and thoughtful organizational change; creates space for new ideas, risk-taking, and out-of-the-box thinking.

**Talent Development:** Prioritizes mentorship and knowledge-sharing to empower staff and foster growth; actively promotes leadership development and succession planning.

**Change Agility:** Remains adaptable to evolving organizational needs, builds change-resilient teams, and cultivates a solutions-focused mindset.

**Vision:** Employs big-picture thinking, works collaboratively with the executive leadership team to take cutting-edge ideas to execution, and communicates organizational vision compellingly to staff to build alignment and buy-in.

**Mission Focus:** Believes in and models SMWD's mission, vision, and values including service excellence, environmental sustainability and resource stewardship, fiscal responsibility and transparency, and strengthening communities through inter-agency and regional relationships; creates an inclusive environment where employees feel supported and connected to the District's mission.

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# Employment Standards

Any combination of experience and training that would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:

**Education:** Graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with a major in environmental science, chemistry, biology, engineering, sustainability, or a closely related field.

**Experience:** Six (6) years of progressively responsible experience in environmental compliance, sustainability, or water quality management within a water, wastewater, or public utility agency, including at least two (2) years in a supervisory capacity.

## PREFERRED/ DESIRED

- AWWA or CWEA certifications in Laboratory Analyst, Environmental Compliance Inspector, or comparable credentials.
  - A Professional Engineer (PE) or Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS) certification.
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# SALARY & BENEFITS

This position will receive an annual salary of **\$149,413.68–\$205,968.36 DOE/DOQ**, with an additional **3% COLA** anticipated for July, pending Board approval.

**PLUS** an attractive benefits package that includes:

**CalPERS Retirement:** The Classic members' formula is 2.7% at 55 with an employee contribution of 8%, while Public Employees' Pension Reform Act (PEPRA) members have a formula of 2% at 62 with an employee contribution of 7.5%.

**Medical:** Multiple plans, including PPO and HMO options, are available. The District pays 100% of the cost for the employee's coverage (not to exceed the amount of the highest HMO plan); the District will additionally contribute 50% of the premium cost for dependents.

**Dental Insurance:** Both HMO and PPO plans are available. The District covers the employee at 100%, regardless of the selected plan; dependent coverage is available at the District's rates.

**Life Insurance:** A term life insurance benefit is provided.

**Vision Insurance:** The District offers a Vision Service Plan (VSP) and pays the full cost for employees and their dependents.

**Paid Time Off:** The District has a generous combined program for time off, with a typical starting accrual rate of 140 hours annually, which increases with years of service.

**Holidays:** The District observes 11½ holidays per year.

**Social Security:** The District does not pay into Social Security and provides a private disability program at no cost to the employees.

**Other Benefits:** Other employee benefit programs are available, including deferred compensation with partial matching and a flexible spending program for medical expenses.

## HOW TO APPLY

For first consideration, apply by **APRIL 2** at:

**WBCP JOB BOARD**



### SAVE THE DATES.

Round one virtual interviews will take place on **APRIL 22**. Finalists will move forward to round two in-person interviews on **MAY 8**. *Selected candidates must be available for both dates.*

### QUESTIONS?

Please contact your recruiter, **Levi Kuhlman**, with any inquiries:

**866.929.WBCP (9227)**  
toll free

**541.664.0376** direct  
**levi@wbcpin.com**