



# **San Diego County Water Authority** And Its 24 Member Agencies

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## **News Release**

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### **Neena Kuzmich Named Director of Engineering**

*Civil engineering professional is first woman to lead the department*

July 12, 2023 – Neena Kuzmich has been appointed director of engineering for the San Diego County Water Authority – the first woman to lead the Engineering Department since the agency’s formation in 1944. Kuzmich brings more than 25 years of experience as a civil engineer to fill the position vacated by the retirement of Gary Bousquet.

The Water Authority is a regional wholesale water agency that provides about 80% of the water used in San Diego County, sustaining a \$268 billion economy and quality of life for 3.3 million residents.

Kuzmich joined the Water Authority in 2013 and has 26 years of experience in design, construction, and project management. Prior to her appointment as director, she served as deputy director of engineering. Kuzmich is responsible for overseeing and managing the design and construction of Capital Improvement Program projects, and the implementation of the Water Authority’s energy management policy. She is currently leading efforts to advance the proposed San Vicente Energy Storage Facility.

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**“The Engineering Department will remain in good hands. Neena Kuzmich’s dedication to innovation and excellence will continue to enhance the San Diego region’s natural resources for decades to come.”**

-- Dan Denham, Acting General  
Manager, San Diego County Water  
Authority

Kuzmich has a bachelor’s degree in environmental engineering from Syracuse University and a master’s in business administration from University of Phoenix. She is a registered professional engineer in the State of California.

“Gary Bousquet’s expertise and dedication made a profound impact on the San Diego region, which benefits from the projects that he helped develop and lead over the past three decades,” said Dan Denham, acting general manager of the Water Authority. “Thankfully, the Engineering Department will remain in good hands. Neena Kuzmich’s dedication to innovation and excellence will help to sustain the San Diego region for decades to come.”

The Water Authority’s Engineering Department is responsible for the design and construction of regional water facilities in the capital improvement and asset management programs; overseeing energy related projects; managing real-estate interests; patrolling and managing 168 miles of right-of-way property; and providing survey services.

During his 24 years at the Water Authority, Bousquet managed design and construction of Capital Improvement Program projects including the San Vicente Tunnel, San Vicente Pump Station, and the Lake Hodges Hydroelectric Facility. For the past several years, Bousquet and Kuzmich have led the Water Authority’s efforts to develop a major renewable energy project proposed jointly with the City of San Diego. The potential San Vicente Energy Storage Facility received \$18 million from the state in 2021, to advance the project through initial design, environmental reviews, and the federal licensing process.

The department has won several awards in recent years, including the world’s top civil engineering honor for its Emergency and Carryover Storage Project in 2017 from the American Society of Civil Engineers. More recently, the agency received four awards from the American Public Works Association and American Society of Civil Engineers for construction projects that exemplified outstanding skill, dedication, and collaboration.

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*The San Diego County Water Authority sustains a \$268 billion regional economy and the quality of life for 3.3 million residents through a multi-decade water supply diversification plan, major infrastructure investments and forward-thinking policies that promote fiscal and environmental responsibility. A public agency created in 1944, the Water Authority delivers wholesale water supplies to 24 retail water providers, including cities, special districts and a military base.*

