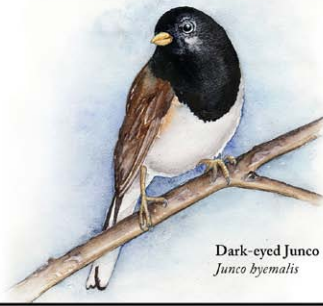


MONTEREY VISTA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

SUMMER 2023 NEWSLETTER



Dark-eyed Junco
Junco hyemalis

Our Shifting Schools within Monterey Vista

Due to dwindling numbers of students and thus funds, the Monterey Peninsula Unified School District (MPUSD) has decided to close the original Monte Vista Elementary School and transform the larger old Colton Middle School to a TK-8 school. To confuse us long-time residents, the original Colton campus on Walter Colton Drive

You are invited to a
Public Outreach Meeting on the MHS Field Improvement Project
Thursday, September 7th, 2023, 5:30-7pm at MHS
Please email your questions and comments to NSC.Monterey@gmail.com.

will be renamed Monte Vista School while further use of the old Monte Vista campus on Soledad Drive is under discussion.

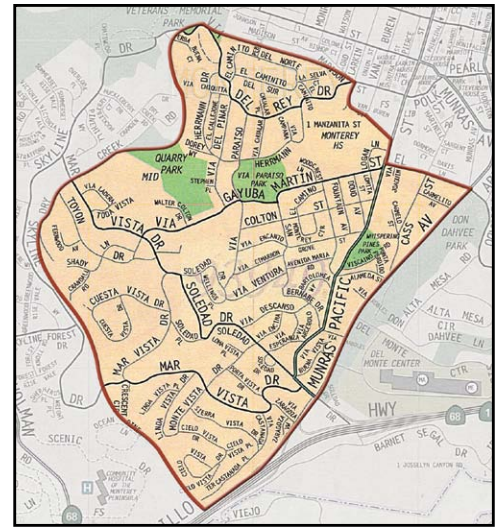
The new Monte Vista School (on Walter Colton Drive) housed grades 1 to 7 for the 2022-23 school year, and has now added TK, K and 8th grade to become a full TK-8 school. Thus, if you walked past the school this summer, you'll have seen plenty of construction activity. Amanda Whitmire (Board Trustee) writes:

Facilities work continues at the new Monte Vista TK-8 campus (formerly Colton MS). Last summer, every classroom was updated with new paint, window coverings, lights and cabinetry, restrooms were remodeled, the campus exterior walls were painted, and a new playground structure was installed for "big kids." Currently, the former locker room is being converted into a makerspace classroom and an art classroom, and the K-wing buildings are being completely renovated to accommodate 5 new TK and kindergarten classrooms. We hope that neighbors will join us for a tour of the modernized site sometime this fall.

The old Monte Vista Elementary School (on Soledad Drive) was home
Continued on next page

WHAT'S INSIDE:

- Our Shifting Schools - Page 1
- To 5G or Not 5G - Page 1
- NCIP Update - Page 3
- Monterey City Codes to Know - Page 4
- Localize Your Energy - Page 6
- Firewise Communities - Page 12
- Are You Prepared for Fire Season? - Page 14
- Say NO to Higher Water Bills Now - Page 15
- Weed Heaven Around Town - Page 16
- Growing Garden Herbs - Page 17
- Join the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) - Page 19



The Monterey Vista Neighborhood Association (MVNA) is one of fifteen City of Monterey neighborhood associations that represent the residents of Monterey.

Our goal is to preserve and improve the quality and character of our neighborhood areas.

Our services include review and comment on selected city programs, proposed ordinances, and building designs. We provide assistance to members in resolving neighborhood concerns.

The Monterey Vista Neighborhood Association invites you to the 2023

MVNA Annual Picnic/BBQ

Saturday, September 16 Noon-2pm Veteran's Memorial Park
(Upper picnic area below the corner of Veterans Drive and Skyline Drive)



MENU:

Hors d'oeuvres Salads Grilled Tri-tip
Veggie Burgers BBQ Chicken Scalloped Potatoes
Garlic Bread Beverages & Desserts

\$10/plate \$5 for kids 5-12

Meet your neighbors! • Learn neighborhood news and elect Association officers

To 5G, or Not to 5G: that IS the question.

by Jeannie Ferrara, Realtor and MVNA Board of Directors

There is an epic battle going on between the giant telecom corporations against cities and states across our nation, as well as 30+ countries around the world, opposed to the installation of 5G cell towers and technology. Monterey Vista Neighborhood Association (MVNA) won a

Our Shifting Schools within Monterey Vista *Continued from previous page*

to kindergarten and 8th grade for 2022-23 and is now closed as those classes moved up the hill. But what will happen to the site? Again, Amanda writes:

MPUSD is working toward opening two preschool classrooms at the old Monte Vista Elementary site this fall. There will be one state-subsidized classroom and one fee-based classroom. Class sizes will not exceed 24, and there will be 3 staff in each classroom (Lead and Associate Teachers, and an Early Learning Assistant). Teachers will be using the Creative Curriculum, which is also used in our Transitional Kindergarten (TK) classrooms and aligns with curricula used up through 3rd grade. To qualify for the state-funded classroom, a family of 4 must have an annual family income of \$112,105 or less. We expect demand to exceed capacity and hope to expand our preschool program at this site in the future. MPUSD also offers [preschool programs](#) at the Marina and Seaside Child Development Centers.

Meanwhile, **Monterey High School** has been busy updating facilities and is worth seeing. Residents are invited to *MHS Back-to-School Night* on Thursday, Aug 31st, 5:30 to 7pm. The recent court case has required some revisions to the EIR for the new sports stadium project as residents are concerned about parking, safety and noise issues, but progress is slowly moving forward.

A group of residents known as the **Neighborhood and School Collaborative (NSC)** is working with the School Board to improve communications and avoid further legal challenges and valuable school funding going to attorneys. The NSC believes that students are best served by residents working together with our schools and district leadership, as in "it takes a village." One of NSC's earlier successes was to replace the older outward facing night lights at MHS with more modern down-facing LED lighting with motion sensors, making it much more pleasant to surrounding neighbors.

The NSC has organized a *Public Outreach Meeting* with high school and district leadership regarding the **High School Field Improvement Project** for:

**Thursday, September 7th, 5:30-7pm
at Monterey High School (see box on page 1)**

You can see [the NSC Mission Statement here](#). Please email NSC.Monterey@gmail.com with any questions, comments and ideas for bringing the community and schools together in support of all our students. We hope to organize another meeting to address the potential new bond for teacher housing.

To better keep up with what is happening with the schools in our neighborhood, MVNA has updated our website to include a [new tab with all school-related information](#).



Photo: @montevistat8mpusd on Instagram

To comply with state guidelines to prevent the spread of Covid our monthly Monterey Vista Neighborhood Association board meetings are held virtually, usually the first Monday of each month on an online conference application from 6:00 to 8:00pm. You are welcome to attend any of these virtual Board meetings, or to suggest agenda items to share your concerns. Please contact a board member for more information.

Web: montereyvistaneighborhood.org

Email: mvneighborhood@gmail.com

MVNA Officers & Directors	
Jean Rasch (President & NCIP Rep)	625-3200
Charles Martin (Treasurer)	373-0649
Hans Jannasch (Membership, NCIP alt)	373-0872
Susan Nine (Past President)	333-6882
Pat Venza (Vice President)	375-8416
Marta Kraftzeck (Secretary)	375-2146
Ray Meyers (Undergrounding Committee Chair)	905-5327
Nickie Bach	747-1613
Jeannie Ferrara	236-1111
Bruce Zanetta	647-1997
John Sovereign	370-2586

Neighborhood & Community Improvement Program (NCIP) Update

by Hans Jannasch (NCIP Alternate)

The good news is that [NCIP](#) was funded again and in a record amount. As you probably know, the City Council cancelled the NCIP program for 2020-21 and 2021-22 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting financial hit on the City. Existing projects that had been funded in past years and not deemed critical or already begun, were “deappropriated,” thus returning over \$10M to the general fund. The Council voted to fund NCIP for 2022-23 as the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) recuperated. This year, 2023-24, the TOT tax, of which NCIP received 16%, is at a record levels, and received almost \$6M for projects.



Due to legal reasons all “deappropriated” projects were considered the same as new projects, and thus NCIP voted on almost 100 projects this year. The list of projects within Monterey Vista as well as others of direct interest are posted on our MVNA Webpage. You can view all projects submitted here. MVNA sent out a survey to determine how folks felt about these projects and how we should prioritize them for voting night. Tom Harty and his colleagues worked hard to estimate costs and on June 1st NCIP voted on all projects. This resulted in a priority list available here. Because of cost uncertainties, projects on our MVNA web page that fell within the first \$4.5M are labeled “NCIP approved”, and projects that fell within \$6M limit are labeled “NCIP possibly approved.”

Projects funded within Monterey Vista are the Via Paraiso Basketball Court, the San Bernabe Road and Walkway design and the Undergrounding Conduit Installation Pilot Project. Also approved were the Community-wide Forest Management fund for \$750k, the most difficult phase of the Veterans Park Bike Path and the Design of a Pickleball Complex at Ryan Ranch. Note that the City Council still has final approval of these projects scheduled for Sept 29th.



*Maria Merzon Eldridge returns the ball during a game at Via Paraiso Park
Photo: Daniel Dreifuss, Monterey County Weekly*

As good as all this sounds, the “bad news” is that the current staffing shortage has reduced the City Engineering Department to a skeleton crew. Although the situation is slowly improving, the result is that many of the projects need to be farmed out, and thus are merely “managed” by the City. This is also why many of the projects have become so expensive, and why it will take time to get many of them completed.

Overall, NCIP is still a unique program that is recovering after taking a big hit and being on life-support throughout the pandemic. One recent success was the new Pickleball courts at Via Paraiso Park, that were completed two weeks after being funded! Let us know if you come up with any great ideas for new projects by submitting [a Project Nomination form](#). The next round is due in February.

MONTEREY CITY CODES TO KNOW or HOW TO BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR WHILE YOU CARE FOR THE WORLD

- JEAN RASCH -

Our city's codes are designed to protect the beauty and quality of our neighborhoods by helping us envision and agree on how we want our community to look, and how to maintain its appealing character. Unless exemptions are granted after required City committee or City Council reviews, Monterey's City Codes are meant to be followed by all of us. If you don't comply with the following codes, you run the risk of being cited and fined, and, if applicable, any noncompliant work performed may have to be reversed.

PRESERVATION OF TREES AND SHRUBS (Monterey City Code, Chapter 37)

I have often heard Monterey described as "Tree City" or "Tree City, USA." Many folks new to the area are surprised by the intensity and commitment with which Monterey residents and City staff value and protect our trees. As we fight climate change and understand more and more about the carbon-reducing attributes of trees, especially mature, large trees, we can better understand our dependence on/need for a healthy tree canopy. Trees literally are life - they take in carbon dioxide and release oxygen. Please join us in understanding tree protection and help us protect the assets provided by our beautiful trees.

Below are some pertinent City codes:

§37-1. Purpose and Goals of the Ordinance.

"Monterey's image is that of a small-scale residential community beside the bay, framed by a forested hill backdrop and drawing its charm from a rich historical background, certain commercial enterprises, and natural scenic beauty. Trees within the City significantly contribute to this image. The Preservation of Trees and Shrubs Ordinance is intended to assure preservation of trees and replacement of trees when removal is unavoidable."

§37-2. K. "Protected Tree" shall mean:

- a) Trees located on a vacant private parcel that are more than two inches (2") in diameter when measured at a point four feet six inches (4'6") above the tree's natural grade; and
- b) Trees located on a private, developed parcel that are more than six inches (6") when measured at a point four feet six inches (4'6") above the tree's natural grade."

§37-8. Removal or damaging trees on private property; permit required.

"No person shall remove, damage or relocate, or cause to be removed, damaged or relocated, any tree on any private property within the City unless the City Forester has issued a permit, or unless exempt as set forth below. Normal pruning or trimming of trees on private property is expressly permitted. Normal pruning for health and maintenance will generally conform to Tree Pruning Guidelines established by the International Society of Arboriculture. "Excessive pruning" (as defined in §37-2.G) without prior approval is a violation of permit requirements and is prohibited. Trees that die or are irreparably damaged as a result of "excessive pruning" shall require replacement in addition to any other penalty imposed under these regulations. The use of certified Arborists is encouraged to avoid excessive pruning damage."

§37-9. Exemptions.

"No permit is required to remove, damage, or relocate a tree under the following circumstances:

- A. Trees not defined as a "protected tree" in §37-1 of the City Code.
- B. Trees damaged by thunderstorms, windstorms, floods, earthquakes, fires, or other natural disasters or determined to be dangerous by a peace officer, fireman, forester, or a code enforcement officer in their official capacity. The Forester shall be promptly notified of the emergency and action taken.
- C. When removal is determined necessary by fire department personnel actively engaged in fighting a fire.
- D. Trees located in above-ground containers."

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MONTEREY CITY CODES TO KNOW *Continued from previous page*

FENCES AND WALLS

(Monterey City Code, Chapter 38)
R-1 Residential Single-Family District

Per Chapter 38's zoning ordinance provisions (Part 2, Article 5, §38-23), for the R-1 areas of Monterey Vista, front yard fences and walls are required to be a minimum of 15' from the property line. For these 15' front yard setbacks, the maximum permissible height of a fence is 4 feet. For walls and fences beyond 15' from the property line, the maximum height is 6 feet.

Preventing fences greater than 4' high opens up our front yards, creates and maintains an expansive, bucolic feel to the neighborhood, and prevents the boxed-in look and closed-off feel of yards with high fences.

GARBAGE SORTING

(Monterey City Code, Chapter 14)
Garbage and Refuse

With the goal of reducing food waste in California's landfills by 75%, California Senate Bill 1382 was signed into law in 2016, and went into effect in 2022. This is the "composting law" that, in order to keep methane producing/emitting kitchen scraps (AKA food waste) out of our landfills, requires municipalities to collect that food waste from homes and business.

By now, we are all hopefully used to disposing of our food waste in the green waste bin instead of the brown bin.

Listed below is our City's primary applicable code:

§14-2. Service requirements for single-family premises....

1.b.i. "Place . . . separated organic materials, including food waste, in the organic materials container; source separated recyclable materials in the recyclable materials container; and solid waste in the solid waste container."

CANINE CLEANUP

(Monterey City Code, Chapter 14) Waste Disposal

Most dog owners are responsible and are good about cleaning up after their pet(s). However, it might come as a surprise to learn that dog poop should not be placed in our green bins. Even a healthy dog's fecal matter can contain parasites (worms) and dangerous pathogens such as bacteria (e.g., Salmonella, E. coli). Instead, the bag and its contents should go in the brown garbage bin.

Some of you may have seen discussions on *Nextdoor* about common courtesy and the proper etiquette for disposing dog waste into someone else's container. The City of Monterey has a code which addresses and should resolve

the issue - - Collections regulation §14-3.1 states, "No person shall place any waste into a collection container without permission of the owner or tenant of the premises on which the container sits."

Contrary to what some people might say, that stinky dog poop is not a "good fertilizer." Simply leaving it on the ground is not a suitable alternative. When the rains come, that dog waste will disintegrate and get washed down our storm drains - - and those drains empty directly into Monterey Bay. That can be detrimental to our ocean creatures because, according to the EPA, dog waste contains lots of nitrogen and phosphorus which can trigger excessive algae growth and, as algae decays, it uses up oxygen needed by fish and other sea life.

When it comes to disposing of dog poop, the EPA recom-



mends the better option of taking everything back home, flushing the droppings down the toilet, and then properly trashing the bag.

As to plastic bags, we all recognize they're a major contributor to the Earth's huge plastic trash problem. As an alternative to reusing plastic bags, you might want to consider compostable bags made from cornstarch. They're advertised as being durable enough so they won't leak or tear, but environmentally friendly enough so that they break down in a "properly managed" home composting system within 6-12 months.

So, in a nutshell, let's all do our part to: keep Monterey's established trees alive, adhere to the 4-foot limit for front yard fences, help reduce food waste in our landfills by putting our kitchen scraps in our green bins, and ask our neighbors for permission before dumping animal waste in their brown bin. Your neighbors will appreciate you and your contributions to a more beautiful and sustainable world.

YOUR ENERGY

THE FIRST IN THE SERIES, "THE PAST AND FUTURE OF ENERGY"

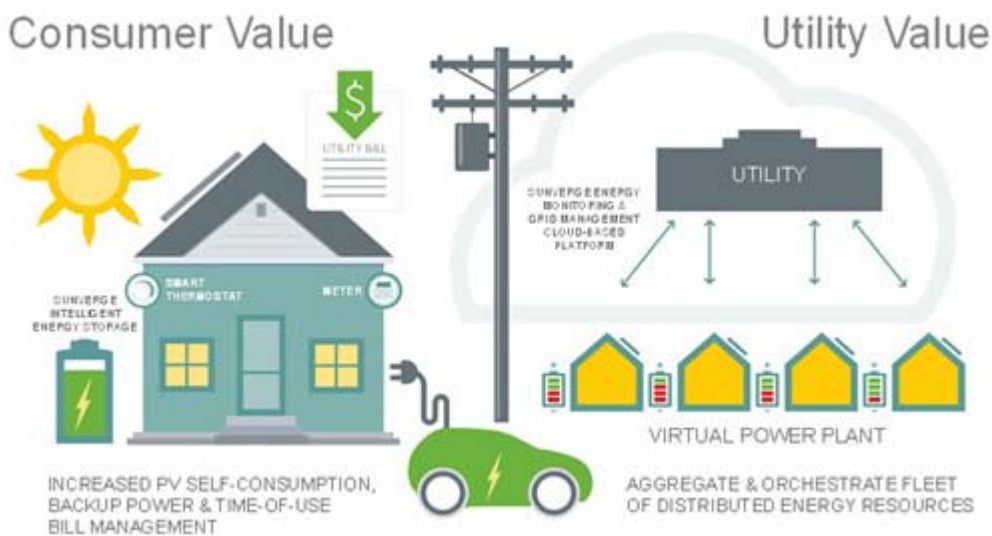
PART ONE - "ELECTRIFY, LOCALIZE AND THE WIZARD BEHIND IT"

-BY RAY MEYERS AND BRUCE ZANETTA -

Record-breaking heat waves, storms that create long-term power outages, devastating fires - - It's here! Climate change is here with a vengeance. Our current principal energy system (pun inserted) is built on an old model of how we get our energy. That model is proving to be increasingly unreliable and vulnerable to the new world of extreme weather. Furthermore, it is failing to address adequately the root cause of climate change, i.e., net greenhouse gases. If that were not enough, the monopolies that own and operate aging, neglected, old world energy systems are continually increasing the costs consumers have to pay.

Consequently, the Monterey Vista Neighborhood Association (MVNA) Newsletter, will be running a series of articles regarding the history and future of energy and energy resources. In this first article, we will discuss how we got to where we are today, and where we can go from here.

For more than six years, Monterey Undergrounding (www.montereyundergrounding.net), with representatives from four neighborhood associations, has been studying the critical importance of the citywide undergrounding of overhead utilities. Recently, the committee expanded its purview to include studying the production side of our energy.



One of the committee's goals is to underground the City's distribution utilities, and it feels the answer to improving energy production also lies within the City. Simply put, if we move energy production to within our local community, and situate it as close to the point-of-use as possible, we can better meet the goals of clean, safe, and reliable energy.

Adding **localized energy resources** to the **undergrounding**

of our utilities completes the energy picture. This overall view offers the promise of solving the broad scope of energy issues that have become an ever-increasing concern. Undergrounding, when coupled with local energy resources, has the potential to improve aesthetics, provide greater safety and resiliency, reduce our carbon footprint, be independent from rate fluctuations, and much more.

ELECTRIFY AND LOCALIZE

Here is a bold, yet demonstratively true statement: Move energy resources (generation and storage) near to, or at the point-of-use (i.e., you and your electric needs), and many of the energy problems we are facing today, and will face tomorrow, will virtually go away.

The new model of how we get our energy is about going electric, going local, and being sustainable. This is the opposite of continuing to rely on the old fossil fuel centralized power plants, and then remaining fully dependent on an enormous, antiquated, flawed, and vulnerable power grid.

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YOUR ENERGY - PART ONE *Continued from previous page*

The old model of how we get our energy is known as a **macrogrid** - - It is where consumers are connected to a central power source (e.g., Moss Landing power plant) by a long-distance distribution grid. With a macrogrid, during a power outage, everyone who is connected to the power source is then simultaneously cut off from that power source.

The new models are known as **microgrids** and **nanogrids**.

A **microgrid** puts the energy resources (generation and/or storage) within a small community, such as a neighborhood or business park. In a neighborhood, it is a small-scale grid often connecting a group of homes. Microgrids can be connected to a larger macrogrid, but during a power outage, microgrid users would be able to use local energy resources, and they would still have electricity. This ability to operate independently of a macrogrid is called “islanding.”

A **nanogrid** is the ultimate microgrid, in that it puts the local energy resource(s) at the point-of-use. Thus, the energy generation and storage are located at the house, business, or vehicle. Yes, you read that correctly - - a vehicle is a nanogrid on wheels. (More about that in a future MVNA newsletter article.) A nanogrid also has the ability to be either connected to, or disconnected from, the grid outside.

The new models are built on three principles: **electrification** (replace carbon-based fuel with electricity), **localization** (energy made at, or near your home), and **sustainability** (energy that is renewable and clean).

LOCALIZED ENERGY RESOURCES ARE NOT NEW

Do those principles sound familiar? The new models are really not all that new, and actually date back to the beginning of our electrification history. The “Wizard of Menlo Park,” Thomas Alva Edison, essentially invented what we today call the **microgrid**. For him, it was the easiest way to power all the light bulbs in New York City that ushered in the beginning of the electric epoch.

Have you ever been to New York City and wondered what that steam rising up from the street was all about and/or why do some older locals call it Edison’s ghost? The answer is that it’s a working remnant of Edison’s second localized energy invention.

Because Edison’s electrical generation plant was located close to the users of that electricity, he could offer consumers heat, in addition to electricity. Edison recognized that he could generate steam from the heat left over from electricity production.

That steam could then be piped to radiators throughout his microgrid-supplied communities. People working and living within Edison’s microgrid were able to receive both light and heat on cold winter nights. It was a case of “two for the price of one.” The Wizard of Menlo Park recognized the wonders of localized energy resources, and put them to full use. Today, we call this “combined heat and power,” or “CHP.”



After New York City became electrified in 1882, some people wanted their own personal power system, so

Continued on next page

YOUR ENERGY - PART ONE *Continued from previous page*

Edison built single systems for homeowners and businesses. Today we call those ultimate, energy production at point-of-use systems, nanogrids. Edison could be credited with offering the first off-grid energy independence to his customers. PG&E take notice.

Edison's original microgrid would eventually see all of its utility lines buried beneath the streets of New York City. But it was the severe blizzard of 1888 that dumped 40 inches of snow in 36 hours, killing 200 people, that motivated New York City to take the additional significant step of placing all of its telephone, telegraph, and power lines underground. Edison figured out how to accomplish that.

Edison gave us microgrids, nanogrids, combined heat and power, and undergrounding, and if you haven't already heard, he also gave us safe low voltage DC (direct current). Those really were the good old days. But good things don't last.

Eventually, most of the microgrids from Edison's era were swallowed up; they were replaced, piecemeal, by massive **macrogrids** extending across the continent. How and why did a good thing get virtually eliminated? Three primary reasons: hydroelectric power, the power inverter and transformer (technology that changes voltage levels), and the electromagnetic induction motor.



Hydroelectric power (a form of renewable energy that uses the force of moving water to generate electricity) was quickly recognized as an economical way to generate electricity. But such water sources were generally a long distance from cities. Edison's DC could not travel long distances, not because DC by its nature was incapable of doing so, but because there was no satisfactory way to step-up and step-down the voltages, which was critical. (High voltage was needed for electricity to travel long distances, and low voltage was needed for the electricity at the starting point, and then back again at the point of delivery.) Edison's local DC grids (microgrids) did not have the high voltages that were needed to travel large distances because, at that time, there was no good way to step up, or step down DC.

That is where the AC (alternating current) power inverter/transformer came in. Westinghouse purchased the rights to the first power inverter. That new electromagnetic technology had no moving parts and would become a game changer. The final nail in the coffin of Edison's microgrid was Nikola Tesla's 1888 invention of the AC induction motor which would be critical in the final transition to AC.

Westinghouse Electric was founded in 1886, and has contributed significantly to our electric infrastructure. Westinghouse was a rival to Edison's company, and in 1892, Edison merged with Westinghouse's

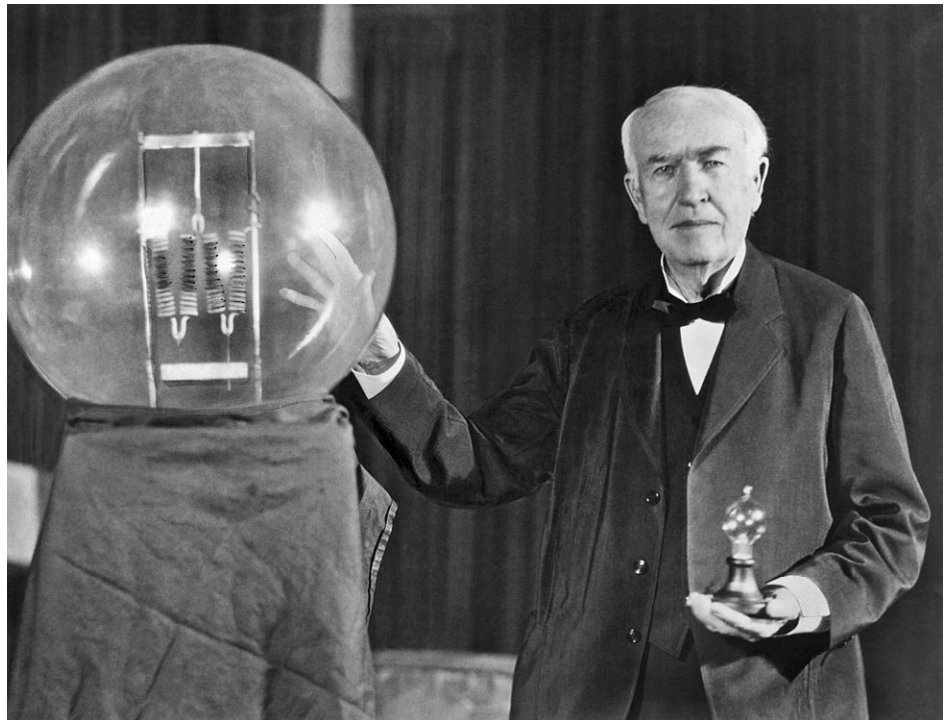
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YOUR ENERGY - PART ONE *Continued from previous page*

principal AC competitor, the Thomson-Houston Electric Company. This, in turn, created the General Electric Company.

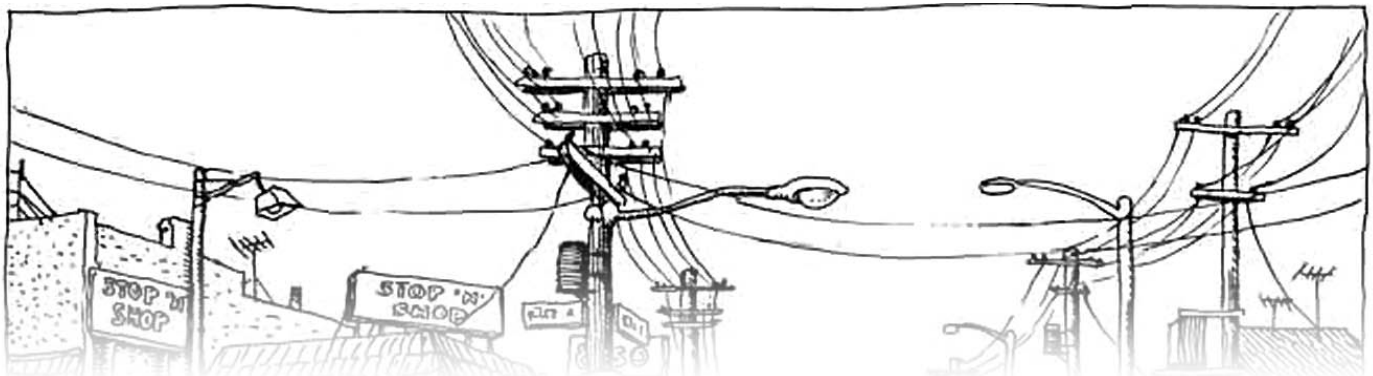
The world didn't look back until recently. Today, you can imagine Edison's ghost saying "You folks today are crazy. All of your devices can run on DC. Safe DC. AC just adds inefficiency, extra cost and unnecessary danger."

Nearly all of today's energy-consuming devices are now dependent on low voltage DC solid-state semiconductors that are software controlled. We now have, and use, DC solid-state converters for stepping voltage up and/or down. Due primarily to efficiency, safety, cost, and durability, a home or business today would no doubt be best served by an Edison DC nanogrid.



Edison might not be too happy his "greatest invention," the incandescent lightbulb, is now virtually gone. However, he would likely recognize and understand today's LED light bulb as a return to his safe, efficient, low voltage DC.

In Part Two of our series, "The Past and Future of Energy," we will discuss the formation of monopolies created in order to get large grids built rapidly across the US. This movement left us with monopolies, including today's PG&E - - an infamous and dominating corporation that we must now live with each and every day - - and the embodiment of utility companies that consistently place profits over the needs of its customers and the environment.



To 5G, or Not to 5G

Continued from page 1

small battle in Monterey City Hall recently and we want you to know about it.



Peter Venieris poses with his daughter Grace, 3, in front of a 5G tower recently installed in front of their La Jolla home.

Andrew Campanelli, the premier lawyer fighting these battles across the US, says that a city's wireless ordinance is the best protection to deny this untested 5G technology. In February 2023, the Monterey City Council preliminarily voted 4-to-1 to pass a weak wireless ordinance, recommended by the city staff, that would allow cell towers to be installed every 250 feet apart with no setbacks from our homes. This could result in countless cell towers spewing untested levels of electromagnetic microwave radiation 24/7, putting residents, animals and the environment generally at risk. The widespread proliferation of these ugly 5G cell towers will forever compromise the character, safety and beauty of our historic city. When I spoke to 200 residents gathering signatures, not a single person knew about the wireless ordinance or the City Council vote and 95% were eager to sign the petition.

Monterey Vista Neighborhood Association (MVNA)

protected residents by collecting 450+ signatures on a petition opposing cell towers in residential neighborhoods and delivered the petitions to the City Council. This and the public comment against, helped flip the Council vote to 5-to-0 in favor of a stronger ordinance prohibiting cell towers in R-1 zoned neighborhoods, including a «100 foot setback from property lines requirement that had been recommended for safety by the planning commission in all R-1 residential districts and from schools». Unfortunately schools, R-2, R-3, commercial, mixed use and industrial zones were not included, so the 5G cell towers will be permitted in those zones.

As a real estate agent, it's my fiduciary duty to protect the people I represent. The National Association of Realtors found that "79% of 1,000 respondents surveyed said that under no circumstances would they ever purchase or rent a property within a few blocks of a cell tower." Those who would, "expected to pay far less for properties near a wireless facility." 57% had previously experienced cognitive effects from radiation emitted by a cell phone, wireless router, portable phone, utility smart meter, neighborhood antenna or cell tower. 63% of respondents had previously experienced physical effects from these devices or neighborhood towers and antennas." The majority of respondents provided contact information indicating they would like to receive the results of this survey or news related to the possible connection between neighborhood cell towers and antennas and real estate decisions. "Research also shows that property values can decrease up to 20% depending on how close a cell tower is from property lines." These proposed 5G cell towers threaten the value of our homes and must be kept out of our residential neighborhoods permanently.

Giant telecom corporations are now lobbying two laws through the California legislature. AB 965 will allow them to overload cities with 50 cell tower installation applications all at once, thereby overpowering local governments who don't have the Human Resources to process them. If AB 965 passes into law, applications not processed within the 60 day «shot clock period» will automatically be approved without a permit. If AB 1065 passes into law, all the funds collected on our phone bills over the past 20+ years for fiber-optic cable to our homes, will be redirected to

To 5G, or Not to 5G *Continued from previous page*

funding 5G wireless technology instead. Wireless broadband is not cyber secure, unreliable in bad weather, a proven fire hazard, untested for EMF safety, uses much more energy, and cannot deliver the speeds required for next generation programs and services. Only fiber-optic cable direct to homes and businesses delivers safe, secure, speed-of-light internet connections that will meet those needs with no threat to cyber security.

The US, UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, India, Australia, New Zealand and Brazil have banned Chinese-made 5G technology because of national security concerns. This means that their 5G technology on cell towers could make us vulnerable to cyber attacks, surveillance, collecting our data, stealing intellectual property, among other illegal privacy offenses.

The FCC is a captured agency whose chairman and commissioners are typically former employees and lobbyists of the trillion dollar telecom industry. The FCC has refused to update their safety standards since 1996. In August 2021, the FCC was ordered to update their safety standards in the federal case Environmental Health Trust, et. al. v FCC supported by over 11,000 scientific studies. Yet the wireless industry is proceeding as if this ruling never took place. The world's largest insurance companies have responded by excluding any liability coverage for claims "directly or indirectly arising out of, resulting from or contributed to by electromagnetic fields, electromagnetic radiation, electromagnetism, radio waves or noise." Lloyds of London and Swiss Reinsurance Company have put wireless radiation in the highest risk category, next to smoking and asbestos.

For more information, click the links below for articles in the news and organizations that promote safe, responsible technology:

<https://www.newyorker.com/news/annals-of-communications/the-terrifying-potential-of-the-5g-network>

<https://scientists4wiredtech.com › cell-tower-installation...>

<https://ehtrust.org/cell-phone-towers-lower-property-values-documentation-research/>

<https://sooke.civicweb.net;>

<https://ourweb.tech/fires-and-collapses/>

<https://5GFreeCalifornia.org>; <http://www.Americans4RT.org/california>;

<http://www.mdsafetech.com>; <http://www.bioinitiative.org>

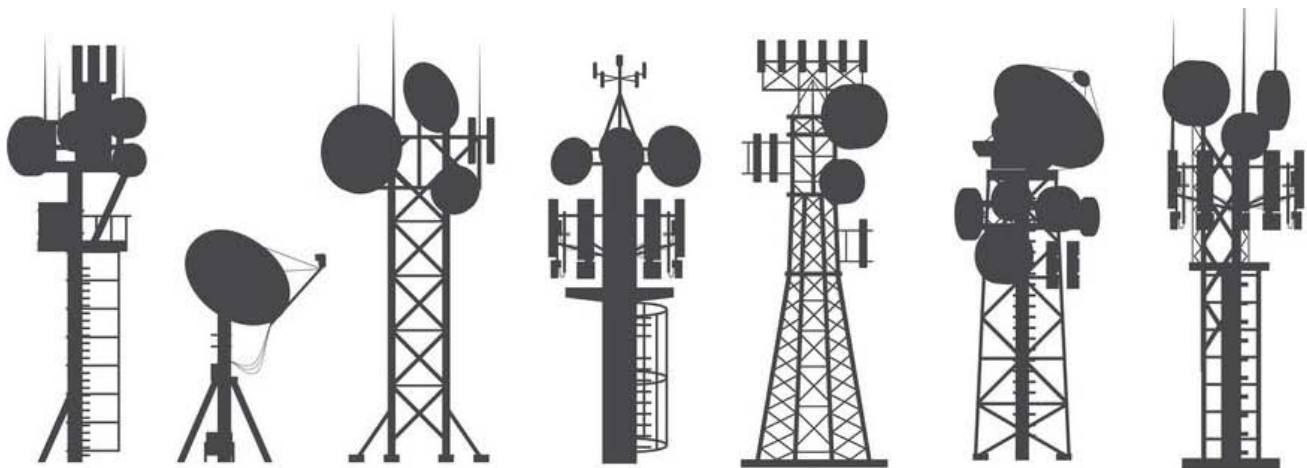
<https://www.lajollalight.com/news/story/2019-09-04/5gs-a-hard-cell-residents-sour-on-towers-going-up-across-la-jolla>

<https://www.cbs17.com/news/national-news/parents-question-cell-tower-radiation-after-multiple-kids-at-same-school-get-cancer/>

[January 23, 2023 Letter from Congressman Nadler on 5G New York Cell Towers](#)

<https://ehtrust.org/5g-in-new-york/>

<https://www.cellphonetaskforce.org/5g-from-blankets-to-bullets/>



All About Firewise USA® Communities *by Jeanne Clark*

(For additional information, please contact jeannieferrara@gmail.com)

Per the readyforwildfire.org website, the “Firewise USA® recognition program is administered by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and provides a collaborative framework to help neighbors in a geographic area get organized, find direction, and take action to increase the ignition resistance of their homes and community and to reduce wildfire risks at the local level.”



FIREWISE USA® Residents reducing wildfire risks

My husband and I served on the Firewise USA® Committee that formed in our neighborhood in Nevada City and became certified in Nevada County. We were just a handful of communities then, and there are now more than 70 certified Firewise USA® communities in Nevada County, with more becoming certified. The communities then formed an umbrella organization to provide county level coordination and advocacy, the Nevada County Firewise Coalition.

WHY be concerned about fire here in Monterey?

- A large portion of MVNA is located in CAL FIRE’s (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection) “Very High” Fire Severity Area -- the highest risk classification. (<https://egis.fire.ca.gov/FHSZ/>)
- Fire risk is becoming a year-round concern.
- It’s a threat to your life, loved ones, and your property, so you need to know how to prepare and to be prepared.
- Local fire can result in loss of utilities, making it difficult to remain in your home even if fire is elsewhere, especially if you are not prepared.
- Insurance costs are dramatically increasing, as are policy cancellations.

Benefits of becoming a Firewise USA® community

- Addresses our local area’s classification as a very high fire severity area, as defined by CAL FIRE’S maps for “High Fire” Severity Zones (<https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/divisions/community-wildfire-preparedness-and-mitigation/wild-land-hazards-building-codes/fire-hazard-severity-zones-maps/>)

This is the most severe classification. Right now, risk is determined by fuels, slope and fire weather (high temps, low humidity, strong winds), but NOT your particular property or what you have done to improve it.

- Be proactive. Get ahead of fire dangers. Receive advice regarding how to harden your landscape, use Firewise plants, be prepared for emergencies, and know evacuation routes.
- Get insurance discounts from about 20 insurers and avoid cancellations, such as those that have occurred in Sky-line Forest, parts of Carmel, and Carmel Valley.
- Use MVNA as one central vetted place for residents to get reliable information and materials pertaining to fire prevention, protection, etc.
- Identify and tackle neighborhood problem areas together, such as overgrown vegetation in parks, on hillsides, vacant lots, in an organized fashion and with preplanning, etc.
- Receive landscape level evaluation by fire department and other fire professionals regarding problems and opportunities in our MVNA area.
- There are excellent state and local resources, from brochures to plant lists, etc., that are ready to be used right now.
- If fire safety improvements need to be made, learn about County, State or Federal grants/funds that are available from the government for bigger projects, or to assist those in need.
- Leverage our efforts with other Firewise USA® communities that share common interests, such as undergrounding utilities, or cleaning up Firewise USA® communities’ overlapping areas.

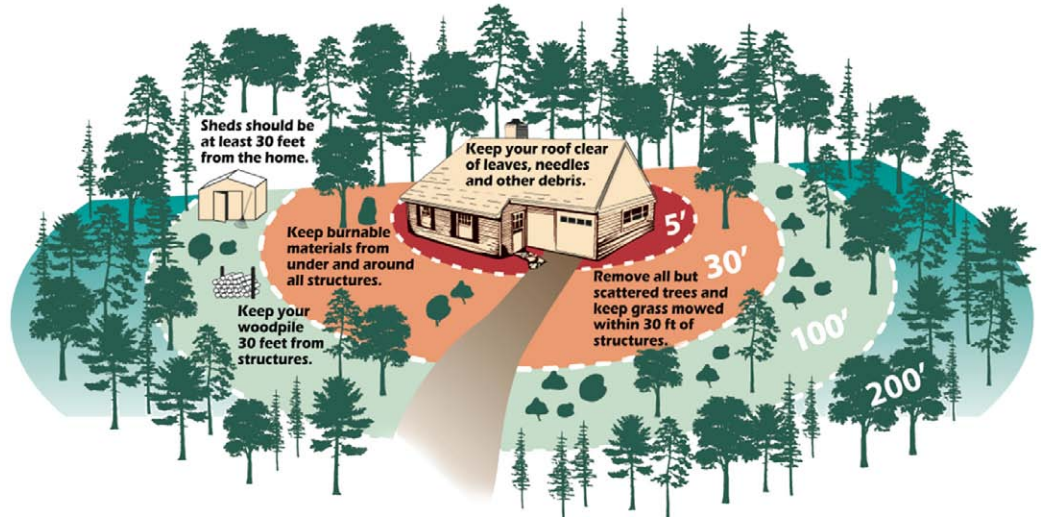
Who are the players?

Your neighborhood association, City and County fire departments, CAL FIRE, local Foresters, representatives of other pertinent government entities, FireSafe Council (local and national), and Firewise USA® Communities (local and national).

Firewise USA Communities *Continued from previous page*

What is a Firewise USA® Community and what does it do?

- Organize at a neighborhood level, usually using existing neighborhood associations
- Receive information about fire and how to prepare/prevent it
- Identify needs and develop an annually updated framework for action based on your neighborhood's needs and ideas
- Work with local fire professionals to develop a plan for certification
- Receive signage and other publicity upon certification
- Receive access to funding and assistance, often awarded with preference to Firewise communities
- Receive insurance discounts from a growing number of California carriers (our personal discount was \$240/year)
- Use fire prevention work as an additional form of neighborhood building, to leverage related projects (such as undergrounding power lines and proactive PG&E tree removal) and for fire readiness
- Get peace of mind for being READY. We had a nearby fire. Our neighbors, just one mile away, were evacuated. We were ready when we received our evacuation warning, and we were able to be out of our home in about 15 minutes.



How to become a Firewise USA® Community

- Form a board/committee of residents or other stakeholders
- Create an account, submit an application to your state Firewise USA® liaison
- Study materials from the website
- Obtain a wildfire risk assessment from the Fire Department
- Host a minimum of one educational outreach event/activity each year
- With help from fire professionals in your community, develop a multi-year action plan outlining risk reduction priorities, and follow through.

As of October 2022, there were 31 recognized Firewise USA® communities in Monterey County!

What does a Firewise USA® community have to do to maintain its certification?

- With fire authorities, update your plan each year.
- Complete your goal.
- Complete annual filings regarding your plan and progress achieved.
- Hold an annual education day.
- Meet the annual minimum wildfire risk investment: Invest a minimum of \$27.20 per residence annually in Firewise projects in your home or neighborhood. This is NOT a fee or membership. The hours worked by volunteers on clearing roadsides, creating defensible space have a dollar value. Investments in home hardening, vegetation mitigation, equipment or labor purchase or rentals, etc., have a dollar value that you can track and count toward the investment requirement.
- Provide written documentation of neighborhood improvements, both individual and landscape level, by filing a straightforward, short form with Firewise USA®.

Continued on next page

Firewise USA Communities *Continued from previous page*

Examples of resources to review:


- Monterey County's Fire website. <https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/departments-a-h/administrative-office/office-of-emergency-services/ready-monterey-county/hazard-ready/wildfire>
- Firesafe Council of Monterey website: <https://www.firesafemonterey.org>
- California FireSafe Council website: <https://cafiresafecouncil.org/resources/fire-safe-councils/>
- Firewise USA® Communities website: <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Wild-fire/Firewise-USA>
- Nevada County website: A robust county website in a high fire risk area: <https://www.mynevadacounty.com/2707/ReadyNevadaCounty>
- Nevada County Coalition of Firewise Communities – an umbrella group website: <https://www.nccoalitionfwc.com/>
- YubaNet: Please look at an incredible local resource in Nevada County, YubaNet. They cover everything, including real time updates about all incidents, including fire. YubaNet's developer has been involved with the Firewise USA® communities and created a 12-week series outlining many aspects of getting ready for fire. Go to <https://yubanet.com/series/> Some examples of what topics are covered: "Go bags for all," "Woodstoves, chimneys, roofs, gutters and screens," "Spring cleaning," "Your way out and emergency plan," "Make a list of what you need to take with you," "How to leave your home ready when you are gone," and "How to leave your home ready when you are gone."

FIRE SEASON IS HERE. ARE YOU PREPARED?

Wildfires are becoming more frequent and deadly. It's important that we utilize every tool at our disposal to help prevent them, as well as to be prepared for them. Two major insurance companies (Allstate and State Farm) have stopped issuing homeowners insurance policies for new clients in California.

MVNA is seeking leadership to form a **Firewise USA®** Community within our "high fire hazard zone" neighborhood. Establishing one might lower insurance costs, and will help us all feel safer. If you know someone qualified who may be interested in helping make our quest a reality, please contact MVNA Director Jeannie Ferrara at jeannieferrara@gmail.com.

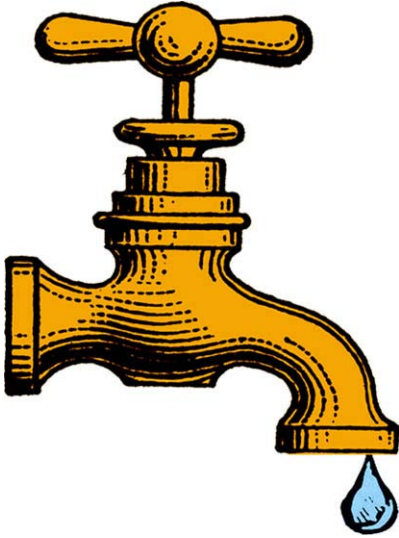
In the meantime, below are FEMA's "12 ways to prepare" for an emergency evacuation.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12 WAYS TO PREPARE					
<input type="checkbox"/>  Sign up for Alerts and Warnings	<input type="checkbox"/>  Make a Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>  Save for a Rainy Day	<input type="checkbox"/>  Practice Emergency Drills	<input type="checkbox"/>  Test Family Communication Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>  Safeguard Documents
<input type="checkbox"/>  Plan with Neighbors	<input type="checkbox"/>  Make Your Home Safer	<input type="checkbox"/>  Know Evacuation Routes	<input type="checkbox"/>  Assemble or Update Supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>  Get Involved in Your Community	<input type="checkbox"/>  Document and Insure Property

SAY NO TO HIGHER WATER BILLS NOW

BY JEANNIE FERRARA AND MELODIE CHRISLOCK

Are you tired of paying higher and higher water bills? I am. There's a quick and easy way to protest California American Water's (Cal Am) rate increases, and it will take less than 5 minutes of your time. Go to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) website [here](#), click "add public comment," write two sentences, or more, telling why you oppose paying even higher water bills over the next 3 years, then click "submit."



Compare your 2019 water bills to what you're paying now. Are you using less, but paying more? How many gallons a month do you use, and how much does it cost? What is your average water bill?

If you feel your Cal Am water bills are too high, post your comment to the CPUC. Cal Am petitions the CPUC for rate increases every 3 years, but because not many rate-payers oppose those increases, the CPUC continues to grant Cal Am's requests. There is power in numbers and it's time to let them know we oppose higher rates now.

Marina Coast Water District (a publicly owned water company since 1960) charges users approximately \$33 for 5,000 gallons. Cal Am Water (a private investor-owned water corporation) charges Monterey Peninsula residents approximately \$150 for the same 5,000 gallons of water. And, no, that's not a typo - - \$33. Compared to \$150. What's wrong with this picture?

After interviewing Melodie Chrislock, Managing Director of Public Water Now, I can share the following information:

There are only two very small water systems in California that have more expensive water than ours - - Dillon Beach (500 connections) and Catalina Island (2,000 connections and two desalination plants). Monterey Peninsula has 40,000 connections.

How did we get to have the 3rd most expensive water in California? What justifies Cal Am's rate increases? It's not inflation, and it's certainly not new water supply. Cal Am has never provided Monterey with one drop of new water."

Food & Water Watch is a consumer watchdog organization that focuses, in part, on corporate accountability relating to water issues and "corporate overreach." In 2017, Food & Water Watch determined that, under Cal Am, the Monterey Peninsula had the most expensive water of the 500 largest water suppliers in the nation." (https://www.foodandwater-watch.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/FS_Top-Ten-Most-Expensive-Water-Providers-June-2017.pdf)

In 2018, our local electorate passed Measure J by giving it 56% of the votes cast. That outcome directed the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District (MPWMD) to buy the Peninsula's water system from Cal Am, if feasible. Feasibility was proven by outside experts in a 2019 study. MPWMD made Cal Am an offer of \$449 million in April 2023. Cal Am refused, and now MPWMD will most likely pursue the buyout under eminent domain. Since 2019, our water rates have increased by a shocking 51%. Now, Cal Am is asking for an additional \$15.3 million to be added to our water bills from 2024 through 2026.

Chrislock said she "wants the entire Monterey Peninsula to be aware of Cal Am's latest rate increase requests." She urges all ratepayers to spread the word to friends and family since "... everyone is affected. We don't want another three years of Cal Am rate increases."



NOTE: Public Water Now is a non-profit, community-based organization committed to achieving the lowest cost, sustainable water supply for the Monterey Peninsula through public ownership. (<https://www.publicwaternow.org>)

WEED HEAVEN AROUND TOWN!

- PAT VENZA -

Weeds grow every year, but as a result of last winter's abundant rains, local weeds and grasses have been able to flourish, and they're now thicker, higher, and more plentiful than usual. We know that we really needed all that rain, but now we're faced with "weed heaven" and the very real possibility of those weeds and grasses fueling a potential firestorm.



Foxtail grass (Alopecurus)

In my experience, I have never had so many thistles on my property. When I cut them down, they seem to grow back quickly even bigger than they were before! Looking around our neighborhood, I've noticed thistles aren't the only noxious weeds crowding around yards, the roadsides, and open spaces.

Various tall grasses have gone wild, too. Almost everywhere you look or hike, dried foxtails (dangerous for our pets' eyes, ears, noses, and feet), oat, wheat, barley, and rye grasses abound. The

same goes for other tenacious invasive weeds such as berry shrubs, poison oak, and all the various brooms (Genista). It bears remembering that, even though their yellow blooms are pretty, Genista plants are super invasive, highly flammable, and their seeds can be viable for up to 80 years!

Left unabated and dried out, weeds and grasses can increase fuel loads and provide flames with a ladder to climb trees and our homes.

I don't think anyone really enjoys the effort it takes to get rid of weeds and high dried grasses, but this year it's really important that we take the time and make the effort to

keep our neighborhood as fire-safe as possible.



Genista

We know that it's not realistic to expect the City of Monterey to cut down the grasses in the City's open areas, so it falls upon us to do our best to get rid of as much potential fuel as possible. Many of us live in what is designated as a "high fire" area. Weeds and tall dry grasses are an extreme fire hazard, and it is worth reaffirming that they are also ladder fuels with the capability of helping fire climb from the ground to treetops and buildings.

So, let's all do our part - - either clear away the weeds and grasses on our properties, or at least keep them trimmed to a height of 3" or less. By doing that, we can mitigate the threat of wildfire around us - - and we'll get the bonus of improving the look of our neighborhood.



Gardening in the Hood *By Susan Nine*



Growing edible herbs on Monterey is fun and easy whether in ground or in pots. On my patio herb garden I grow a variety of common culinary herbs. Each of these herbs provide a plethora of incredible flavor combinations both in the kitchen and in my ice water.

LEMON VERBENA

A perennial shrub, lemon verbena is not only beautifully fragrant, it is also edible. I use a fresh leaf in a champagne cocktail with a sugar cube or add it to sparkling ice water. The leaves can be used in salads, as a garnish, on seafood or steeped for hot or cold tea.



MINTS

An easy to grow herb that you can start from cuttings, peppermint and spearmint are common. Other varieties include pineapple, chocolate or apple mints. Use fresh leaves to make simple soothing hot peppermint tea, or a refreshing mint iced tea. Mints grows profusely in damp soil. This summer, I've been tossing mint into salads and blending it into pesto. Classic mint mojito recipes are easy to find online; a refreshing cocktail at the end of a hard day working in the garden.



CHIVES

Another personal favorite, I grow lots because I use it so often. Is anything better than a well baked potato with sour cream and chives? Chives are delicious in potato salad, sprinkled on feta cheese and so good on omelets and scrambled eggs. Grown in sun, it grows back after cutting.

BASIL

Basil comes several varieties. This is a strongly flavored herb that can be used in many dishes, including pasta sauces and pesto. Fresh basil has more flavor than dried. It is popular in Mediterranean cooking . Tomatoes and basil go great together as on bruschettas or pizza Margherita, with fresh tomatoes and mozzarella. Basil also pairs well with strawberries in an ice water infusion. Outdoors, basil needs protection from wind and lots of sun.. Always water with care, ideally before mid-day, and avoid splashing the leaves. This should help prevent botrytis (powdery mildew). Plants will grow fast in containers, so expect to pot them up a few times during the growing season.



BAY LEAVES.

I grow bay laurel trees in large pots. They like sun or part shade. Bay leaves provide a 'woody' flavor to sauces, stews, soups, vegetables and grilled meats. Add bay leaves early in the cooking process to draw out their flavor. Remove before serving.

Continued on next page

CILANTRO

Cilantro or coriander has a strong fragrance. It goes well with spicy foods. Cilantro is used in salsas, guacamole, stir-fries and curries. Cilantro does not cook well and should be added right before serving for best flavor. Coriander seeds are the dried fruit of the plant and are used a lot in Asian cooking.

DILL.

Dill has a light, distinctive flavor that is used in salads, fish, egg, vegetables and meat dishes, sauces and dressings. Add dill at the end of cooking because it loses its flavor when heated. Use fresh dill when you can since dry dill has little flavor. OREGANO. Oregano is also called wild marjoram because of its stronger, more pungent flavor and aroma. It's easy to grow and comes back season after season. My husband and I enjoy it sprinkled over a slice of homemade pizza, worked into a flavorsome marinade, or stirred into a brothy soup. It also works well with the flavors of most vegetables. Originating in the mountains of Greece, this aromatic herb has long been a hallmark of cooking across the Mediterranean region.



PARSLEY

Parsley is a slightly peppery, fresh-flavored herb used to season many different dishes, and is often used as a garnish. Look for flat leaf or Italian parsley, which provides more flavor than curly parsley. I grow both and use it almost daily, even in home pressed juices. Dried parsley does not have the same intense flavor, so use fresh whenever possible. Parsley can also be a key ingredient in salads and in Mediterranean dishes such as tabbouleh salad.

ROSEMARY

Rosemary has a strong flavor. Rosemary leaves are often used with meats, tomato sauces, potatoes, soups, vegetables, fish and dressing. Both fresh and dried provide a strong flavor and aroma. Try it on roast chicken and roasted root veggies.

SAGE

Sage is a strong herb that is slightly bitter with a musty mint taste and aroma. Common sage is the only edible salvia. It's often used in Mediterranean cooking. Sage is often combined with other strong herbs, and used to flavor pork, beef, poultry stuffing, and sausage.

THYME

Common thyme and lemon thyme are the varieties most often used in cooking. Lemon thyme looks similar to common thyme but offers a distinctive lemon aroma and flavor. Thyme is used to flavor soups and stews, sauces, vegetables, meat, poultry and fish dishes and is often used in combination with other herbs like rosemary, parsley and oregano. It's often used in French cooking. Because of its intense flavor, use in small amounts. Try it with roasted vegetables, and minestrone soup. Thyme also makes a refreshing herbal infused water with squeezed lemon.



Growing your own fresh culinary herds and harvesting them fresh or for drying is easy and fun. There are many additional varieties of herbs that can be grown successfully here, including marjoram, borage (edible leaves and flowers), stevia, lavender, chamomile and fennel, to name a few.

C.E.R.T. Training For Monterey Area Residents in October 2023



The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program uses a FEMA curriculum to educate people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist their families and others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT also participates in searches for missing persons, serves as coastal spotters for persons swept out to sea, storm response and other emergencies.

Learn These Skills and Many More:

- Emergency First-Aid
- Use of a fire extinguisher
- Disaster Preparedness
- Shutting off your utilities
- Rescue Techniques
- Communications when phones fail
- Assessing your home or workplace after an earthquake or storm
- Neighborhood search
- Working as part of a team



Class occurs over three consecutive Saturdays, October 14th, 21st and 28th, 2023. Time each day is 8:00 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. Instruction takes place in downtown Monterey.

CERT provides 24 hours of community service credit to Students!

Open to residents of Monterey and neighboring communities. Students under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. **To enroll, send an email of interest to: training@montereycert.org**