

## What is ISO?

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) is the world's largest developer of voluntary international standards, which are state of the art specifications for products, services, and good practices, helping make industry more efficient and effective. For the Santa Clara Valley Water District's (district) customers and public, this means greater confidence in consistent, high quality products and services the district provides.

The district has extensive history of ISO commitment, having first been registered to ISO 9001 in 2002 for Quality Management Systems and to ISO 14001 in 2004 for Environmental Management Systems.

## Principles of ISO

The district's management system is implemented based on the following ISO principles:

- **Customer Focus:** customer satisfaction.
- **Leadership on purpose and direction:** management creates engagement.
- **Involvement of people at all levels:** everyone is involved.
- **Process approach to resources and activities:** process consistency and stability.
- **Systems approach to management:** plan the work; work the plan.
- **Continual improvement as a permanent objective:** seek regular, constant improvement.
- **Factual approach to decision making:** ensure the facts before making decisions.
- **Mutually beneficial relationships:** if they fail, then the organization fails.

## What are the Benefits of ISO?

- Improves efficiency and productivity.
- Reduces variation, waste, inefficiencies, and defects.
- Facilitates continual improvement.
- Improves process consistency and stability.
- Improves employee motivation and participation.
- Improves customer confidence and satisfaction.
- Improves conformity to quality and environmental requirements.

## District's Quality and Environmental Policy

The Santa Clara Valley Water District is committed to organizational excellence and environmental stewardship, and as such, maintains an integrated Quality and Environmental Management System (QEMS) conforming to ISO standards. The QEMS supports the organization's continual improvement through the development of a robust employee knowledge base, which ensures continuity of daily operations and facilitates succession planning. Compliance with this policy is the responsibility of each individual working for or on behalf of the District.

### Purpose

Provide Silicon Valley safe, clean water for a healthy life, environment, and economy.

### Customers

Meet customer requirements and enhance customer satisfaction.

### Environmental Stewardship

Provide environmental stewardship through prevention of pollution and minimizing and managing environmental impacts by setting and regularly reviewing quality and environmental objectives.

### Continual Improvement

Ensure the QEMS is regularly monitored and improved in accordance with ISO requirements to ensure that all District products and services offer the highest level of quality while maximizing the District's environmental stewardship efforts.

### Compliance

Compliance with Board policies and statutory and regulatory requirements related to the District's quality and environmental processes.

### Policy, Objectives, and Targets

Ensure this policy is documented, maintained, and implemented, and, in addition to the District's quality and environmental objectives and targets, reviewed for continuing suitability through periodic Management Reviews.

### Awareness and Competence

Ensure, through workforce development, training, communication, and succession planning, that each individual working for and on behalf of the District has the awareness, skills, and knowledge to carry out this policy in a manner that maximizes effectiveness, ensures continuity of daily operations, promotes continual improvement, and contributes to environmental stewardship.

### Public

Ensure this policy is available to the public.

## District's Significant Environmental Aspects

For each type of activity, product, or service, the district has identified its unique environmental aspects and determined the most significant environmental aspects that have or could have a significant environmental impact.

Management recognizes the following two major activities, within the scope of the QEMS, as having or could have a significant impact on the environment:

### **Bulk Chemical Storage**

The district water treatment plants utilize several bulk chemicals in the water treatment process. The chemical of greatest concern, which could create a significant impact, is 19.5% aqueous ammonia. This chemical is regulated under the California Accidental Release Program. This chemical is singled out for greater control because accidental releases have the potential to create offsite consequences that could spread to residential neighborhoods adjacent to the water treatment plants.

### **Construction of water utility and flood protection capital projects**

Construction of water utility infrastructure and flood protection projects can involve significant changes to riparian environments and other landforms. The district recognizes the impact of these changes by integrating projects into watersheds as a whole, ensuring that ecological functions and processes are supported, ensuring that the quality and availability of water are protected for ecological and water supply functions, and that environmental impacts of projects are avoided, minimized, or mitigated.

## District's Quality and Environmental Objectives

The district has identified operational objectives throughout the organization. Specifically, in support of ISO, the district analyzes and determines goals for meeting customer product requirements and overall environmental goals consistent with the environmental policy.

The following in-scope quality and environmental objectives act as a general framework for continual improvement in the organization.

### **Quality Objectives:**

- Prepare and respond effectively to flood emergencies countywide to protect life and property.
- Current and future water supply for municipalities, industries, agriculture, and the environment is reliable.
- Reliable high quality drinking water is delivered.
- Maintain effective relationships with the retailer and other stakeholders to ensure high quality, reliable drinking water.
- Provide natural flood protection for residents, businesses, and visitors.
- Protect parcels from flooding by applying an integrated watershed management approach that balances environmental quality and protection from flooding.

### **Environmental Objectives:**

- Prepare for and respond to emergencies that threaten local waterways.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions to achieve carbon neutrality by 2020.

## Environmental Impacts

Pollution prevention is the cornerstone of ISO's environmental standard. ISO requires that every individual working for or on behalf of the District is responsible for being aware of how their work could impact or potentially impact the environment. ISO specifies that staff, vendors, and contractors are aware of the QEMS policy, the District's significant environmental aspects, and the impacts of their work on the environment. Processes and programs are designed and implemented to help control environmental impacts resulting from District operations and therefore, deviating from these could have unintended adverse impacts on the environment.

## Assessing the QEMS for Effectiveness

To ensure that the district is continually improving its QEMS and conforms to the ISO standards, regularly scheduled audits of the system are conducted by an external third-party. This organization, known as a registrar, audits the QEMS and makes findings based on interviews and review of district procedures and records. Any deviations from the ISO standards are captured as non-conformities and require the district to take the necessary corrective and preventive actions to prevent reoccurrence. If the district is found to be in conformance to the ISO standards of which it is registered, the registrar recommends certification.



**CONTACT US**

For more information, contact us at **(408) 265-2600** or by email at **ISOMgtRep@valleywater.org**. Or use our **Access Valley Water** customer request and information system at **valleywater.org** to find out the latest information on district projects or to submit questions, complaints or compliments directly to a district staff person.

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