

Calaveras County Receives \$2.8 Million to Ensure Safe Water After a Wildfire

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OAKLAND, Calif. – The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has granted \$2.1 million to the Calaveras County Water District. A new project will replace five wooden water tanks with four ignition-resistant steel tanks to ensure more than 3,500 residents do not lose access to safe drinking water after a wildfire.

Calaveras County's redwood water tanks, serving the communities along Ebbetts Pass Highway, west of Arnold, CA, were nearly consumed by wildfires in 1992, 2001, and 2015. To ensure future protection, the scope of the project includes both the installation of four steel tanks and the expansion of the area's defensible space by removing hazardous fuels like dead trees, saplings, and other vegetation around the installation site to significantly diminish the community's wildfire threat to its potable water facilities.

Communities that lose access to local water tanks can suffer service disruptions for months while permanent tanks and piping are installed, requiring local government to purchase, transport, and connect emergency water.

The \$2.8 million project includes a \$2.1 million grant from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), with the remaining \$700,000 from non-federal sources.

FEMA's HMGP helps states, territories, federally-recognized tribes, local communities, and certain private, non-profit organizations become more resilient to potential infrastructure damage and reduce future disaster costs. In the past 31 years, FEMA has invested nearly \$1.4 billion to reduce disaster risk in California.

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