



Background: Geyserville Sanitation Zone

- The Geyserville Sanitation Zone serves approximately 370 single-family dwellings across 177 acres, with a collection system built in the 1960s and 1970s and a treatment plant designed for 92,000 gallons per day in average weather flow.
- The Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water) currently manages and operates the Geyserville Sanitation Zone along with seven other zone and districts, funded by ratepayer fees that cover operations, maintenance and capital improvements.

Why does Sonoma Water want to dissolve the Geyserville Sanitation Zone?

- Increasing efficiencies: Sonoma Water staff who operate and maintain the Geyserville Sanitation Zone also serve Sonoma Valley, Guerneville and The Sea Ranch, among other locations. By reducing the number of sanitation zones it is responsible for in Sonoma County, Sonoma Water can significantly improve staffing efficiency.
- With California American Water (Cal-Am) providing drinking water service in Geyserville since 2016, the utility is well-positioned as a local candidate to take over management of the sanitation zone.

Why is Cal-Am interested in owning the sanitation zone?

- Existing presence: Cal-Am already owns and operates the Geyserville Water Works system, serving local water customers with certified staff and established infrastructure.
- Operational expertise: Cal-Am has experience managing water and wastewater systems across California, offering economies of scale, technical expertise, and access to conservation and assistance programs.
- Active in the community: Cal-Am is already a member of the Geyserville community, actively supporting local events—such as sponsoring the annual tractor parade—and investing in critical infrastructure like new storage tanks that increased overall capacity by 50,000 gallons.

What advantages are there to ratepayers for the dissolution?

- Potential for improved service: A larger utility like Cal-Am can offer enhanced operational efficiency, access to advanced technology and robust customer service.
- Regulatory compliance: A well-resourced utility is well-equipped to meet regulatory requirements, minimizing the risk of violations and associated costs.



What impacts will there be to ratepayers?

- Rates: As a part of negotiations, Cal-Am would be working to minimize rate impacts while continuing to deliver quality service.
- Continued oversight: Any transfer of ownership or dissolution would require regulatory approval and public notification, ensuring transparency and opportunities for community input.
- Assistance programs: Like Sonoma Water, Cal-Am offers a rate relief program for low-income customers, access to which may continue under new management.

How can ratepayers stay involved in the dissolution process?

- Attend public meetings: Participate in Geyserville MAC meetings to stay informed and voice concerns.
- Submit comments: Provide feedback during public comment periods, especially during the Prop. 218 and the CPUC approval process.
- Monitor official communications: Watch for updates from Sonoma Water and Cal-Am regarding the status of the dissolution and any proposed changes.
- Contact local representatives: Reach out to Sonoma Water, the County Board of Supervisors or Cal-Am with questions or to request additional information.

What happens next?

- The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors will hold a public workshop July 22 to discuss the proposed transfer of the Geyserville Sanitation Zone.
- Two formal Board of Supervisors hearings will follow, spaced 45 days apart, with a final vote to approve.
- The California Public Utilities Commission must review and approve the transfer before it becomes final.
- Cal-Am would begin its integration process after County Board of Supervisors and CPUC approval.
- If all approvals are secured, Cal-Am could take over operations as early as summer 2026.

Key Messages

- Ratepayers may benefit from improved service, access to assistance programs and greater investment in infrastructure.
- Sonoma Water could improve efficiency by removing the need for operators to travel from Sonoma Valley to Geyserville for operations and maintenance.
- Cal-Am's interest in acquiring the system is based on its existing presence in Geyserville and its capacity to provide integrated, professional water and wastewater services.
- Community involvement is essential—public meetings, comment opportunities, and direct communication with officials will shape the outcome and ensure local needs are addressed.