



PALMDALE WATER DISTRICT

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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PWD TO EXPAND USE OF SOLAR POWER, DECOMMISSION WIND TURBINE

Palmdale, CA – The Palmdale Water District (PWD) Board of Directors voted Monday to move forward with two solar projects to power large portions of the District, potentially saving up to \$16.5 million in energy costs in the next 25 years.

One project would power six well sites and the District office on Avenue Q and 20th Street East. The second project would supply up to 100% of the energy needed by the Leslie O. Carter Water Treatment Plant, in addition to boosters at a nearby tank.

PWD's new solar plan for the treatment plant would require the decommissioning of the nearly 20-year-old wind turbine, an iconic landmark in the Antelope Valley. The new contract with Southern California Edison would override the existing agreement for the wind turbine.

“We have been very fortunate to have had the wind turbine provide power all these years,” said General Manager Dennis D. LaMoreaux. “It’s a

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good time to retire it because finding parts and qualified technicians for repairs have been very difficult. The turbine has definitely done its job for the District.”

The wind turbine, installed at the treatment plant on Avenue S in 2004, saved the District 30-50% on power costs when the treatment plant was running. During some years, the 237-foot-tall turbine saved PWD up to \$100,000.

The two approved solar projects will assist with the soaring energy costs. By installing 2,500 to 4,000 panels on about two acres of land at each location, each site would provide 2 to 5 megawatts. The contract with New York-based Distributed Solar Development (DSD) calls for paying 6.26 cents per kilowatt hour at the site on Avenue S near the treatment plant and 5.54 cents at the District office, both much less than the current Edison rates.

PWD paid \$1.68 million and \$2.42 million in 2020 and 2021, respectively, to Edison. Most of the expenses were for powering 20-plus wells.

“Our goal is to control power costs,” said Assistant General Manager Adam Ly. “These projects will give us a rate that we can rely on for the next 25 years. We all know Edison’s rates are going to go up, so we must find ways to mitigate that.”

According to Ly, there are no out-of-pocket costs for the projects. PWD will only be paying for the agreed amount per kilowatt hour. The contract with DSD also provides funding reserves to pay for various fees and possibly construction costs for the turbine removal.

Since 1918, the Palmdale Water District has provided high-quality water at a reasonable cost. We pride ourselves on providing great customer care; advocating for local water issues that

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help our residents; educating the community on water-use efficiency; and leading our region in researching and implementing emerging technologies that increase operational efficiency. For more information about PWD, visit www.palmdalewater.org.

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