



Looking Back and Moving Forward
MNWD will celebrate our 50th anniversary in November.
This is the first in a three-part series on the District's service.
1960-1974

LAGUNA NIGUEL, Calif. (September 1, 2010) - Prior to becoming one of Orange County's most bustling coastal communities, the areas served today by MNWD were once part of two sprawling Spanish land grants: Rancho Niguel and Rancho Mission Viejo. You may be familiar with neighborhoods bearing the same names, but until the early 1960s, these lands were used primarily for ranching. Lacking a reliable water supply to maintain their herds, the area's ranchers banded together in 1960 to create their own water agency – and the Moulton Niguel Water District was born.

At its inception, MNWD served only eight customers. But as ranch land quickly began transforming into ranch homes, local water demands dramatically changed, and the District began building reservoirs to help serve its new customers. The lure of affordable coastal living drew new families to the region in the coming years, with MNWD's customer base doubling to more than 33,000 between 1970 and 1972.

Along with a reliable water supply, these new residents would need sewer service, so MNWD expanded its operations to provide wastewater treatment. In 1974, the District became one of the first water providers in Orange County to deliver recycled water for irrigation uses. This revolutionary program has saved billions of gallons of potable water over the years.

Next Month: 1975-2000

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