

# County Water Authority Prepares For Major Quake

*County Imports 78% Of Its Water From Sacramento Delta, Colorado River*

**KGTV.com (San Diego television), 6-22-10**

SAN DIEGO -- San Diego County water officials said the area's water supply is prepared to withstand a major earthquake.

The most recent earthquakes to shake San Diego have raised more awareness of the possibility of a major earthquake hitting southern California, but water officials said they have already begun preparing.

The San Diego County Water Authority's Operations Center has electronic sensors on 1,600 structures used to transport water into the county and out to its member water districts. San Diego County imports 78 percent of its water from the Sacramento Delta and the Colorado River.

If an earthquake damaged a pipe, treatment plant, or dam, the operations center would know immediately. "That resulting loss of pressure would show up on here and would alarm and let our operators know that the pipeline had been breached," said Gary Eaton, the operations director for the SDCWA.

The SDCWA also has procedures in place to fix any damage to its facilities. In the event of a catastrophic earthquake, the SDCWA would implement the Emergency Storage Project.

Earlier this decade, the Olivenhain Dam and Reservoir was completed and filled with 24,000 acre-feet of water, which is a year's worth of water for 48,000 households. However, that water is for emergency use only. If an earthquake snapped the pipes that deliver water from the Delta or Colorado River, San Diegans would begin using the water from the Olivenhain Reservoir.

The SDCWA will also store emergency water at the San Vicente Reservoir. Construction is underway to raise the San Vicente Dam an additional 117 feet, giving the reservoir considerably more storage. It would also give San Diego County a six-month supply of emergency water if the county is cut off from its water sources.

"We'll have 90,000 acre-feet of water in storage and that's enough to carry us through six months while we could repair the pipelines and get the imported water supply up and going again," said Kelly Rodgers, who is managing the San Vicente Reservoir project.