



## Website and Social Media Administrative Policy

### INTRODUCTION

The Agency uses its websites (primarily, but not limited to [yourscvwater.com](http://yourscvwater.com)) and social media as components of the Agency's public outreach activities and to assist in the conduct of and to promote Agency business. Social media programs include, but are not limited to: Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, blogs and other such programs that exist now or will be developed in the future. The Agency's website and social media programs and data used for the social media programs are property of the Agency.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the Agency's website and social media programs is effective communication that ensures the Agency is recognized as a credible, effective and reliable authority for water infrastructure, management and policy. All outreach efforts should further the three main goals identified in the Agency's Communication Plan – build awareness, influence behavior change and foster positive public perception.

In addition, the Agency's website and use of social media programs should serve to:

1. Maintain and enhance credibility and public trust.
2. Inform the public of what services and programs the Agency provides.
3. Promote the Agency's program and activities.
4. Promote community partnerships and community events.
5. Provide accurate information to the public regarding incidents and public service announcements.

#### Role of the Agency Website

Public Outreach shall maintain the Agency's official web presence via social media, the official website and other tools that may be developed. The Agency's official website will remain the primary means of online communication and the predominant online presence. The public's general comments or communications concerning service requests should be directed to the Agency's Customer Care Center on the Agency website, or other tools that may be developed for this purpose. Social media messaging features will include notifications that they are not monitored 24-hours a day, with directions to official service request tools.

### DEFINITIONS

- **Social Media or Social Media Sites** – Internet-based communications tools with a focus on immediacy, interactivity, user participation, and information sharing. Media include, but are not limited to, social networking sites, forums, blogs, vlogs, online chat sites, and video/photo posting sites or other similar output or format. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Nextdoor, Instagram, Snapchat and YouTube.
- **Agency Social Media Site** – A social media site established, maintained for and used by the Agency to communicate with the public on Agency business, and over which the Agency has control of all pages, sections or posting locations.



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- **Agency Posts/Postings** – Information, articles, comments, photographs, graphics, videos or any other form of communication posted by the Agency on an Agency social media site.
- **Public Comments** – Information, articles, comments, photographs, graphics, videos or any other form of communication posted by a member of the public on an Agency social media site.
- **Social Media Administrators** – Agency employees expressly authorized and designated to establish, maintain and/or oversee the Agency’s social media sites.
- **Agency’s Official Website** – The Agency’s official website is [www.yourSCVwater.com](http://www.yourSCVwater.com).
- **Public Information Officer (PIO)** – The Public Information Officer for the SCV Water Agency.
- **Public Outreach** – The staff team assigned duties in public information, outreach and other communication functions.

### AUTHORIZED USERS

Agency staff or consultants posting on behalf of the Agency on websites and social media networks must be authorized by the PIO or his or her designee. Additionally, the content of such posts must be pre-approved by the PIO or other authorized staff or designee.

The maintenance, monitoring, posting and responding on Agency social media sites shall be conducted during normal business hours. After-hours or weekend activity shall only be conducted with advanced approval of the PIO, or in the case of urgent or emergency situations which require immediate communications.

### Conduct

- Agency staff shall post under the official Agency identity where possible according to the social media site being used.
- Staff should refrain from posting as an individual unless site function requires it (i.e., a Facebook page cannot post inside a Facebook group.) Agency staff shall not use a personal social media account to reply in official capacity on behalf of the Agency.
- Agency staff posting on behalf of the Agency shall at all times conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner.
- Postings on any Agency social media site shall only reflect the views of the Agency. Administrators shall not express his or her own personal views or concerns through such postings.

### Responsibilities

- Establish, maintain and monitor Agency’s social media sites in compliance with this policy.
- Comply with the individual social media site’s terms of service.



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- Limit administrator access to social media sites to authorized employees or consultants only.
- Ensure grammar and spelling are correct and mistakes corrected quickly.
- Monitor public comments, engagements and other interactions to ensure they are consistent with this policy.
- Ensure posts are accurate, appropriate, professional, respectful, relevant, on topic with the Agency's mission, and compliant with this policy.

### Account Setup and Settings

- **Account Setup** – SCV Water's Public Outreach Office must approve any new social media accounts prior to their creation. Official Agency contact information must be used to set-up, maintain, monitor or access an Agency social media account. The use of personal information (email or phone number) is not allowed.
- **Account Information Storage** – All social media account information (login, password and administrative access) must be given to the Public Information Officer, and changes reported immediately.
- **Settings and Functionality** – The Agency reserves the right to implement or remove any functionality or content of its Agency social media sites, when deemed appropriate and possible. This includes, but is not limited to: information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communication that is posted on an Agency social media site.

### **CONTENT GUIDELINES**

- Content that is posted must:
  - Be factual and informational material related to the goals and purposes listed above.
  - Use proper grammar and avoid jargon.
  - Seek an approachable, conversational tone, while maintaining professionalism.
  - Contain information that is freely available to the public and not be confidential as defined by any Agency policy or federal or state law.
- Content posted may contain:
  - Hyperlinks directing users back to the Agency website.
  - Links to other social media or websites, that are government or Agency-related, sites with specific ties to the Agency.
  - Links to sites that contain relevant information that help the Agency fulfill its mission.
- The Agency shall insure they have full permission or rights to any content before posting it to an Agency social media site, including photographs and videos.

### Applicable Laws, Rules and Regulations

- Content posted on Agency websites and social media networks is public record.
- Agency social media sites are subject to the California Public Records Acts (Government Code Section 6250, et seq.) and associated laws and policies and must be able to be managed, stored and retrieved to comply with these laws.



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- Sharing or posting content owned by others shall be performed in accordance with copyright, fair use and established laws pertaining to materials owned by others. This includes, but is not limited to: quotes, images, documents and links.
- All Agency social media sites shall adhere to applicable federal, state, and local laws regulations and polices including, but not limited to: this policy, and all other Agency policies including information technology and administrative.
- Agency social media sites shall comply with usage rules and regulations required by the social media site provider, including privacy policies. All content on any Agency social media site are subject to the terms of service (TOS) of the individual social media sites.

### Records Management and Documentation

- Any content maintained on an Agency social media site that is related to Agency business, including a list of subscribers, posted communication and communication submitted for posting, may be considered a public record and subject to public disclosure as required by law. The Public Outreach work group shall process any request for public records related to Agency social media sites.
- Agency social media sites shall be managed consistent with the Brown Act. Public Comments or Public Postings by elected and appointed officials (including, but not limited to responses to, “likes”, “shares”, retweets or other participation in any published posting or use of an Agency social media site or other social media site or any form of electronic communication) for the purpose of discussing, deliberating, or expressing opinions on any issue within the subject matter jurisdiction of the body, which would constitute a serial meeting or is otherwise inconsistent with the Brown Act, shall not be permitted.

### **PROHIBITED CONTENT**

Content that is not allowed to be posted by Agency staff includes:

1. Confidential information such as: (1) the personal information of employees and Directors, (2) information related to actual or potential legal claims, lawsuits or other legal issues, or (3) customer information published without written permission.
2. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation/gender identification, as well as any other category protected by federal, state or local laws;
3. Comments not topically related to the particular subject being commented upon; and hyperlinks to material that is not directly related to the discussion.
4. Photographs or images of anyone who can be identified without first obtaining a signed release, except for publicly obtained pictures/videos involving public social events.
5. Languages, photos, images, links or other content that is sexually explicit (including nudity), lewd or obscene, racist, political, or religious.
6. Profane language and content, potentially libelous comments; or personal attacks, insults or threatening language.
7. Any content that actively engages any person posting in an argumentative or offensive manner.



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8. Solicitations of charitable contributions or commerce, including, but not limited to, advertising of any business or product for sale, commercial promotions and spam;
9. Content that inappropriately promotes an outcome for an election or campaign (refer to the California Fair Political Practices Commission for additional guidance).

### **BRANDING CONSISTENCY AND OTHER BEST PRACTICES**

Whenever possible, Agency social media sites shall use official "SCV Water" logos as profile pictures. Any cover or banner images must be authorized by the PIO. If color/theme customization is available, official SCV Water Colors must be used.

- All Agency social media sites shall bear the name, and/or official Agency logo.
- This Website and Social Media Administrative Policy shall be displayed to users of Agency social media sites or made available by hyperlink.
- Each Agency social media site shall include an introductory statement (where possible) clearly specifying the purpose and topical scope of such site; shall clearly state that such site is maintained by the Agency and that the site is subject to the Agency's Website and Social Media Administrative Policy.
- Agency social media sites shall supplement, and not replace, the Agency's required notices and standard policies, practices and methods of communication.