



On the Water Front

October 2022 | A Message from John Balliew, P.E., President/CEO

Resilience is next for Bustamante Wastewater Plant

Our city is growing, and El Paso Water is growing with it.

Fresh off lessons learned from last year's Frontera wastewater emergency, we are focused on building resilience in all four of our wastewater plants' infrastructure. Rehabilitation projects to extend lifespans, increase reliability and reduce odors are planned at all four but, by far, the largest projects will occur at the Roberto Bustamante Wastewater Treatment Plant.



Construction is taking place at the Bustamante Plant.

One of our busiest facilities – the 30-year-old Bustamante Plant – is at the center of a major multimillion-dollar overhaul, which will extend its lifespan by an additional 30 years.

The bustling Bustamante Plant, located along the Rio Grande in El Paso's Mission Valley, treats up to 39 million gallons of wastewater daily from east El Paso. After treatment, the cleaned water is released into the Riverside Canal to farmers downstream for irrigation, as well as the Rio Bosque Wetlands Park. We also supply reclaimed water to nearby Mount Carmel Cemetery.

But the plant's days of innovation are about to get a major boost. EPWater is investing in additional infrastructure to keep up with the East Side's growth and to strengthen our wastewater system.

- **New Headworks Influent Pump Station:** This state-of-the-art pumping station offers full redundancy to further support system performance and reliability. It features new treatment mechanisms, pumping and automation to meet the East Side's needs now and into the future.
- **Expansion of Bustamante Plant:** We're adding 12.5 million gallons of treatment capacity with upgraded aeration basins that will remove more contaminants to produce higher quality reclaimed water. Additional primary and secondary clarifiers help polish the water after it is biologically treated. This advanced treatment train offers the best technologies available to remove organic waste and will highly benefit advanced water purification, resulting in a cleaner water that will feed into the upcoming Advanced Water Purification Facility next-door. That facility will add 10 million gallons of drinking water per day to the area's water supply. A digester upgrade project is also planned that will increase methane gas production, which is used to fuel backup power generators at the plant.
- **The Reliable 39 Project:** After the expansion project is completed, plans call for the original Bustamante Plant to undergo a major upgrade. By the end of the decade, the project will reveal a fully upgraded, reliable and resilient Bustamante Plant. Operating at 51.5 million gallons per day, the plant will supply farmers, the Rio Bosque and the Advanced Water Purification Facility.

Looking around EPWater, the investment in infrastructure at the Bustamante Plant is indicative of what is happening throughout our utility. We are addressing major rehabilitation projects while being fiscally responsible. Though our critical infrastructure needs are expensive, we are setting priorities and putting our ratepayers' money to maximum use.

Please bear with us as we address critical projects to improve our systems. With strategic investments, we can continue toward long-term sustainability and ensure that El Paso has safe, reliable and high-quality water services for years to come.



On the Water Front is a publication of El Paso Water.
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