

## Customer Transforms Landscape with Captivating California Native Plant Garden



If you are traveling through Eastside Costa Mesa and spot a home surrounded by a lush green garden teeming with wildlife, native plants and sculptures – you're likely passing Mesa Water District (Mesa Water®) customer, Travis Gramberg's stunning front yard garden! However, his garden is more than just a beautiful addition to the neighborhood—it's a new way of life for many Southern Californians.

Mesa Water is proud to provide customers with an abundance of local, reliable water. All water customers use indoors is captured, recycled and put back into the groundwater basin. However, water used outdoors is not captured and recycled. Customers can make the biggest impact in water use efficiency by focusing on their outdoor water usage, which has been Travis' goal for the past two and a

half years. By selecting native plants that are adapted to our region's natural conditions, his garden has significantly reduced the need for supplemental watering and promotes water use efficiency and environmental sustainability.

A landscape architect and owner of Costa Mesa-based Koheid Design by day, Travis found his passion for native plants, water use efficiency and ecology as he began experimenting with his garden using California native plants to create a sustainable design language that proves water use efficiency does not mean a garden lacking vibrancy. At first, Travis received pushback from others on a fully native garden because of the misconceptions surrounding California natives. For many, the first thing that comes to mind when picturing a fully native plant garden is often messy and weedy plants, absent of blooming flowers and shrubs, but his garden is proof that this is far from the truth.



Today his landscape is lower maintenance and saves water when compared to having a turf or a non-native yard. To help offset costs of relandscaping, Travis utilized Mesa Water's rebate programs for drip irrigation, turf removal and smart timers. If you're considering replacing your yard with native plants, Travis encourages other Mesa Water customers to, "just go for it." He recommends customers experiment, research and use resources like Mesa Water's rebate programs and local nurseries for plant options and ideas.

The selections of California native plants are endless; you can start small and test what works and what doesn't for your yard, which is what Travis did. As his experimentation evolved, he has continued to explore innovative options and today's result is a closed loop yard that captures all surface runoff water used in the garden. To do this, he removed the concrete from his driveway and replaced it with permeable pavers – layers of turf blocks and rocks. To capture additional water, he created a rain garden which includes a Hügelkultur – a sloped planting bed filled with topsoil, wood and organic materials that has now become a thriving ecosystem amongst a spray of blooming California poppies.

Travis' yard is a great example of native plant gardening. Mesa Water encourages customers to consider incorporating sustainable practices into their own landscapes. The District offers a variety of resources including landscaping mockups, recommended watering schedules and more. Take a look today at [MesaWater.org/BeMesaWaterWise](https://MesaWater.org/BeMesaWaterWise)



### 2024 Water Quality Report Now Available

Mesa Water conducts extensive water quality testing to ensure your water is clean and safe. To read the 2024 Water Quality Report, visit [MesaWater.org/WaterQualityReport](https://MesaWater.org/WaterQualityReport).

To request a printed copy, email [Info@MesaWater.org](mailto:Info@MesaWater.org) or call 949.631.1201 and provide your name and mailing address.

## Staff Splash: Meet Epuni Hinnebusch

Epuni Hinnebusch, Customer Service Representative II, is committed to helping Mesa Water customers with any questions they may have.

**Q: How did you get into the water industry?**

A: I have a customer service background from the hospitality industry, so when I was ready to make the jump from that industry and try something new, Mesa Water was the perfect opportunity. Excellent customer service skills are applicable to many different industries.

**Q: What would people find surprising about your role at Mesa Water?**

A: That it constantly changes. As hard as we try, the day cannot be scheduled or planned because my role at Mesa Water is very much customer-driven.

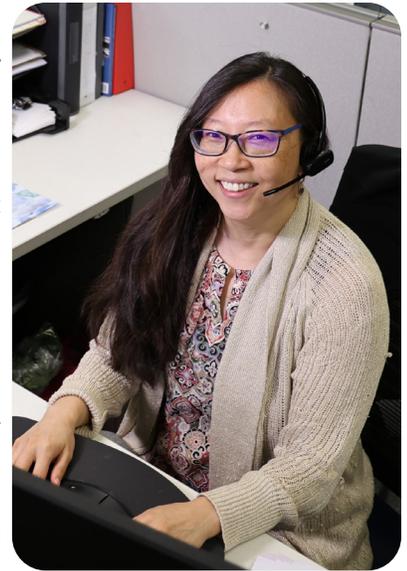
**Q: What is your favorite part about your job?**

A: Helping customers. Whether it's setting up new water service, answering questions about water bills or resolving complex issues – our goal is always to make the customer's day.

**Q: What is your favorite water-themed movie?**

A: This is not the typical choice, but I like *Open Water*. It does not have a predictable ending and is considered a horror movie.

Staff Splash is a recurring feature in News on Tap. Look forward to meeting more Mesa Water employees in future issues.



## Local Students Produce Creative H2O-Infused Videos

At its May 22 Board Meeting, local students were honored and awarded prizes for their creative and entertaining entries in the annual video contest for high school and college students, who live in or attend school in the Mesa Water service area. The first-place prize was awarded to "Cheers to Mesa Water," produced by India Howerton, Jaydon Ferrier, Graydon Sage and Aubrey Spallone from Costa Mesa High School. The group's clever video submission earned them a \$1,000 cash prize, and their referring teacher, Sarah Portwood, received a \$500 Amazon gift card for classroom supplies. View the winning videos at [YouTube.com/MesaWaterDistrict](https://www.youtube.com/MesaWaterDistrict).



Members of the video contest winning teams recognized at the Mesa Water Board meeting on May 22.

## Reduce Pool Water Loss and Save Money – Apply for a Mesa Water Pool Cover Rebate

Splish, splash! Summer is here and it is time to get swimming pools ready for fun. A pool cover can benefit Mesa Water customers with swimming pools in several ways:

- Protects your pool or spa from debris;
- Keeps the water warmer and helps save money on heating costs; and
- Prevents water loss from evaporation. Pools can lose anywhere from two millimeters to two inches of water per week or about ¼ inch of water loss per day. This can add up to 10,000 to 15,000 gallons of water lost per year from evaporation.

To encourage the use of pool covers, Mesa Water is pleased to offer a pool cover rebate of \$50 when customers purchase a new pool or spa cover. See our website to learn more and apply for a pool cover rebate ([www.MesaWater.org/customer-service/rates-and-fees/rebates](http://www.MesaWater.org/customer-service/rates-and-fees/rebates)).

If you have questions or need assistance with your application, call or email our Water Use Efficiency and Education Coordinator at 949.207.5413 or [HesterP@MesaWater.org](mailto:HesterP@MesaWater.org).

Keep your pool full of 100% local, reliable, clean and safe Mesa Water and we hope you have a refreshing summer!



[MesaWater.org](http://MesaWater.org)

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Produced by Mesa Water's Board of Directors, **News On Tap** is a bi-monthly publication to inform Mesa Water's customers and community about water issues and events.

### BOARD MEETINGS

Mesa Water Board meetings are held the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 4:30 p.m. at 1965 Placentia Avenue, Costa Mesa, and are open to the public. For more information, call 949.631.1206.

### Public Affairs Department

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