



MesaWater

DISTRICT<sup>®</sup>

DISTRICT ENGINEER



**BOB MURRAY  
& ASSOCIATES**  
EXPERTS IN EXECUTIVE SEARCH

## INSIDE THE DISTRICT

Mesa Water District is an independent special district that provides 16,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) of domestic water and 1,100 AFY of recycled water to 110,000 customers in an 18-square mile area covering the City of Costa Mesa, parts of the City of Newport Beach, and John Wayne Airport. The District is governed by a publicly elected, five-member Board of Directors responsible for setting policy, establishing rates, and overseeing District operations. Directors serve four-year terms, are elected by district, and represent the District on both internal committees and external agencies. The District employs a total of 61 full-time staff.

Mesa Water's vision is to be a top-performing public water agency. Its mission emphasizes managing finances and water infrastructure, advocating for sound water policy, and reliably delivering an abundance of clean, safe water to enhance the public's quality of life. Core values include prioritizing the health and safety of the public and staff, commitment to excellence, a philosophy of abundance, and a perpetual agency mindset.

For Fiscal Year 2026, the District's has a \$40 million operating budget. The capital budget for the same fiscal year totals \$13.8 million. Mesa Water maintains a strong financial position, holding AAA credit ratings from both Fitch and Standard & Poor's. The District also pursues grant funding and low-interest loans to support capital improvements.

Mesa Water District recently received the ACWA Certificate of Excellence (A.C.E.) award for outstanding achievements in water management, recognizing leadership, innovation, and excellence in stewarding California's water resources. The District relies entirely on local groundwater supplies, with imported water serving as a fully reliable backup. Major infrastructure investments are underway, including the Interagency Water Transfer Project, reservoir upgrades, and local SIP (Supply Improvement Project) which is exploring a brackish groundwater desalination facility. Mesa Water also conducts regular internal process reviews and employee engagement surveys to support continuous improvement efforts.

[Click here to learn more about Mesa Water District's Strategic Goals.](#)

## THE COMMUNITY

Nestled in the vibrant heart of Orange County, California, Mesa Water District proudly serves a dynamic region encompassing the City of Costa Mesa, parts of beautiful Newport Beach, and the bustling John Wayne Airport. This highly desirable area combines the quintessential Southern California lifestyle with a thriving economic and cultural landscape.

Residents of Mesa Water District's service area enjoy a diverse and welcoming community, benefiting from an exceptional quality of life. The region is renowned for its outstanding schools, creating a family-friendly environment within its well-maintained neighborhoods. With sun-drenched beaches just moments away, the area offers unparalleled opportunities for outdoor recreation, including surfing, paddleboarding, and an abundance of parks and green spaces perfect for hiking, biking, and leisurely strolls under the California sun.

Culture and the arts flourish here, with Costa Mesa celebrated as the "City of the Arts" and home to the Segerstrom Center for the Arts, offering world-class performances.



Throughout the year, the community enjoys a rich calendar of events, festivals, and diverse culinary experiences that reflect its lively spirit.

Economically, the region is a powerhouse within Southern California. Key economic drivers include tourism, retail, real estate, technology, and healthcare, with John Wayne Airport (JWA) serving as a major transportation and business hub. John Wayne Airport offers travelers the rare luxury of a world-class airport experience just minutes from the heart of Orange County. This robust and stable economy provides ample opportunities and a high standard of living.

## THE POSITION

Under the direction of the General Manager, the District Engineer leads and oversees all functions of the Engineering Department. This includes managing engineering services, guiding new development projects, and directing the planning, design, and construction of District facilities and water systems. The role also involves coordinating projects with internal departments and external partners while providing high-level technical expertise and administrative support.

As a department leader, the District Engineer exercises independent judgment in the design and construction of capital facilities and in the planning and scheduling of maintenance for a wide range of engineering programs. Responsibilities include prioritizing projects, managing budgets and costs, and ensuring that all work is completed efficiently, meets quality standards, and aligns with District goals.

The District Engineer also ensures compliance with established policies and procedures, while planning, organizing, and supervising the work of staff. This role requires strong leadership, sound decision-making, and the ability to manage complex engineering challenges with initiative, discretion, and accountability. Key responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

- Assuming full management responsibility for all Engineering Department services and activities, including managing and directing engineering, capital projects, planning, design, and construction of District facilities and water systems; ensuring activities are in compliance with applicable codes and District standards; coordinating

assignments with other groups within the District; making recommendations regarding project methodology by assisting in developing project scope, criteria, and staff assignments; establishing project schedules and budgets; monitoring project progress; and attending project meetings to resolve problems and make decisions.

- Reviewing, approving, and signing for development projects; providing technical expertise, review, and approval for civil and process design; reviewing work for effectiveness, sound design, constructability, thoroughness, and adherence to technical standard codes and District standards and procedures; performing feasibility and conceptual studies, detailed studies, evaluations, assessments, and/or designs; and providing technical input on project planning, design, studies, evaluations, and other documents.
- Developing, directing, and managing long-range capital improvement plans; conducting cost-benefit analyses; managing and directing the construction phase of capital improvement and infrastructure refurbishment projects; establishing project goals; drafting scopes of work; drafting and negotiating agreements, including consulting agreements; and mitigating potential construction delays or cost overruns.
- Managing professional services and consultants for large water system construction projects; writing or directing scopes of work in requests for proposal; conducting pre-bid conferences to discuss District requirements; reviewing bids/proposals; evaluating and selecting consultants for professional services; recommending bid awards; preparing, directing, and negotiating agreements with consultants; administering and tracking consultant performance; auditing work for compliance; and approving contracted work.
- Supervising, overseeing, and participating in construction project administration; overseeing engineering plan and specification development.
- Coordinating District engineering services for in-house projects and overseeing contractor/developer projects.
- Participating in the selection, training, supervision, and evaluation of assigned staff; participating in the establishment of performance requirements and personal development targets; providing technical assistance and advice to assigned staff; providing day-to-day leadership; and working with staff to ensure a high-performance, customer service-oriented work environment supporting the department's and District's mission, strategic plan, objectives, and values.
- Overseeing and participating in the development and administration of the department budget; approving the forecast of funds needed for staffing, equipment, materials, and supplies; approving expenditures; implementing budgetary adjustments as appropriate and necessary; and participating in overall District budget development and CIP planning and preparation.
- Researching, analyzing, writing, and presenting a variety of technical and staff reports; interpreting technical reports for non-engineering personnel, Board members, and others; and providing staff assistance to the General Manager.



- Representing the Engineering Department to other departments, elected officials, and outside agencies; coordinating assigned activities with those of other departments and outside agencies and organizations; participating on a variety of boards, commissions, and committees; facilitating and instructing inter-departmental teams regarding technical issues; explaining and defending Department programs, policies, and activities; and negotiating and resolving sensitive and controversial issues.
- Attending and participating in professional group meetings; maintaining awareness of new trends and developments in the field of engineering; and incorporating new developments as appropriate.
- Responding to and resolving difficult and sensitive citizen inquiries and complaints.
- Assisting the Operations Department with engineering and technical decisions; consulting with Operations Department staff to ensure effective system operations; and making recommendations for potential solutions.
- Representing the District in the absence of the General Manager and/or Water Operations Manager.
- Performing related duties as required.

## ENGINEERING PROJECTS

- The Local Supply Improvement Project (Local SIP) is envisioned to be a locally controlled, drought-resilient water supply that treats brackish groundwater into ~6,000 acre-feet per year of reliable potable water available to the communities of Costa Mesa, Huntington Beach, and Newport Beach.
- The Interagency Water Transfer Projects are proposed interties with the neighboring communities of Newport Beach and Huntington Beach to replace imported water supplies with Mesa Water's locally-produced groundwater.



## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The Mesa Water District is seeking a forward-thinking professional with strong managerial and leadership capabilities to serve as its next District Engineer. The ideal candidate brings comprehensive knowledge of employee supervision, including work planning, performance evaluation, staff training, and disciplinary practices, along with a solid foundation in leadership principles. This individual is well-versed in the tools, equipment, and materials used in water utility construction, and is proficient in Computer Aided Design and Drafting (CAD) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). They demonstrate expertise in business writing, report preparation, contract administration, and records management, supported by a strong grasp of mathematical principles as applied to civil engineering. Additionally, the candidate understands budget development and administration, fosters collaborative team environments, and applies effective techniques for engaging with staff, contractors, vendors, and the public to deliver exceptional customer service. Strong communication skills, including a command of English grammar and composition, and familiarity with modern business technologies and coordination tools are essential.

The successful candidate also possesses a proven ability to operate within CAD and GIS environments, analyze hydraulic pipeline systems using computer modeling, and conduct engineering economic and financial analyses. The ideal candidate demonstrates the ability to prepare and manage large, complex budgets and leverage data analytics to inform sound decision-making and long-term planning. With a high degree of professionalism, they handle sensitive and confidential information with discretion. This individual excels at problem-solving; identifying issues, evaluating alternatives, projecting outcomes, and implementing effective solutions aligned with organizational goals. Candidates skilled in researching and assessing innovative service delivery methods and demonstrate the ability to interpret and apply applicable laws, codes, regulations, policies, and standards relevant to their work are sought.

Equally important is a commitment to the people process cultivating a collaborative work environment, empowering teams, and mentoring staff to support both individual success and organizational excellence. The ideal candidate leads with transparency and accountability, building trust across all levels of the organization. They will also prioritize open communication and create opportunities for staff to contribute, grow, and thrive in a supportive and high-performing environment.

Qualified candidates will possess a combination of education and experience that demonstrates the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities for the role. Typically, this includes a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in civil engineering or a closely related field, with a master's degree in civil engineering, environmental engineering, business administration, or public administration preferred. In addition, candidates should have at least eight years of progressively responsible professional experience in water utility engineering, including a minimum of five years managing projects—particularly within the public sector—and at least three years in management roles.



The position also requires possession of a valid California Certificate of Registration as a Professional Civil, Chemical, or Mechanical Engineer, as well as a valid Class C California Driver's License with a satisfactory driving record.

## COMPENSATION

The annual salary range for the District Engineer is \$190,424 - \$262,496; placement within this range is dependent on qualifications and experience. The District offers an excellent benefits package which can be viewed here. Highlights include comprehensive health coverage for employees and their dependents (including \$2,400/month for benefits expenses), life and disability insurance, membership in CalPERS (California Public Employees' Retirement System), a voluntary deferred compensation plan that includes a District match of up to 3.5%, and generous vacation, sick, and holiday leave.

## TO APPLY

If you are interested in this outstanding opportunity, please apply online at:

[www.bobmurrayassoc.com](http://www.bobmurrayassoc.com)

**Filing Deadline:  
May 3, 2026**

Following the closing date, resumes will be screened according to the qualifications outlined above. The most qualified candidates will be invited to personal interviews with Bob Murray & Associates. A select group of candidates will be asked to provide references once it is anticipated that they may be recommended as finalists. References will be contacted only following candidate approval. Finalist interviews will be held with the Mesa Water District. Candidates will be advised of the status of the recruitment following selection of the District Engineer.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call Ms. Yasmin Beers at:

(916) 784-9080

