



# Water News + Views

The Water Hub

# About the Water Hub



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Managing Director  
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We work to make water communications more accessible and activism more effective, so the people most impacted by water challenges have greater power to set the solutions.



# Today's flow

- Changing media landscape
- News analysis + lay of the land
- Adapting your communications
- Q&A



# POLL: Who's in the (virtual) room?

What's your connection to communications?

- It's my primary focus
- It's part of my job
- I read the news
- I'm not involved at all





# Changing media landscape

# Newsrooms have been hit hard

- Record-setting 16k newsroom jobs lost last year (Challenger, Jan. 2021).

## This is an ongoing trend ...

- More than 2,100 U.S. cities have lost a newspaper in the past 15 years.
- *Newspaper jobs dropped by half from 2008 to 2019.*



# Actual 2020 newsroom footage



# Capacity ↓ Competition ↑ = ??

Media analysis: Analyzed 18 months of media coverage

Looked at 3 key themes

1. Water supply
2. Water quality
3. Water access and affordability





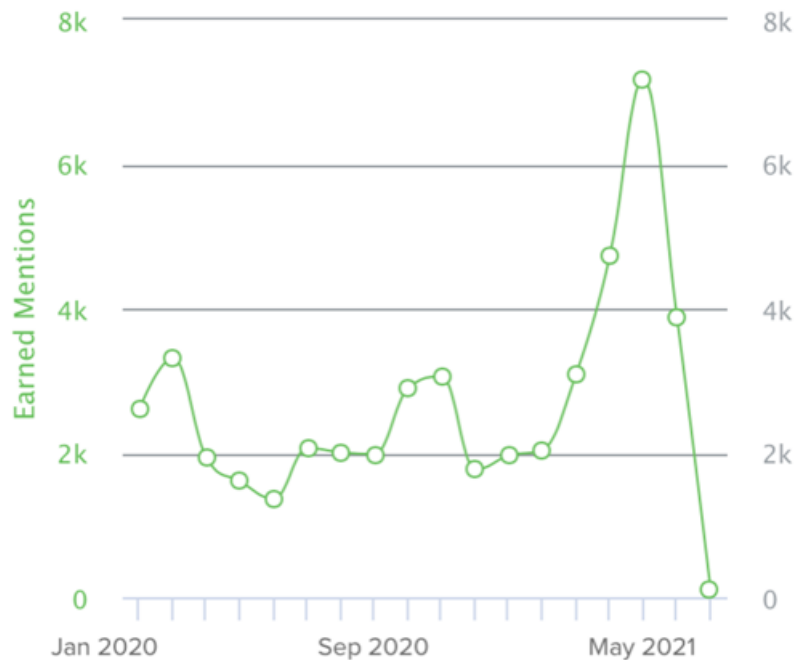
# TLDR: Water is having a moment!!



# Water supply news

**47,596 Total Mentions**  
for Jan 1, 2020 - Jun 1, 2021

Day Week **Month**



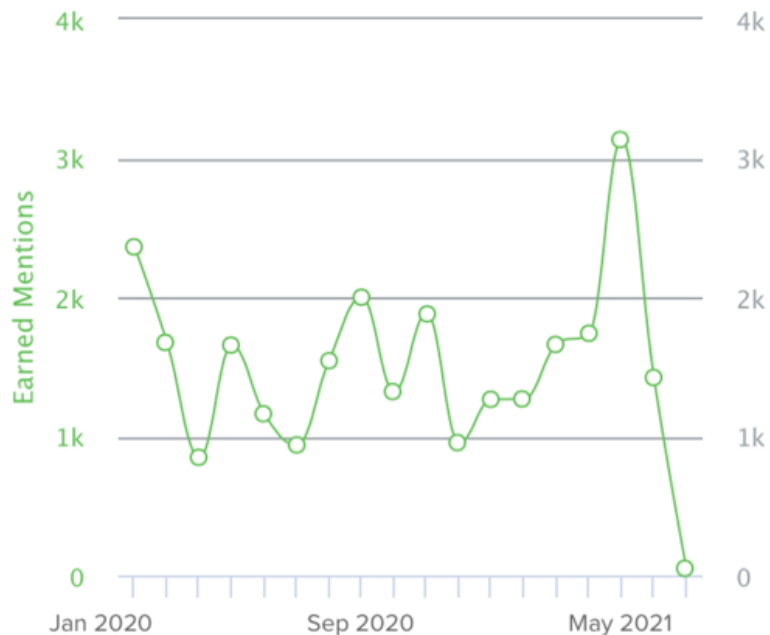
# Water quality news

26,895 Total Mentions  
for Jan 1, 2020 - Jun 1, 2021

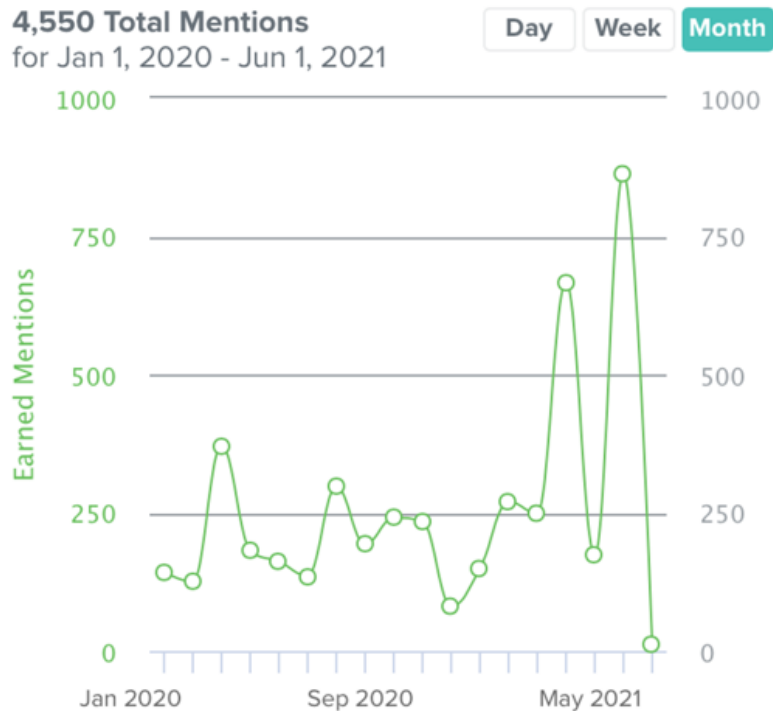
Day

Week

Month



# Water access and affordability





What's getting covered in  
California?

# Drought

## California drought enters dangerous territory. What's ahead for fish, farms and cities

BY DALE KASLER AND RYAN SABALOW

MAY 27, 2021 05:00 AM, UPDATED 1 HOUR 9 MINUTES AGO



This flyover gives comprehensive look at how California water system works

# Water restrictions

## California water: Mandatory restrictions coming to Santa Clara County as feds cut water supply

Worsening drought prompts Bureau of Reclamation to reduce water deliveries



# Groundwater





# Debt + affordability

## As Californians Rack Up \$1 Billion in Water Debt, Advocates Fear Relief Could Come Too Late

 **Nina Sparling**

Friday, January 22, 2021 | Sacramento, CA



LISTEN

1:53



# Drinking water safety

## “I’m Scared of Getting Sick From the Water”

*As state officials lag, more than 300 California communities lack drinkable H<sub>2</sub>O.*

**CLAUDIA BOYD-BARRETT**

[Bio](#)





Reactions? Questions?



What do we do now?

# Media strategy

- **Start with what's timely:** Weather events, seasonal news, etc.
- **Reach beyond newspapers:** Broadcast outlets have had fewer layoffs. Digital ones have no space constraints.
- **Focus on local, niche, ethnic media outlets:** They often receive fewer pitches.

# Focus on “why” rather than “how”

## The Key to Saving Family Farms Is in the Soil

Why you can trust us

BY DAVID R. MONTGOMERY

6 MIN READ

OCT 19, 2019



# Talk about climate solutions



CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT



Want to save energy and fight climate change? Try using less water



# Work with the seasons

## California wastes most of its rainwater, which simply goes down the drain

By HANNAH FRY and ALEJANDRA REYES-VELARDE

FEB 20, 2019 AT 12:20 PM



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# Get super local/specific

## What to plant in your Sacramento-area yard as California faces drought

Resources on drought-tolerant plants, irrigation upgrades that can save money and water

Share



KCRA 

Updated: 12:56 PM PDT May 7, 2021

Infinite Scroll Enabled



**Hope Miller**



# Sometimes water isn't the focus

## New Shared Street Makes Its Debut in Pacoima

Converting an alley parallel to Van Nuys Boulevard

OCTOBER 29, 2020, 1:50PM STEVEN SHARP ↓ 23 COMMENTS



# Think beyond the press release

- Brief statement:
  - “Our take on this breaking news...”
- Media availability:
  - “Experts available...”
  - Note if you have images/b-roll available!



# Op-ed alternatives



- Interview programs
  - Radio
  - Podcasts
- Existing opinion leaders
  - Columnists
  - Bloggers
  - Even threaded tweets



# Make your own media!

- **Develop your digital channels:** Email, Twitter, Facebook, etc.
- **Make it visual:** Images catch the eye and connect to emotion.
- **Consider video:** Smartphone footage and DIY production can go a long way!



Less pain + suffering, please





Questions?



# Thank you!

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