



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Diablo Water District (District) may use social media as an additional means of conveying District information to stakeholders of the District and the general public. Social media is defined as any array of internet-based platforms that allow for the sharing of information.

The District has a right to speak for itself and to select the views that it wants to express as a government agency. (*Pleasant Grove City, Utah v. Summum* (2009) 555 U.S. 460, 466.) The District has an interest and expectation in protecting the speech posted on its social media pages and deciding what is "said" on behalf of the District. This policy does not address personal use of social media by District personnel, elected Board members, or members of the public during a campaign. Under all circumstances, the use of language or any representations, including the use of the District's Logo, that appears to be endorsed by the District and is not authorized for use by the District, is prohibited.

Personnel authorized to manage the District's social media presence shall ensure that the use or access to social media is done in a manner that protects the constitutional rights of all.

This policy provides guidelines to ensure that any use of social media on behalf of the District is consistent with the District's mission, vision and guiding principles. This policy is also intended to mitigate associated risks from the use of social media technology by designated personnel and the general public.

All official District presence on social media is considered an extension of the District's information networks and are governed by District policies, including e-mail, computer, cell phone, and internet usage policies, as well as the District's policies on diversity, equity, and inclusion ("DEI"); harassment; and discrimination.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The General Manager will review plans for social media sites and may delegate this function to a designated employee of his/her choosing. The General Manager and his/her designees will monitor content on all District social media to ensure adherence to the social media policy for appropriate use, message, and branding consistent with the mission, vision and guiding principles of the District.

All content posted by employees on any District social media site shall relate solely to matters of District business and its mission. A comment or post by a member of the public is the opinion of the commenter or poster only, and does not imply endorsement of, agreement with, or reflect the opinions of the District.

The District's official website, www.diablowater.org, remains the District's primary source and means of internet communication. To the extent possible, a link to the District's official website and the District's general contact information shall be included on all District social media accounts.

Information posted on District social media sites will only supplement, and not replace, required notices and standard methods of communication with District residents.

The District is responsible for complying with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies in connection with its use and administration of any social media site, including, but not limited to, copyright, records retention, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), California Public Records Act, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act ("HIPAA"), privacy laws, and confidentiality of personnel information. This policy attempts to address the most common concerns in these regards. Please contact the General Manager with any questions regarding these areas. When needed, the General Manager may confer with legal counsel on these matters.

AUTHORIZED USERS

Only personnel authorized by the General Manager may administer social media on behalf of the District. Authorized page administrators shall have social media training and ensure that all content aligns with the principles of DEI to guide content and interactions.

CONTENT GUIDELINES

Only the General Manager, or the General Manager's designee(s), may use District social media platforms and interact within social media platforms in an official capacity on behalf of the District. When any of these platforms are used, all District personnel, including elected Board members, will abide by the guidelines listed.

APPROPRIATE CONTENT

All content must conform to the District's policies and regulations. All dates of observance for external use will be vetted by the District's DEI Committee, and approved by the General Manager, on an annual basis.

Appropriate content includes, but is not limited to:

- Ensuring that all social media posts are accurate, consistent, and appropriate.
- Always be respectful, professional, and courteous.
- When possible and appropriate, respond to users who ask questions or give feedback.

Authorized personnel are encouraged to respond accurately and appropriately to all comments and encourage the user to contact the District directly if necessary.

- Do not over-promise in response to a customer or resident, only post what can be appropriately done to address an issue (service call, standard treatment, etc.). When in doubt, District Personnel must refer the customer or resident to contact the District directly.
- Do not delete public responses or comments, unless the text contains hateful, profane, or offensive content.
- Maintain all pages and posts as necessary with regular posting on behalf of the District.
- News and media requests shall be referred to the General Manager or Public Information Officer for any and all assistance.
- When sharing District published content, employees or Board members are encouraged to only respond to comments that relate to the original shared content. When responding to comments outside the scope of the shared content, employees and Board members are encouraged to refer the customer or resident to the District's customer service department.

PROHIBITED CONTENT

Prohibited content on District social media pages includes, but is not limited to:

- Confidential, sensitive, or proprietary information or records.
- Content or posts that are abusive, discriminatory, inflammatory, or sexually explicit.
- Posts in violation of individual rights, including confidentiality and/or privacy rights and those provided under state, federal, and/or local laws.
- Copyrighted images or content. Always give people proper credit for their work. Respect copyright and fair use norms online.
- Discussing internal District policies, ideas, and or drafts not yet finalized and adopted by the District's Board or appropriate District personnel.
- Posts that would be in violation of the Ralph M. Brown Act (commencing with Government Code section 54950).

- Any information that could compromise an ongoing investigation.
- Any information that could compromise or damage the mission, function, reputation or professionalism of the District or District Personnel.
- Any information that could compromise the safety and security of District operations or District Personnel.
- Political campaigns or endorsement of a candidate or measure.
- Any content that has not been properly authorized by the General Manager, or the General Manager's designee.

PUBLIC POSTING PROHIBITED

District social media pages shall be designed and maintained to prevent posting of content by the public, excluding comments and/or replies, as allowable through the platform (i.e., spam, ads, etc.).

The District will periodically monitor for other accounts or pages that impersonate the District's official business page on any social media platform. Violations will be reported to the appropriate social media platform.

CONTENT MONITORING AND REMOVAL

As a public entity, the District abides by certain standards to serve all constituents in a civil and unbiased manner. For the purposes of determining whether or not to remove content or comments made on District social media pages, the District's social media accounts shall constitute a limited public forum in relation to protected speech rights.

The District's position on whether or not to remove certain types of comments or content will be reviewed when applicable or necessary with District Counsel.

Content subject to removal will be limited to speech not protected by the First Amendment and/or other applicable speech rights. This is defined as, but may not be limited to:

- Obscenities
- Defamation
- Actual Threats
- Spam
- Illegal Activities
- Malware Links
- Promotion of Illegal Discrimination

- Copyright of Another

These guidelines must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink on all platforms and social media accounts. The decision to remove content can only be made by the General Manager or the General Manger's designee. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained. Any content removed for the above stated reasons will be documented via screenshot complete with date and time of removal, identity of the individual who posted the content, and retained by the District.

RECORDS RETENTION

The District's social media pages are subject to the California Public Records Act. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to District business, including a list of subscribers and posted communication, is a public record. The District is responsible for responding completely and accurately to any records requests relating to social media.

California law and District records retention schedules apply to social media formats and social media content. The District shall preserve records required to be maintained pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule for the required retention period on a District server.

CORRECTIVE AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Violations of this policy will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Violations may result in a variety of District actions or discipline including, but not limited to, the removal of posts/comments, discipline, or termination of employment.