DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS 
AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS
EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
PERRIS, CA
www.emwd.org
ABOUT EMWD
Recognized as a leader in the water industry throughout California and nationally, Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD) is the water, wastewater, and recycled water service provider to nearly one million customers living and working within a 558-square mile service area in Western Riverside County. EMWD is governed by a five-member Board of Directors and conducts its business with the support of a highly trained workforce of approximately 620 employees and a $557 million budget for FY 2023-2024. EMWD benefits from a strong governance model with alignment between the Board and staff on vision, mission and values, and strategic objectives. This collaboration has had a significant influence on EMWD’s success.

THE DEPARTMENT
EMWD makes it a priority to communicate with clarity and purpose, conduct constructive advocacy, and engage in mutually beneficial partnerships through community relations, education, and transparency.

The Strategic Communications and Public Affairs Department’s mission is to effectively communicate with and engage stakeholders to continue building trust and support for EMWD. This is accomplished through multi-media campaigns to promote EMWD services, programs, and key messages. The department’s overarching objective is to raise EMWD’s profile in the service area and the industry through communication and outreach activities. The department is also responsible for planning, creating, managing, and implementing a comprehensive education program for the 11 school districts, individual private schools, and community colleges in EMWD’s service area.

THE POSITION
Reporting to the Assistant General Manager of Strategic Communications, Public Affairs, and Water Use Efficiency, the Director of Strategic Communications and Public Affairs oversees, directs, and participates in all activities of the Strategic Communications and Public Affairs Divisions, including EMWD’s comprehensive education program, is responsible for representing EMWD on public and media relations matters, and serves as chief spokesperson for EMWD on public affairs. Responsibilities include effectively coordinating the activities of the department with those of other departments, the Board of Directors, and outside agencies. The Director of Strategic Communications and Public Affairs will be responsible for, through direct supervision over supervisory, professional, technical, and administrative support staff, accomplishing departmental planning and operational goals and objectives and for furthering organizational goals and objectives within general policy guidelines.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE
The ideal candidate for this position possesses a strong background in communications or journalism, with an in-depth understanding of how communications, outreach, and education are implemented within a water/wastewater agency. The Director of Strategic Communications and Public Affairs will be a detail-oriented,
forward-thinking, creative strategist, demonstrating exceptional judgment in advising staff, executive leadership, and the Board of Directors regarding strategic communications, media, and public relations issues. They will be an excellent writer, editor, and presenter, particularly skilled in communicating complex, technical subjects to a variety of audiences. To be successful in this position, the Director of Strategic Communications and Public Affairs will be a confident, inspirational leader who maintains credibility and professional diplomacy, able to effectively relate to people at all levels internally and externally.

As the leader of a high-performing team at a fast-paced agency, the Director of Strategic Communications and Public Affairs will effectively manage workloads and meet deadlines, keeping up with evolving priorities of the agency with the ability to pivot team assignments to best serve the objective at hand. They will demonstrate a commitment to understanding multiple perspectives and approaches to communication, cross-training, coaching and mentoring staff to support employee’s career goals and the agency’s succession planning efforts. EMWD’s deployment of information is transparent and clear at all levels of the District. The new Director will mirror this same communication style.

**CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

- Reaching audiences is getting more difficult. The Director of Strategic Communications and Public Affairs must be able to track emerging trends, initiate new communication and outreach methods and technologies, and ensure customers are kept informed and understand how agency and/or industry issues may affect them.
- The Director of Strategic Communications and Public Affairs must be able to establish and maintain effective, collaborative relationships with other agencies and industry associations to develop regional, statewide, or nationwide messaging. The Director will be an active participant in ACWA and WateReuse. Additionally, the Director will work with neighboring agencies to support regional educational opportunities.
- The Director of Strategic Communications and Public Affairs will continue previous professional development and leadership training programs and implement new programs that will enhance the staff’s knowledge and skill sets.
- The Director of Strategic Communications and Public Affairs will need to improve internal processes by leveraging technology and providing training to current and future staff on process improvement best practices.
- The Director of Strategic Communications and Public Affairs will assist the district in strategic planning and budget development.
- The Director of Strategic Communications and Public Affairs will play an integral part in planning and implementing EMWD’s upcoming 75th Anniversary celebration.

**EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE**

Graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor’s degree in marketing, public relations, communications, business or public administration, or a related field; and ten (10) years of experience in strategic communications, community engagement and media relations, at least five (5) years of which are management-level, directly supporting elected officials and executive management staff; or an equivalent combination of education and experience. A master’s degree is highly desired, but not required.

**LICENSES/CERTIFICATIONS**

- A valid California driver’s license and the ability to maintain insurability under the District’s vehicle insurance policy.
COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

- The annual salary range for this position is $190,310-$236,984. In recognition of the value its employees deliver to the organization, EMWD offers a generous compensation and benefits package which includes:

- CalPERS Retirement – Classic Members: 2% at 55 benefit formula, the employee pays the 7% contribution. PEPRA Members: 2% at 62 formula, the employee contribution is 7.5%. EMWD does not participate in Social Security. Retiree Medical Coverage is provided through CalPERS with EMWD providing the PEMHCA minimum

- Deferred Compensation – Two programs are offered to employees: 401(a) – EMWD provides annual contributions of $1,180 and a 457 voluntary plan where EMWD provides a match equal to 4.5% of the employees annual salary for Classic employees and a 6% for PEPRA employees

- Medical Plans – Several health plans are offered through CalPERS, with EMWD currently contributing up to $2,535 per month towards the premiums for employee and family; medical-in-lieu program is available with required proof of coverage

- Dental Plan – Full coverage for employee and family in the base plan at no cost with EMWD contributing up to $1,560 annually. Employees have the option to elect an enhanced plan with the employee paying the difference through voluntary payroll deductions

- Vision Plan – Full coverage for employee and family at no cost

- Voluntary Plans – Health Care and Child/Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account, supplemental accident, cancer, and short-term disability insurance available through payroll deductions

- Life Insurance – Equal to annual salary up to a maximum of $250,000 at no cost. Employees may purchase up to an additional $500,000 in life insurance with EMWD paying 50% of the premium

- Paid Time Off (PTO) – 176 hours per year, increase after year 5 completed

- Holidays – 10 paid holidays and 3 floating holidays per year

- Bereavement Leave – up to 5 days per occurrence

- Tuition Reimbursement – up to $6,000 per year

- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) – Available to employees and their families

- Telecommute Opportunities – Available to qualifying employees on a case-by-case basis when operationally feasible and in accordance with the District’s Telecommuting Policy

- Alternative Work Schedule – Employees are provided the opportunity to work a 4/10 or 9/80 work schedule dependent on position and operational needs

HOW TO APPLY

If you are interested in this exciting opportunity, submit your resume to Nancie Shaw in the Human Resources Department. This position is open until filled. First review of submittals will begin after January 19, 2024, so please submit your resume promptly for consideration. Following the initial filing date, resumes will be screened according to the qualifications outlined herein. The most qualified candidates will be invited to personal interviews.

For questions, inquiries, or candidate recommendations, please contact: Nancie Shaw, Human Resources Technician II, (951) 928-3777, ext. 4214, shawn@emwd.org.

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