



Memo

To: Board of Directors
From: Josselyn Quine
Date: May 27, 2026
Subject: District Cost for CSDA Annual Conference

2026 CSDA Annual Conference & Exhibitor Showcase: The Leadership Conference for Special Districts will take place from August 24 – 27, 2026 in Palm Desert, CA. The cost is as follows:

Reservation cut off is July 22nd for Early Bird Registration.

Conference	CSDA Member	\$890.00	(non-member cost: \$990.00)
Hotel	\$159 + tax (x3 nights)	\$477.00	Plus Tax
Mileage @ .725 per mile	161 MILES	\$116.73	
Approx. Cost to District		\$1,483.73	



The CSDA Annual Conference & Exhibitor Showcase is the must-attend event for special district leaders across California! With a densely packed agenda, this conference offers unparalleled opportunities to connect with peers and experts, and learn about new tools and trends.

Network with fellow special district professionals, explore the latest innovations and services in our extensive exhibitors' hall, and choose from over 40 targeted breakout sessions tailored to address today's relevant trends and topics for special districts.

This essential event will sharpen your skills, broaden your knowledge, infuse enthusiasm, and forge new connections. Join us in 2026!



SDRMA Credit Incentive Points

Special District Risk Management Authority (SDRMA) is committed to establishing a strategic partnership with our members to provide maximum protection, help control losses and positively impact the overall cost of property/liability and workers' compensation coverage through the Credit Incentive Program. Credit incentive points (CIPs) can be earned based on an agency's full conference attendance at the CSDA Annual Conference & Exhibitor Showcase, reducing SDRMA members' annual contribution amounts.

SADDLE UP in Palm Desert!

CSDA's 2026 Annual Conference & Exhibitor Showcase is heading to the desert! Attendees can explore the charming El Paseo Shopping District — the "Rodeo Drive of the Desert," where you can savor world-class dining and browse eclectic local shops. Visit the stunning Living Desert Zoo and Gardens to get up close with desert wildlife and breathtaking botanical landscapes or tee off on one of Palm Desert's legendary golf courses for an unforgettable round under the sun. In your free time outside of the conference, soak in the golden desert vistas, vibrant arts scene, and warm southwestern charm that make Palm Desert truly unforgettable!



JW Marriott Desert Springs Resort & Spa
74-855 Country Club Dr, Palm Desert, CA 92260

CSDA room reservations in the CSDA room block start at the rate of \$159 plus discounted \$20 resort fee plus taxes and fees per room per night. The room reservation cut-off is July 22, 2026; however, space is limited and may sell out before this date.

One night's non-refundable room and tax will be charged on July 22, 2026 for rooms reserved in the CSDA room block.

Information about hotel reservations and links to book in the CSDA room block will be emailed to you within 24 hours of registration.



PRE-CONFERENCE Monday, August 24, 2026



6:20 am Tee Times Start
Pre-Conference Activity
SDLF Scramble for Scholarships Golf Outing
Desert Springs Golf Club

Join special district elected officials, staff, and business affiliates at this optional fun event. Great golf skills are not necessary! Proceeds benefit the Special District Leadership Foundation scholarship fund.

\$125 includes golf, a cart, and food and beverage voucher! Hurry, space is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis.

8:30 am - 12:30 pm

Pre-Conference Tour - **Blazing Paddles: A Pre-Conference Tour with Desert Recreation District**

Step into one of the desert's premier recreation facilities for a hands-on pickleball experience and guided tour hosted by the Desert Recreation District (DRD). DRD has exclusively reserved the day for our group, offering a dedicated block of court time and an inside look at their indoor pickleball operations.

Participants can jump into a friendly round-robin session led by DRD staff. To ensure the best possible playing experience—and to honor how seriously our members take their pickleball—DRD will have a certified instructor to help run matches and keep play flowing. Whether you're a seasoned player or brand new to the sport, everyone will have a chance to get on the court. Not a player? You're still invited! DRD will also lead a facility tour for attendees interested in learning about district operations, programming, and community engagement. Their team, board members, and general manager will be on-site throughout the visit to answer questions and showcase their work.

The tour is fully indoors, so weather won't be a concern. Join us for a fun, informative kickoff to conference week—where recreation, community, and a little friendly competition come together.

\$50 per person, includes transportation to/from the hotel and tour. Early registration is encouraged.

9:00 am - 3:30 pm

Pre-Conference Workshop:

Special District Leadership Academy Module 1: Governance Foundations

Hilary Straus, Citrus Heights Water District

SDRPA CIP ELIGIBLE

As the core curriculum of CSDA's Special District Leadership Academy, this workshop serves as the "foundation" for the series on effective governance of special districts. It is specifically designed for special district board members and meets the requirement for six hours of governance training for Special District Leadership Foundation programs.

*\$325 CSDA Member / \$650 Non-member
Price includes continental breakfast and lunch*

9:00 am - 3:30 pm

Pre-Conference Workshop:

So, You Want to Be a General Manager?*

*Sean Barclay, Tahoe City Public Utility District
Melissa Asher, CPS HR Consulting*

**Qualifies toward the completion of the Essential Leadership Skills Certificate*

Sponsored by:  **SPECIAL DISTRICT LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION**

This is a practical career development workshop for senior executives and emerging leaders in special districts. This action-oriented workshop includes group and panel discussions on the journey, roles, and skillsets of a general manager; identifying general manager opportunities; developing positive relations with the board, staff, and peer agency executives; and leadership best practices.

*\$130 CSDA Member and Non-member
Price includes continental breakfast and lunch*



Monday, August 24, 2026

9:00 am - 3:30 pm

Pre-Conference Workshop:

Three Required Trainings for Today's Special Districts

Ethics AB 1234 Compliance Training - Gary Bell, Colantuono, Highsmith & Whatley, PC
Sexual Harassment Prevention Training for Supervisors - Katherine Read and Ryan Hallett, Richards Watson Gershon
SB 827 Fiscal & Financial Training - Rick Wood, CSDA

Today's special district leaders are expected to govern ethically, foster respectful workplaces, and provide sound fiscal oversight. This six-hour pre-conference workshop offers a streamlined way to complete California's required training for special district officials, including ethics (AB 1234), sexual harassment prevention for governing bodies (AB 1825/AB 1661), and finance and fiscal responsibilities under SB 827. Designed specifically for special districts, this session blends statutory compliance with practical guidance to support confident, effective governance.

\$325 CSDA Member / \$650 Non-member
Price includes continental breakfast and lunch

1:00 - 3:00 pm

Pre-Conference:

Certified Special District Manager (CSDM) Exam, Special District Leadership Foundation*

**Optional - Must be scheduled prior to the conference*

3:30 - 5:00 pm

Pre-Conference:

Chapter Leaders Meeting*

Join CSDA board members and local chapter leaders from across the state to share best practices and discuss issues and opportunities. The meeting will begin with networking and refreshments with CSDA Diamond and Platinum Business Affiliate Members, including information on how they can help support your chapter's efforts!

**Optional - No fee, but must be attending the conference to participate*

4:00 - 5:00 pm

Pre-Conference:

First Rodeo Meet Up*

Where new faces get the lay of the land

Saddle up for a relaxed reception designed for new CSDA members, prospective CSDA members, and first-time attendees. Join us before the conference officially kicks off, to meet fellow attendees, connect with CSDA board and committee members, and pick up a few insider tips on navigating the conference. It's an easy way to find your footing, make a few connections, and head into the conference feeling ready to ride.


**Optional - No fee, but must be attending the conference to participate*



CONFERENCE OFFICIALLY BEGINS!

5:15 - 7:30 pm

President's Reception with the Exhibitors



Pull on your boots and head to the exhibit hall for the official kickoff of the 2026 CSDA Annual Conference. Connect with fellow attendees and business partners who support special districts across California. Enjoy appetizers, refreshments, and light entertainment as we kick off the conference in true Western style.

Reception is included in the conference registration.

SCHEDULE Tuesday, August 25, 2026

7:00 am - 6:00 pm

Registration Open

7:30 am - 6:30 pm

Exhibitor Showcase Open

7:30 - 8:30 am

CSDA Board Meeting

7:30 - 8:30 am

Continental Breakfast in the Exhibit Hall/Raffle

Breakfast is included in conference registration.




8:45 - 10:45 am

Opening General Session and Keynote

"POWERED BY PURPOSE"

Ben Nemtin, Star of Hit TV Series "The Buried Life" & Co-Founder of The Buried Life Movement; New York Times Bestselling Author; Mental Health Advocate


Sponsored by: 

In today's relentless environment, where uncertainty reigns supreme and burnout threatens even the strongest teams, why do some organizations continue to thrive while others struggle? Ben reveals the game-changing truth: purpose isn't just a buzzword, it's the secret weapon that fueled his own extraordinary journey, lifting him from the depths of depression to ignite a global movement and achieve the seemingly impossible.

Through compelling scientific evidence and unforgettable stories, Ben demonstrates how embracing your professional and personal purpose unleashes untapped potential, creates true work-life harmony, and empowers you to become the best version of yourself.

In this revolutionary keynote, discover why purpose-driven individuals and teams are 7x more likely to overcome challenges, focusing on the "why" that ignites passion and resilience. Ben masterfully blends cutting-edge science with captivating storytelling to reveal how purpose transforms organizational culture from the inside out.

Leaders will gain actionable strategies to build trust, authentically demonstrate care for their teams' well-being, and foster innovation, retention, and breakthrough performance. This isn't merely theoretical, it's a strategic blueprint for translating purpose into tangible outcomes and cultivating a workplace that inspires genuine passion.

 **Awards Presented:**

- ▶ General Manager of the Year
- ▶ Board Member of the Year
- ▶ Staff Member of the Year
- ▶ SDLF Certificate in Special District Governance
- ▶ SDLF Certified Special District Manager
- ▶ SDLF Essential Leadership Skills Certificate

All registered conference attendees are welcome.



11:00 am - 12:00 pm

Breakout Sessions

What's New in CEQA Review: Key Updates and Practical Strategies

Amanda Daams, Best Best & Krieger LLP

Stay ahead of the curve on the latest developments in CEQA. This session will break down recent legislative updates and important case law from the past year, with a focus on changes aimed at streamlining the CEQA review process. Designed with special districts in mind, the presentation will go beyond theory to offer practical, real-world examples and actionable insights to help you navigate and implement these updates with confidence. Whether you're looking to sharpen your understanding or improve your approach, this session will provide the tools you need to stay informed.

Civility in Action: Building Respectful Workplaces in the Public Sector

Yolanda Underwood, CPS HR Consulting

This webinar will provide practical strategies for identifying workplace incivility, managing emotionally charged interactions, and navigating uncomfortable conversations in a productive way. Participants will leave with tools to help foster healthier communication and more respectful workplace interactions.

When is Early Enough? Engaging High School Students in Internships

Rachel Murphy, Contra Costa Water District

This panel brings together utilities and partners to offer insights and success stories to help you create safe, engaging, and inspiring high school internship programs that cultivate California's future workforce.

The Long Game: Communicating for a Future You May Never See

Tiffany Baca and Sarah Wilson, Municipal Water District of Orange County

Communicators often chase quick metrics, but lasting impact grows slowly. This session shows how long-term education programs build trust, reach future audiences, and deliver enduring value far beyond quick wins.

Navigating the Funding Landscape: Grant Strategies for State, Federal, and Local Funding

Alex Gibbs, Townsend Public Affairs

A practical, insider guide to identifying the right funding opportunities, aligning projects with agency priorities, and

writing competitive applications across state, federal, and local programs.

Enhancing Cybersecurity Preparedness in Uncertain Times - A Special District Perspective!

*Girum Awoke, CSDM, Alameda County Water District
Corey Kaufman, VC3*

This presentation will highlight the actionable steps a special district has taken to build resilience and protect essential services based on lessons learned from recent incidents that caused systemwide outages and disruption to service delivery.

Empowered to Protest AND Object: New Procedures for Adopting Assessments and Water and Wastewater Fees

*Sara Mares, NBS
Megan Burke, Jarvis Fay, LLP*

Learn how to utilize the optional legal process, set forth in AB 2257, effective January 1, 2025, which protects public agencies from future legal challenges by requiring any potential challengers to file an objection, to be considered during the assessment or fee adoption hearing, and will limit any potential lawsuits to the grounds asserted in the objections.

Authentic Leadership and Communication in Special District Governance

Charlene Engeron, Mojave Water Agency

Learn how authentic leadership strengthens governance, builds public trust, improves communication under pressure, and enhances board-GM alignment. This session provides practical strategies to lead with clarity, consistency, and confidence.

12:00 - 1:30 pm

Lunch with the Exhibitors

All attendees are welcome to attend lunch in the exhibit hall. Enjoy your lunch while taking time to learn more about our exhibitors and the valuable services they provide. From risk management to accounting, HR, legal, banking services, and more – our exhibitors have some of the best of what you're looking for!

Lunch is included in the conference registration.



1:30 - 3:00 pm

Breakout Sessions

Supercharging Community Support

*Hilary Straus and Ray Riehle, Citrus Heights Water District
Jennifer Liebermann, Jennifer Liebermann Consulting*

Supercharge community engagement to support capital projects and funding. Learn how a special district is tackling a \$500M infrastructure project through community engagement, resulting in public support and new funding.

Creating Your Own Prevailing Wage Checklist

Deborah Wilder, Contractor Compliance and Monitoring, Inc.

You have attended many prevailing wage educational sessions and webinars, but what you really need is an all-inclusive checklist of prevailing wage obligations. The checklist outlines what is required under California prevailing wage and when a project may also require Davis-Bacon compliance or Skilled and Trained Workforce provisions. Join this class to receive your own copy of the Prevailing Wage Checklist and review the specific requirements based on your funding source.

Proposition 218 in Practice: Emerging Trends, Legal Updates, and Real-World Solutions

Lutfi Kharuf, Best Best & Krieger LLP

As the legal and regulatory environment surrounding Proposition 218 continues to evolve, agencies must adapt their approach to rate setting and cost allocation. This session brings together legal insight and practical experience to unpack key developments shaping property-related fees. Attendees will gain a clearer understanding of compliance requirements, explore recent court decisions and legislation, and walk through case studies that highlight effective, defensible strategies in action.

Pure Water Soquel: from Day 1 to Done

*Taj Dufour, Soquel Creek Water District
Rebecca Takacs and David Gehrig, Hanson Bridgett, LLP*

Staff and legal counsel from the district discuss the concept, strategy, and successful completion of the Pure Water Soquel program for new recycled water facilities that will halt seawater intrusion into the local groundwater basin. The program will discuss selection of progressive design-build as the delivery method, the procurement process, key

terms and negotiation of the phased agreement, technical challenges, use of a Project Neutral for disputes, and successful resolution of claims.

SB 707 and the Brown Act: What You Need to Know

Fabi Ceja and Travis Kaya, Richards Watson Gershon

Recent updates to the Brown Act under SB 707 bring important changes to public meeting requirements, enforcement, and compliance expectations for local agencies. This session is designed specifically for board members and executive leadership, providing a clear, practical overview of what has changed, what remains the same, and where agencies face increased risk. Learn how SB 707 affects meeting procedures, public participation, and cure-and-correct demands—and what steps you should take to ensure compliance and protect your agency.

The Role of AI in Special Districts: Legal Risks and Governance Solutions

Gabriella Kamran, Liebert Cassidy Whitmore

Gain insight into AI's rapid expansion in special districts, including associated legal risks, policy considerations, and governance solutions designed to help agencies adopt AI tools responsibly while safeguarding public trust and operational integrity.

Financing From the Other Side: An Insider's Perspective

*William Morton, Municipal Finance Corporation
Rick Brandis, Oppenheimer & Co. Inc.*

What are lenders and investors really thinking when they review your financing request? CSDA Finance Corporation consultants break down your agency's funding options, the credit review process, what raises flags, what builds confidence, and what you can do now to position a successful closing.

Navigating LAFCO with Confidence - A Practical Guide for Special Districts

*Gary Bell, Colantuono, Highsmith & Whatley, PC
Michelle McIntyre, CALAFCO*

Special districts regularly interact with Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs), yet the process and purpose can often feel complex or unclear. This session is designed to demystify LAFCO and provide practical insight into how special districts can build productive, collaborative relationships when updating service reviews and spheres-of-influence or considering a change of organization like annexation, consolidation, or activation of latent powers.



3:30 - 4:45 pm

Breakout Sessions

Recommendations on Handling Difficult Board Situations (Meetings or Otherwise)

Richard Pio Roda and Alex Mog, Redwood Public Law, LLP

Gain an understanding of and learn best practices on how to handle difficult situations that may happen at a Board meeting, a closed session, and interpersonally amongst Board members.

Implementing Progressive Design-Build Under California's New Statutes

Michael Moore and Edmund Caplicki, Nossaman, LLP

This presentation explores how new legislation expands progressive design-build, offering flexible, efficient project delivery as demonstrated by East Valley Water District's construction of the Sterling Natural Resource Center wastewater treatment facility.

Optimizing District Performance Through Strategic Organizational Assessments

Michelle New and John Andrews, Jacob Green & Associates

Discover how organizational assessments uncover inefficiencies, optimize workflows, and build capacity, empowering special districts to deliver superior services and achieve sustainable operational excellence.

Fiscal Roadmap for District Consolidation

*Mary Morris-Mayorga, Kensington Fire Protection District
David Spath, Kensington Community Services District
Dmitry Semenov, Ridgeline Municipal Strategies*

The session explores financial aspects of district consolidation: due diligence, strategic and financial planning, fiscal analysis and long-term forecasting, and using the financial data in decision making. The story of the two Kensington districts provides a case study.

Teamwork Makes the Dreamwork - How to Focus on Your Team for Success

Roland Williams and Naomi Lue, Castro Valley Sanitary District

CVSan has built a strong team that has fueled an award-winning organization. We will discuss the tactics and approach to our teambuilding program that has been in place for more than 20 years. The process we use is effective, affordable and fun!

Building Financial Sustainability in Special Districts

Josh Byerrum and Samantha Prall, Platinum Strategies Inc

Strategies for long-term fiscal health: establish reserve policies, forecast multi-year budgets, manage revenue volatility, balance restricted/unrestricted funds, and apply lessons from water, fire, and resource district case studies.

Top 10 Board Member Best Practices

Justin Scott-Coe, CSDM, and Sandra Rose, Monte Vista Water District

Building on 25 years of experience as a Board Member and President at Monte Vista Water District, Sandra Rose will offer practical insights on navigating board dynamics, partnering effectively with management, and handling the realities of public sector politics. This 2025 CSDA Board Member of the Year will also discuss sustaining balance and purpose throughout a long service commitment.

AI-Era Leadership: Human Skills That Can't Be Automated

Lisa Kjellstrom, CPS HR Consulting

With AI taking over tasks, what's left for leaders? Everything that makes us human. In this forward-focused course, we'll explore the uniquely human traits that define 21st-century leadership - empathy, ethics, communication, creativity - and how to sharpen them in an age of automation. Future-proof your leadership today.

5:00 - 6:30 pm

Mix and Mingle in the Exhibit Hall



Stop by the exhibit hall for one final chance to chat with the exhibitors, enjoy a drink and hors d'oeuvres, and enter for more chances to win one of our fabulous prizes!

The exhibit hall closes on Tuesday, August 25 at 6:30 pm

Reception is included in full conference registration.

SCHEDULE

Wednesday, August 26, 2026

7:00 am - 6:00 pm

Registration Open

8:00 - 8:30 am

SDRMA Sponsored Full Plated Breakfast

Breakfast is included in the full conference registration.


8:30 - 10:30 am

General Session Keynote

THINKING INSIDE THE BOX:

How Tough Times Fuel True Creativity and Innovation

Kyle Scheele, Innovation and Leadership Speaker, Champion of Crazy Ideas, Accidental TikTokker (3M+ Followers), Author

Sponsored by: 

We've all said it: "If only I had _____, then I could do _____."

We're convinced that the only thing standing between us and our best work is more money, more time, more resources, more buy-in, a better team, a better boss, a better piece of software... the list goes on.


But the truth is, real creative work thrives within constraints.

True creative work exists in the gap between what you have and what you think you need. After all, if you had everything you needed, you wouldn't need creativity at all.

True creativity showed up when the Apollo 13 astronauts had to make square filters fit round tubes. It showed up when a global pandemic made in-person work a liability. And it'll show up for you too, once you let go of your misguided beliefs about what true creativity requires.

In this talk, Kyle will:

- ▶ Show how constraints are the breeding ground for creativity.
- ▶ Identify the difference between constructive constraint and restrictive constraint.
- ▶ Help reframe the constraints in your organization and find the solutions you've been searching for.
- ▶ Walk through tools and exercises to break through creative blocks.

 **Awards Presented:**

- ▶ SDRMA Safety Awards
- ▶ SDLF Transparency Certificate of Excellence
- ▶ SDLF District of Distinction

All registered conference attendees welcome.

10:45 am - 12:00 pm

Breakout Sessions

Strategic Planning for Special District Boards and Managers

Rock Rockenbach, Rock Solid Options

Practical approaches for boards and managers to develop strategic plans that align policy and execution, translate priorities into actionable projects, and move ideas from vision to implementation.

The Playbook for Responding to Catastrophic Injuries

Jeff Rush, California JPIA

Debbie Yokota, ARM, CPCU, CSDM, Special District Risk Management Authority

Catastrophic work injuries occur on a regular basis to employees at public agencies of all sizes. These life-changing claims are complex, individualistic and require much higher standards of coordination and communication. Jeff Rush will draw on over three decades of experience to address what to do during each step of the process, the parties who will assist you and your employee and the one tip you can use to reduce the likelihood that your employee retains an attorney.

Emergency and Disaster Preparedness for Board Members

Michael Saunders, Georgetown Divide Public Utility District

This session provides board members with a practical overview of how to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters. Participants will explore steps they can take now to position themselves and their agencies for an effective response, including key policies and plans that should be in place and personal preparedness considerations. The session will cover the board's role before, during, and after an emergency; how responsibilities—particularly those of the Board President—may shift during a crisis; and best practices and strategies for communication, including working with staff and the public. The goal is to ensure board members understand their governance role, support management appropriately, and can navigate their district before, during and after an emergency.

Hiring Retirees the Right Way

Steven Berliner and John LaCrosse, Liebert Cassidy Whitmore

With workforce shortages and institutional knowledge loss accelerating, public agencies are relying on retired annuitants as a practical solution more than ever. But rehiring retirees comes with a thicket of legal requirements, from strict limitations on the work they can perform to the 180-day sit-out rule, plus limits on hours and wages. This session walks through what you can and can't do under the law and CalPERS' guidance, plus CalPERS enforcement

procedures and penalties. The presenters will share their extensive experience in these matters, offering practical tips and best practices for structuring assignments that meet your agency's needs without putting retiree pensions or agency compliance at risk.

How Special Districts Can Integrate AI Into Their Operations

Kevin Benson, VC3

Artificial Intelligence is no longer just for large cities or private-sector organizations - it is increasingly accessible and practical for special districts of all sizes. This session will provide a clear, real-world look at how AI can be applied across district operations to improve efficiency, enhance service delivery, and support better decision-making. Attendees will learn how AI tools can streamline administrative tasks, assist with customer service, improve asset and infrastructure management, and unlock insights from existing data. The session will focus on practical, low-risk entry points, including the use of tools already available, as well as considerations around governance, data security, and public transparency.

Stop Being Conflicted - Conflicts of Interest 101 and Legal Updates

Jeffrey and Kevin Harris, Atkinson; Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo

Every public employee risks encountering conflict-of-interest issues without a solid understanding of California's conflict-of-interest laws. Simply reading the statutes and regulations often isn't enough, as the law's nuances can be complex and challenging to interpret. This presentation will provide an overview and legal updates on conflicts of interest, including Government Code section 1090, the Political Reform Act, and common law conflicts.

Reserves & Investment Policies: How Much Is Enough and What Your Policies Should Actually Say

Rick Wood, CSDA

Everyone agrees reserves matter...until someone asks why you're "sitting on all that money." This session cuts through the confusion around reserve targets, giving you the language to explain and defend your position with boards, the public, and auditors, while also examining when tapping reserves is actually the right call. We'll go beyond boilerplate investment policies to tackle the liquidity vs. yield tension, how to update policies in volatile markets, and what auditors and rating agencies are really looking for. Walk away with practical tools to defend your reserve levels and a sharper policy framework to back them up.



Wednesday, August 26, 2026

Zero Carbon, Full Throttle: No Excuses, Just Implementation

Dan Muelrath, Wayne Weaver, Kait Knight, and Jennifer McCoy, Diablo Water District

Learn how Diablo Water District is driving full-throttle toward zero carbon by 2027, sharing real-world lessons from green buildings, renewable fuels, and solar projects — with a focus on implementation over excuses.

11:00 am - 12:00 pm

SDLF Board and Annual Meeting

12:15 - 2:30 pm

Policy and Practice - A Legislative and Legal Update

CSDA Advocacy and Legal Affairs Team

Trying to keep up with the relentless action affecting special districts in our Capitols and Courts? Catch-up on the biggest legislative, budgetary, and legal issues impacting local governments and the communities they serve. This session will cut through the noise and provide a high-level overview of the key public policy matters that truly do matter most to our membership.

Awards Presented:

- ▶ Innovative Project/Program of the Year Award (large district)
- ▶ Innovative Project/Program of the Year Award (small district)
- ▶ Exceptional Public Outreach & Advocacy Award (large district)
- ▶ Exceptional Public Outreach & Advocacy Award (small district)
- ▶ Ralph Heim Exceptional Outreach & Advocacy Award
- ▶ CSDA Lifetime Achievement Award

Lunch is included in the conference registration.

2:45 - 3:45 pm

Breakout Sessions

International Water Partnership Strengthens Communities Across Borders

Tom Coleman and Dusty Moisis, Rowland Water District

This year-long initiative, supported by the Asian Development Bank's Water Organizations Partnerships for Resilience (WOP4R) program, established a twinning partnership through which Rowland Water District provided

mentorship and technical guidance to Norzagaray Water District (Philippines) to enhance operations, reduce water loss, and strengthen accounting practices.

Your Wish Is My Command - How to Efficiently Manage CPRA Requests

Kevin Harris and Nicolle Falcis, Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo

California public agencies are receiving an increasing number of California Public Records Act requests from the public. While it is essential to respect constituents' constitutional rights, managing requests that involve large volumes of documents can be challenging. Public entities must strike the right balance, protecting rights to access public information while minimizing operational burdens of these CPRA requests. This presentation will provide an overview of CPRA laws, practical guidance on responding to CPRA requests, key exemptions/privileges, conducting efficient searches of responsive documents, and strategies for managing voluminous/vexatious CPRA requests.

How to Properly Tender Property Liability Claims and What to Expect

Roberto Lozano, Special District Risk Management Authority

A discussion on the principles of tendering / risk transfer with specific focus on practical application. Focus will be on best practices for tendering new claims to subcontractors/ vendors and effective strategies to secure timely and positive outcomes with real world case examples.

What You Don't Know Can Hurt You: Social Security Coverage Issues for Public Agency Employees

Nancy G. Hilu, Hanson Bridgett, LLP

This session will focus on Social Security coverage basics, potential coverage pitfalls and associated liability your agency may face, what agencies can do to ensure their employees have coverage, when intended, and how to use the modification process to obtain Social Security coverage as well as other ways to reduce your agency's risk in this area.

Financial Technology and Innovation in Special District Finance

Josh Byerrum and Samantha Prall, Platinum Strategies, Inc.

Leverage modern accounting/payroll systems for efficiency and transparency. Select and integrate software, utilize data analytics for informed decisions, and train staff to optimize financial operations using innovative tools.



Postscript to the Lunch General Session Legislative and Legal Update

CSDA Advocacy and Legal Affairs Team

Did you leave today's Legislative and Legal Update Luncheon still hungry for more? That's what the "Postscript" breakout session is for. Here's your chance to meet with the heads of CSDA's advocacy and legal team in a smaller setting designed to address your questions related to the topics presented earlier during the general session. P.S. Be sure to bring your notes and plenty of questions – this is intended to be one big Q&A session.

One Voice, Clear Expectations: How Boards Can Get General Manager Evaluations Right

Martin Rauch, Rauch Communication Consultants, Inc.

Learn a practical, strategic approach to General Manager performance evaluations that strengthens board–manager relationships, clarifies expectations, aligns with goals, and helps boards deliver fair, effective evaluations with one voice.

Unlocking Your Agency's Future: Succession Planning Through Talent Development

*Christine Martin, Tripepi Smith
Jason Hays, Tahoe-Truckee Sanitation Agency
Sean Barclay, Tahoe City Public Utility District*

Succession planning is no longer optional for agencies facing retirements, competitive hiring markets, and evolving leadership demands. This session explores practical strategies to intentionally attract, develop, and retain talent with an eye toward long-term leadership continuity. Learn how to identify critical roles, build internal career pathways, and position your agency as an employer of choice—ensuring institutional knowledge is preserved and future leaders are ready when transitions occur.

2:45 - 3:45 pm

CSDA Finance Corporation Board and Annual Meeting

4:00 - 5:00 pm

Breakout Sessions

From Insight to Influence: Developing Political Acumen

Mary Egan, Cathy Capriola, and Tasha Tervalon, MRG LLC

Learn to lead with political acumen—a core leadership competency. Build insight, integrity, and influence to

navigate complexity, drive impact, and elevate your leadership in any environment.

Public Funds Investing 101: Compliance, Safety, and Strategy

Sarah Meacham and Bob Shull, California CLASS

This presentation will discuss the basics of investing your agency's public funds in compliance with the California Government Code and simple strategies to maintain a safe, liquid, and productive investment portfolio.

Trail Blazers: New and Future GM Meetup

*Justin Scott-Coe, CSDM, Monte Vista Water District
Scott Carroll, CSDM, Costa Mesa Sanitary District*

This engaging and interactive breakout session is designed exclusively for new and aspiring General Managers. "Trail Blazers" is your opportunity to connect with peers, share experiences, and gain valuable insights into the dynamic role of serving as a general manager. Whether you're new to the position or setting your sights on the next horizon in your career, gain practical strategies, leadership tools, and industry best practices to navigate the challenges ahead.

Internal Controls for Small Staff

Roger Martinez, Vasquez + Company, LLP

For districts with small teams, internal controls must be practical, flexible, and sustainable. This session will highlight simple, high-impact practices - including technology-enabled controls - that strengthen oversight without adding headcount. Topics include segregation-of-duties alternatives, workflow and approval automation, and policy-based controls that improve transparency. We'll also discuss right-sized options, such as shared services, and third-party providers to reduce key-person risk and improve control consistency. Attendees will leave with actionable ideas and low-cost solutions they can apply immediately.

Are You ADA Compliant? Tackling Website and PDF Accessibility

Mac Clemmens, Streamline, powered by CivicPlus

Learn how to assess ADA compliance across websites and PDFs, improve accessibility, and apply practical tools and strategies to build an inclusive, compliant digital presence for your community.



Wednesday, August 26, 2026



5:00 - 6:00 pm

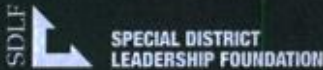
SDRMA Member Reception (by Invitation Only)

Mosey on over for some refreshments, vittles and a chance to win raffle prizes before heading to the Taste of the City reception. Network with your fellow SDRMA members and get to know the friendly ranch hands of the SDRMA crew!

Electronic invitation to follow in early August

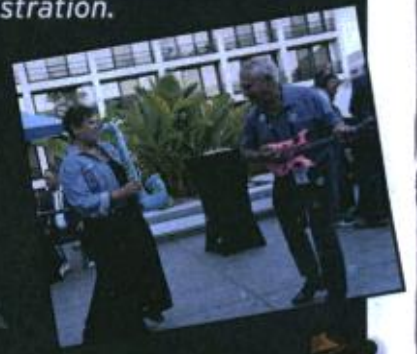
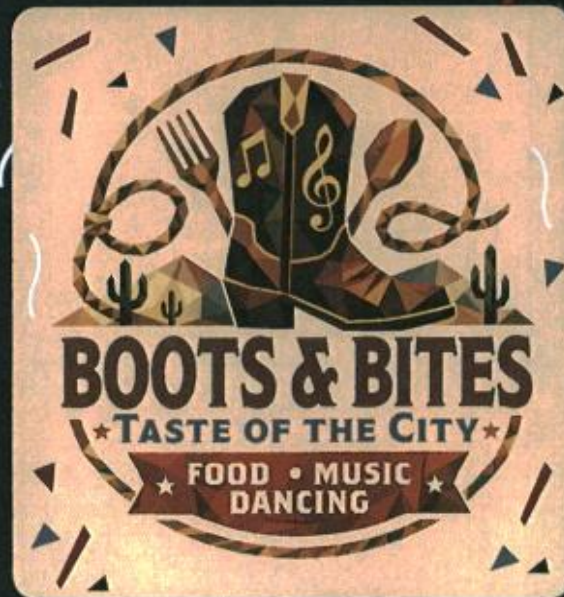
6:00 - 9:00 pm

Taste of the City - Boots & Bites



Pull on your boots for Taste of the City – Boots & Bites, an evening of local flavors, great company, and Western style fun. Enjoy line dancing lessons and live performances with the Ventucky Stompers and DJ Rick and take part in a silent auction benefiting the Special District Leadership Foundation.

Reception is included with full conference registration.



SCHEDULE Thursday, August 27, 2026

8:00 - 10:00 am

Stronger Together: A District Collaboration Breakfast

Join district elected leaders and staff for a closing breakfast focused on reflecting, connecting, and carrying relationships forward. This session offers time to meet others from similar district types, share perspectives, and continue conversations started throughout the conference. Wrap up the event by strengthening professional connections and reinforcing the collaborative approach that supports effective public service across California.

Awards Presented:

- ▶ Excellence in Technology
- ▶ Chapter of the Year

Breakfast is included in full conference registration.

10:00 am

Conference Adjourns



Registration Fees

Save \$\$\$ by registering early!

Early Bird (on or before July 22, 2026)

- Member (Full Conference) \$890
- Non-member (Full Conference) \$1,780
- Guest of a CSDA Member* - Full Conference \$460
- Guest of a CSDA Non-member* - Full Conference \$920
- Member (One-day Registration) \$495
- Non-member (One-day Registration) \$990

Regular Registration (After July 22, 2026)

- Member (Full Conference) \$990
- Non-member (Full Conference) \$1,980
- Guest of a CSDA Member* - Full Conference \$565
- Guest of a CSDA Non-member* - Full Conference \$1,130
- Member (One-day Registration) \$530
- Non-member (One-day Registration) \$1,060

*Guest registration includes all meal functions, receptions (including Taste of the City), and Keynote sessions. Guests cannot be from a district or from a company that serves districts. We also offer a Taste of the City-only guest registration, as well as a Party Pack guest registration, which includes all three evening receptions.

Not sure if you are a member? Contact the CSDA office at 877-924-2732 to find out if your agency or company is already a member. To learn more about the many benefits of CSDA membership contact Member Services at membership@csda.net or 877-924-2732.

