

December 18, 2025



Santa Flies Through the Skies to Deliver Presents and Meals to 1,500 Monterey County Children

KING CITY, Calif.—Christmas arrived early at the Salinas Valley Fairgrounds on Thursday, with the arrival of a very special guest – Santa Claus. As part of an annual event organized by Monterey County Supervisor Chris Lopez and local water utility California Water Service, with support from other community organizations, Santa traded his reindeer for a helicopter and touched down with a bag of toys for 1,500 children and meals for more than 500 families. These families, many of whom serve as farmworkers or laborers feeding the nation, were pre-selected by local school districts based on financial need.

“We thank Santa Claus, for once again, prioritizing the children of Southern Monterey County. With families from Lockwood to Soledad participating this year, the magic we can make together is growing,” Monterey County Supervisor Chris Lopez said. “With over 100 elves from the community joining our partners, it shows that this is a community where we look out for one another. I hope these are memories that will last generations.”

It was an honor to be a part of bringing joy to the community through Operation Santa, said Steve Vasquez, Operations Manager of California Water Service’s King City District. “We are absolutely honored to be able to help serve our community and witness the joy of the season,” he said. “At Cal Water, we aren’t just a water company, we are part of our communities, and we recognize the importance of caring for the people in the communities we serve.”

The event, in its fifth year, gave families a chance to enjoy food and music as they awaited Santa’s arrival. Once on ground from the helicopter provided by Fort Hunter Liggett, Santa listened to little ones’ requests and took photos before waving farewell to families that were leaving with pozole boxes and gifts in tow.

Operation Santa was brought to residents by Monterey County Supervisor Chris Lopez and local water utility California Water Service, and supported by Speaker of the Assembly Robert Rivas, Fort Hunter Liggett, Food Bank for Monterey County, City of King, King City Police Department, Chevron, Greenfield Police Department, Waste Management, Salinas Valley Fair King City, Clinica de Salud del Valle de Salinas, and County Employees Management Association.

About Supervisor Chris Lopez

Chris Lopez is the Supervisor to the constituents of Monterey County's Third District, which is home to some of the world's richest farmland and dedicated workforce of farmers, farmworkers, and laborers that feed the nation. The District stretches from Williams Road in Salinas in the North, to Bryson-Hesperia and Ranchita Canyon in the South. The District is also home to the cities of King City, Greenfield, Soledad, Gonzales, and Salinas, as well as

the communities of Bryson-Hesperia, San Ardo, San Lucas, Parkfield, Ranchita Canyon, Jolon, Bradley, Lockwood, Pine Canyon, Arroyo Seco, Chualar, and others.

About California Water Service

California Water Service provides high-quality, reliable water utility services to about 138,600 people through 34,300 service connections in Salinas and King City and more than 2 million people statewide through 499,600 service connections. Cal Water's purpose is to enhance the quality of life for customers and communities. To do so, it invests responsibly in water and wastewater infrastructure, sustainability initiatives, and community well-being. The company's 1,200+ employees live by a set of strong core values and share a commitment to protecting the planet, caring for people, and operating with the utmost integrity. The utility has been named one of "America's Most Responsible Companies" and the "World's Most Trustworthy Companies" by *Newsweek*, a USA Top Workplace, and a Great Place to Work®. More information is available at www.calwater.com.

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