



## Student Essay Contest

Imagine waking up in the morning to get ready for your day. You go in to brush your teeth and turn on the faucet...but it stutters and belches air...and nothing more. The well has run dry. You're left with a dry toothbrush and a bad case of morning breath. You can't shower or do your dishes. Meanwhile, across town, the pistachio farm is yielding a bumper crop and the lush, green golf course has never been busier.

Some may argue that the desert is no place for 18-holes of grass or food crops, and they should be relocated to other regions with more water availability. Others claim that the provision of food and recreation opportunities are vital for any community, even if those functions consume the natural water supply.

The Mojave Water Agency wants to know your position on the ethics of water.

**This year's essay theme is:** *What water uses are ethical in the desert?*

Your essay should include your philosophy on what are ethical water uses. You may also refer to existing local policy and suggest new water policies.

A winning essay will not only demonstrate creativity but will be well-sourced.

Visit [www.mojavewater.org](http://www.mojavewater.org) for High Desert-specific water and population data.

**Note:** The three finalists will be tasked with reworking their essays into a speech.

### Contest Rules:

1. Open to students living in the Mojave Water Agency boundaries enrolled in grades 9-12 in public, private, or home school. (Past finalists are not eligible.) Maximum age: 18.
2. All essays must be emailed to Arlynn Caasi at [acaasi@mojavewater.org](mailto:acaasi@mojavewater.org) by **5 p.m. on Nov. 5, 2021**. Please submit in Word or pdf format. Make sure your name and school name is on the top of your essay as well.
3. The completed essay must be between 550 and 900 words. (Titles, headers, etc. are not included in the word count.)

4. In addition to the essay, you **must** include a short video clip to introduce yourself, the city/town you live in, the name of your school, grade level, and what you learned while writing the essay. Cell phone video is acceptable.
5. The top three finalists will be assigned a community mentor/coach to polish their presentation for a verbal presentation on **Tuesday, January 25 at 5 p.m.** to a selection panel in front of a small audience, which may include family.
6. The essay contest winner must present his or her essay at the 2022 Innovators High Desert Water Summit on **February 25** at High Desert Church in Victorville.
7. Essays will be judged on creativity, use of current technologies, and examples of community collaboration, as well as writing skill.
8. The winner will receive a scholarship of \$3,000 and the remaining two finalists will each receive a scholarship of \$1,000.
9. The top three finalists must agree to participate in an MWA produced video.
10. All entries become the property of the Mojave Water Agency.

### **Student Summit Essay Schedule**

- 9/03/21 – Announce Essay Contest & Rules
- 10/04/21 – Essay contest start date
- 11/05/21 – Essay deadline due by 5 p.m.
- 11/15/21 – Give essays to judges. Judges select their top 3 essays.
- 11/29/21 – Judges determine the top 3 essays for recognition
- 12/03/21 – Top 3 meet their mentor
- 12/19/21 – Deadline to submit final version of essay due by 4:30 p.m.
- 1/21/22 – Last day to mentor
- 1/25/22 – Essay presentation & dinner. Judging of final 3 essays.
- 1/26/22 – Winner meets PowerPoint professional
- 1/27/22 – Start working on PowerPoint (Student books time with professional)
- 2/16/22 – Complete PowerPoint for rehearsal
- 2/25/22 – Date of High Desert Water Summit and winning essay presentation