



## Our Beautiful Desert

When some people think of the desert, especially those that don't live here, they may envision miles of barren land with dry dirt, parched plants, and few signs of life to be seen. That isn't the reality though.

The High Desert is an amazing and unique environment. Locals enjoy gorgeous sunsets, wonderful wildlife, and native landscapes that thrive in the extreme desert climate of high and low temperatures and very little rainfall, which is why it is so important to protect our most precious resource: water.

**This year's essay theme is:** *Our Beautiful Desert*

The Mojave Water Agency would like to celebrate the splendor our desert displays with minimal water use. Your essay should include your perspective on what makes the desert beautiful, what locals can do to enhance the beauty of the desert, and how homeowners can build and maintain beautiful landscaping that respects the scarcity of our desert water resources.

A winning essay will demonstrate creativity, be well-sourced, and provide key take-aways that readers can put into practice. Three finalists will be chosen to rework their essay into a speech that will be presented live to a panel of judges.

### **Contest Rules:**

1. Open to high school students living in the Mojave Water Agency boundaries enrolled in grades 9-12 in public, private, or home school. (Past finalists are not eligible.)
2. All essays must be emailed to [cengeron@mojavewater.org](mailto:cengeron@mojavewater.org) by **5 p.m. on October 26, 2022**. Please submit in Word or pdf format. Make sure your name, contact information and school name are on the top of your essay.
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** fill out a [short on-line application](#) and 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 **Thursday, January 5 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 2023 Innovators High Desert Water Summit on **February 10** at the High Desert Church campus in Victorville.
7. Essays will be judged on creativity, writing skill, knowledge of regional horticulture and hydrogeology, and merit of proposed action-steps readers can take to enhance the desert beauty with minimal impact to our water supply.
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.

→[Click here to fill out the on-line application](#)←

Or visit: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/IHDWSESSAY>