



ERIK NASARENKO
VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
NEWS RELEASE



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Contact: Joey Buttitta
Title: Communications Manager/PIO
Phone: (805) 767-3400
Email: Joey.Buttitta@ventura.org

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Water Board Member Charged with Felony Water Theft

VENTURA, Calif. - District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that charges were filed against Daniel Conklin Naumann (DOB 12/24/57), of Camarillo, for multiple felony counts of grand theft and theft of utility services. Naumann owns and operates Naumann Family Farms in Oxnard. He is also a publicly elected board member of the United Water Conservation District (United). For a portion of the charged offenses, Naumann was also an alternate board member of the Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency (Fox Canyon).

United and Fox Canyon manage and preserve groundwater resources for agricultural uses in Ventura County. Both entities establish water allocations and charge agricultural users fees to pump groundwater.

Investigators from the Ventura County Sheriff's Office discovered diversion bypasses were installed on two commercial water pumps that irrigated Naumann's crops. The bypasses diverted pumped water to irrigation lines before the water reached flow meters that measured water use for billing purposes. Between 2019 and 2021, Naumann is alleged to have pumped \$29,301 of groundwater without paying the required fees to Fox Canyon.

"California's groundwater has long been in crisis because of over pumping and drought," said District Attorney Erik Nasarenko. "Unlawfully avoiding the water fees and allocations necessary to preserve water only adds to this ongoing crisis. We will hold anyone who threatens our natural resources accountable, regardless of their position."

Senior Deputy District Attorney Anthony Wold, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office Public Integrity Unit, is prosecuting the case. Naumann is scheduled for arraignment on September 12, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. in courtroom 12 of the Ventura County Superior Court.