

A hydration station is a sleek water station that attaches to a wall and dispenses cold jets of water into reusable water bottles.

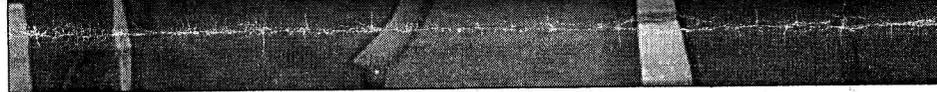
The station, coupled with basic information about the health benefits of drinking water, encourages students to drink more water.

Shaun Havard, a health educator with the nutrition program, helped Clear Creek Elementary obtain the station after writing a federal grant, late last year, to the Public Institute of Health.

The \$800 grant was approved in January, and paid for the purchase and transportation of the hydration station to the school.

Havard said the funding for the hydration station came specifically from CA4Health as part of a program that strives to reduce childhood obesity by decreasing consumption of sugary beverages and increasing the availability and consumption of healthy beverages, such as water in a school setting.

"One of the things we see with kids in school all day, often there's kind of the idea that the drinking fountains in the school are not that



**A hydration station was installed at Clear Creek Elementary School to entice students to drink more water.**

appealing," Havard said. "So a hydration station is something you can use your own water bottle with, it's set up so you can get easy access to get water from, instead of trying to fill a water bottle up at a drinking fountain, which can be very difficult."

If you've ever tried to fill up a water bottle at a drinking fountain, you know that there are several awkward angles the bottle needs to be tilted, in order to fill the bottle up even half way. Havard says the hydration station streams water straight down into a bottle.

"The hydration station enables kids to basically drink a lot of water throughout the day, which they are encouraged to do," Havard said.

"At Clear Creek, the hydration station is located where the kids have gym class, and have their lunches, so they have great access to the station and can potentially fill up and drink

an entire water bottle two to three times a day, which is great."

Lay says that the hydration station has gotten a lot of use, and benefits his students.

"The students have been very positive about it, especially the young ones; they like filling it up, it's fun," Lay said. "And for the older kids, it's just so much easier than trying to tilt your water bottle in to get a little more from a drinking fountain."

Havard said the county's health department is currently looking at other potential school sites, and said that Nevada Union High School, which already has one in their cafeteria, would benefit from a few more stations, due to the size of the school's campus.

"I know that a lot of the schools are interested and it's sort of a new concept, they haven't been around that long," Havard said. "The health department is

keeping our eyes open for additional funding sources for more hydration stations, but sometimes installing them is an issue because the grants don't pay for the installation costs, so it's not always that straightforward, depending on the school."

Lay says that having hydration stations at other schools and in the community is a great idea, and would help improve student health around the county.

"We've talked about getting another one outside for the community, for youth league teams it'd be great, and to get one out there for summer team activities for soccer teams," Lay said.

"But we're just really appreciative of (Havard) and her team to work in partnership to get the hydration station here at Clear Creek."

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