

UPDATE ON WATER MAIN REPAIR

As reported a few months back, on December 8th a major water main that runs under the San Luis Rey River ruptured after a heavy rain. The 22-inch steel line is buried about 30 feet deep and is the main delivery route to move water back and forth across the river.

During the past several weeks District personnel have been working with contractors and engineers to videotape the damaged line to determine the most cost effective method of restoring the pipeline, and the conclusion is that a new pipeline is needed. The existing pipe has numerous damaged areas that would require extensive excavation in environmentally sensitive areas, making repair impractical.

District staff is evaluating proposals and will issue a contract to design the new pipe in March. We hope to begin construction in early spring so the pipe can be in service by summer. Most likely the new pipe will be constructed using directional drilling technology to minimize any environmental impact. Preliminary cost estimates for the replacement range from \$1.6 million to \$2 million.

DISTRICT COMPLETES MAJOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

The District recently completed major renovations to one of our connections to the San Diego County Water Authority delivery system. Connection #6, located in the southerly end of the district, is a primary means of importing water into our distribution system. A joint effort by a private contractor and district staff culminated in a day-long water shutdown during which a team of seven welders worked in five different excavations to replace valves, fittings and piping, ranging in size from 6-inches to 24-inches in diameter.

The construction project was intended to reconfigure the piping coming out of the connection to eliminate unnecessary valves and fittings that restricted flows and caused fluctuating pressure in the distribution system. The contract cost approximately \$236,000.

HIGH PRESSURE AREAS

Due to the hilly topography of the District many portions of our service area are subject to high water pressure. So what can consumers do to protect their water system?

The California Plumbing Code requires pressure regulators on water supply inlets to homes and buildings wherever local static water pressure is in excess of eighty (80) pounds per square inch. Your house may already have a pressure regulator to protect against high pressure, but they are usually located where your pipe enters the building.

What about the water line from the meter to your home? Usually the line from the meter to the house remains unprotected. Some areas have District-installed and owned pressure regulators that are in front of the meter. Those devices are only installed to protect the District's meter from high pressure, not your water line. If you want to protect your line from high pressure coming into your property, we highly recommend you install a pressure regulator right after the meter.

If you have any questions about pressure please contact Customer Service at (760) 728-1178.

EMPLOYEE CERTIFICATIONS

Chris Fletcher, Clemmon Taylor, and Robert Poole received their Cross Connection Control Program Specialist certifications.

Chuck Faust, Lawrence Garcia and Scott Terrell received their California Department of Public Health Water Treatment Operator 2 certifications.

Congratulations, Chris, Clemmon, Robert, Chuck Lawrence, and Scott!

**RAINBOW
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WATER
DISTRICT**

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**2010
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One of the comments we hear most often involves the difference between agricultural and residential consumers...

If you are a farmer you probably feel you pay more than your fair share of costs; inversely, if you are a residential consumer you probably feel the agricultural customers get a cost break.

In reality, in this district one group couldn't get by without the other. The rural nature of our region means we have a very extensive network of pipes, reservoirs and pump stations to provide water throughout our service area. Consider the fact that we have about 7,200 meters, serve a population of about 18,000 people, and sell approximately 25,000 acre-feet of water per year. The City of Escondido uses about the same amount of imported water as RMWD, but serve a population of more than 140,000 people through about 27,000 meters. We have a lot fewer customers over which we can spread the costs.

Although it is true agricultural water rates provide a slight discount as compared to domestic rates, the trade off is farmers do not share in emergency water storage programs, so they are the first users to get cut back in times of water supply shortages. For several years the discounts seemed pretty one-sided as farmers received reduced rates without suffering any reduction in delivery; then came 2008 and the mandatory 30 percent cut for growers. That cut stayed in place through 2009, and a

25 percent cut still remains in place today. In contrast, residential customers only had to reduce their usage by 8 percent beginning in July 2009.

Agriculture uses a lot of water—accounting for almost 70 percent of our water sales. That high volume of water use means the growers help support the expense of maintaining all of the many miles of pipelines and other infrastructure necessary to provide service to *all* of our customers. If agriculture phases out of our region we still have the same infrastructure to maintain, so the cost to the residential consumers would increase drastically. In the same manner there are more residential users so they tend to provide a more steady revenue stream. Since about half of our operating expense is recovered through fixed monthly fees, those residential users help offset costs.

The mix of agricultural and residential water use provides mutual benefits to each user group. Preserving the agricultural industry in our region helps to keep water rates lower for all user groups *and* helps preserve our rural identity.

**DISTRICT BOARD MOVES FORWARD WITH MORRO
RESERVOIR PROJECT**

At its February meeting the Board of Directors authorized completion of the design plans and specifications to construct a floating cover and other site improvements to the Morro Reservoir. At present, the reservoir is open to the atmosphere which is no longer approved for drinking water reservoirs. Morro is the District's second largest reservoir holding 150 million gallons.

The design should be completed within a few months, and we hope to have the project ready to bid this summer with construction to begin by year-end. At one point the District had four open-air reservoirs. Work has been completed on North Reservoir and is underway on Northside Reservoir. When Morro is covered that will leave only Beck Reservoir uncovered. The District is currently evaluating options for Beck.