

Metropolitan Water District Announces Water Rate Increase

At their April meeting the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California voted to increase wholesale water rates to its member agencies by 7.5 percent beginning in January 2011. Because of the way MWD factors transportation charges in to the water rate the actual increase to the retail agencies in San Diego this January will be closer to 12 percent. That means customers in the Rainbow MWD can expect water rates to increase in January by about \$0.17 per unit (one unit of water is 748 gallons). At the same meeting the MWD Board approved an additional 7.5 percent increase for January 2012.

MWD explains the rate hikes are needed because of reduced water sales resulting from the prolonged drought and water rationing. MWD's water sales are down about 20 percent from previous years.

About 91 percent of MWD's revenue is based on water sales even though a substantial portion of their expenses are fixed costs for infrastructure and the State Water Project contract. MWD is required to pay a half-billion dollars annually for the State Water Contract regardless of how much water they receive. So even though issues with the California Delta have restricted water deliveries from the State Water Project, MWD is still required to pay for the full contracted amount.

At the May meeting Rainbow's Board of Directors will consider adopting the district's operating budget for fiscal year 2011. District staff working together with the Board and Budget and Finance Committee has prepared

a proposed budget that reduces operating expenses by more than \$600,000 over the current year budget. As a result of those operational cost savings Rainbow will not require an increase in their portion of the water rate.

Water purchases are Rainbow's single largest operating expense, accounting for almost 65 percent of our operating costs.

COMMITTEE VACANCIES

RMWD is currently seeking new community volunteers to fill a couple of vacancies on its Communications and Budget and Finance Committees respectively.

The Communications Committee is responsible for matters of internal and external communications including: positive public image; positive staff relationships; community outreach; media relations; water conservation programs; intergovernmental relations; and other public relations programs.

The Budget and Finance Committee is responsible for the review of District finances including: rates, fees, charges, and other sources of revenue; budget; audit; investments; insurance; and other financial matters.

If you are interested in volunteering to serve on the RMWD Communications or Budget and Finance Committees, please contact Dawn Washburn at (760) 728-1178 Ext. 129.

**RAINBOW
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**2010
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Operations Manager
Chuck Sneed

Finance Manager
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Human Resources
René Bush

District Engineer
Brian Lee

WORK ON NORTHSIDE RESERVOIR REACHES 50% MARK

Contractors are making good progress on the work to add a floating cover to Northside Reservoir. This month crews began the process of installing the cloth fabric that will cushion the new liner—similar to the padding placed under carpets. This construction project results from new federal mandates to protect water quality in open storage reservoirs.



Northside Reservoir

REGIONAL SAFETY TRAINING

Safety is an important part of the work we do. Our field crews do a lot of work in excavations, and that poses the very real risk of trench cave-ins. In the US about 35 people die in trench cave-ins each year.

Recently the staff of several local water agencies teamed up with crews from North County Fire to practice trench rescue drills at the Rainbow maintenance yard. Our field crews dug a six-foot deep trench and then assisted fire crews in rescuing a dummy from the excavation. The two-day program included classroom training as well as the field work.



Crews Lifting Training Dummy