



The Waterfront

El Dorado Irrigation District • May–June 2008

Message from the Interim General Manager



David Witter

For the past four months, I've had the privilege of serving as EID's Interim General Manager. My goal was to keep the District moving forward, and that has been accomplished. As I return to my previous position as head of

EID's environmental compliance and water policy department, I want to express my appreciation to the Board of Directors, for putting their faith in me, and to EID's managers and staff, who supported me in this assignment.

By now you may know that EID's top management responsibilities have been placed in the very capable hands of Tom Gallier, who began his job as our new General Manager on May 1. Tom has nearly three decades of experience in this industry, working in Texas, Colorado, and just down the road in Fresno, before becoming General Manager of the water and wastewater utilities department in Tempe, Arizona. For 10 years, he led the department, with a service area that includes a population of 171,000 and about 41,000 water connections — in that respect, very similar to EID.

Tom's experience and personality propelled him to the top of a list of more than 40 excellent applicants for our General Manager position, and I join the many who are pleased that he accepted the Board's offer.

The District has accomplished much in the past several years to ensure a reliable water supply for our customers. We are on sound financial footing, and we have improved many aspects of our daily services. We all look forward to working with Tom as he brings his vision and management style to the District.

Water waste regulations encourage prudent water use

Earlier this year, EID staff adopted administrative regulations designed to help customers stop water waste. The idea is to cut back on the amount of water that is lost each year through wasteful practices. This helps preserve a reliable water supply—every drop not wasted is a drop added to the water savings account. And not wasting the water you use cuts down on your water bills.

But what, actually, is “water waste?” Our regulations, which are similar to those adopted by water agencies throughout California, define water waste as “causing or permitting water to discharge, flow, or run to waste into any gutter, sanitary sewer, water course, or storm drain, or to any adjacent lot, from any tap, hose, faucet, pipe, sprinkler, or nozzle.” Translation: Irrigating with water beyond the ground's saturation point, or using more water than is needed to wash dirty or dusty objects—cars, sidewalks, parking areas—is considered wasteful.

What else? Our regulations also say that allowing fixtures or heating and cooling devices to leak or discharge is wasteful. And so is maintaining ponds, swimming pools, and decorative basins without recirculation devices. If you operate an irrigation system that applies water to an impervious surface and the water runs off or if your irrigation system is in disrepair, that's wasting water. Using a water hose that has no control nozzle capable of completely shutting off the flow of water—that's wasteful, as is irrigating your landscape when it's raining.

These are examples of water waste practices that are fairly easy to identify and correct. But what about “hidden” causes of water waste, like a leak in a pipe that you aren't aware of? Just call EID's office of water efficiency 530-642-4126 and schedule a water survey at no cost to you. Or sign up on-line at www.eid.org—click on the water efficiency icon. During the survey, one of our water efficiency specialists will look for leaks inside and outside of your home or business and suggest measures that will save you water, and ultimately, money.

Over the next few months, our staff will conduct workshops on the new water waste regulations. Notification of the workshops will be posted on our website and in local newspapers. We hope to see you there!

“Property tax loss” surcharge ended, but a new state proposal could once again take EID's property tax revenue

Starting April 1, the Board of Directors removed a surcharge from water bills that was adopted three years ago when the state took \$10.4 million of the District's property tax revenue to help balance the state budget. The surcharge—about \$2.26 for the average residential customer—was identified on the bill as WC STATE DEFICIT WTR 2.

The Board approved the surcharge in 2005 only after cutting the District's operating budget by more than \$1 million. The Board stated then that the charge would be removed from the bills once the revenues were recovered.

However, the state is considering another grab for EID's local property tax revenue. The proposal is to transfer a state felon parolee program to the counties and pay for the transfer by taking the property tax revenue that goes to local water districts. This means the permanent loss of half of EID's property tax revenue every year.

The Board has contacted state legislators to protest this proposal and encourages EID customers to share their concerns with their state lawmakers about the proposal.

“World Thinking Day” has Girl Scouts thinking about water

On February 14, eleven inquisitive Girl Scouts from Troop 850 filed into the El Dorado Hills Raley’s meeting room—dressed mostly in pink and carrying Valentine goodies—prepared to “think about water.” This was the topic for the troop to earn their Action and Water Wonders Badges. Troop leader Diana Fenske asked EID to help the girls earn their badges by teaching them about our environment in a way that will assist people, animals, and plants to stay healthy and the air, soil, and water to stay clean.



From left, Tricia Bridges, Karen Cross, and Bryson Pearson pose with Troop 850

Bryson Pearson, EID water treatment plant operator, was on hand to provide that help.

Bryson’s fun, fact-filled, interactive presentation engaged the troop with questions like “Where does the world’s water come from?” and “Where does our water come from locally?” Bryson gave a great overview and enlisted a volunteer in a hands-on lesson explaining how water is treated and the different types of treatment methods. He also talked about why water needs to be clean, provided conservation tips, and listed the many uses for water—after all, it’s not just for drinking.

EID has an interest in teaching young people about the importance of water conservation and management of this precious resource. Children love to let people know about new things they have learned.

And, as Bryson said, “Water is so important. It’s something the world can’t live without. By learning to conserve, manage, and preserve it, you—yourself—become a resource.”

Tricia Bridges, EID public information and outreach specialist, demphasized water’s importance to life on earth and the need to safeguard it wisely. “As a public agency, EID is mindful of its responsibility to promote good stewardship of this resource, now and for the future,” she said. “It begins with educational activities like this.”

May is “Water Awareness Month”

Ten ways to avoid water waste

- 1 Water plants and lawns only when necessary**
Avoid water runoff into streets and gutters.
- 2 For best results, try morning watering.**
Evaporation loss is at a minimum.
- 3 Avoid washing down paved areas.**
Sweep driveway and sidewalks in garden cleanup.
- 4 When washing the car...**
Use a bucket of water. Use the hose only to rinse.
- 5 Repair faucet leaks.**
As much as 15 gallons of water can be lost each day with a slow drip.
- 6 Avoid toilet water waste.**
Do not use the toilet as a trash disposal.
- 7 Don’t dawdle in the shower.**
An extra five minutes in the shower could mean 25 gallons or more down the drain. Use a moderate stream.
- 8 The automatic dishwasher-use it wisely.**
Half loads cheat you out of full water use.
- 9 Watch those laundry loads, too.**
Some 50 gallons of water are used to wash a load of clothes. Make every load count.
- 10 Avoid the running faucet.**
Don’t run water continuously while shaving, brushing teeth, peeling vegetables, or washing dishes.

2008	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Regular Board meetings normally take place on Mondays. The May date marked (W) will be held on a Wednesday.
	12	9	14	11	8	6	10	15	
	28 (W)	23	-	25	-	27	24*	-	

* tentatively scheduled