Turning Off the Water in an Emergency

Do you know how to turn off the water to your home if there is an emergency? If a water pipe breaks in your home, are you—or your tenants—able to find the valve that shuts off the water and prevent costly damage?

There are a couple of ways to turn off the water at your property. If you have a water emergency inside the house, locate your house shut-off valve. This valve is typically located where the water line comes into the house, usually on an outside wall near the front of the house. This shut-off valve can usually be turned off by hand. Just turn the valve handle clockwise to turn off all water to the house.

The other valve is located near your water meter. Water meters are installed inside concrete or plastic meter boxes and placed close to the street so they can be easily read by an EID staff member. The pressure regulator and gate valve will be next to the water meter. However, in some cases where a residence is a long distance from EID’s main water line, the gate valve may be difficult to locate in an emergency—it is important to plan ahead. Often these boxes, wherever they are located, can be overgrown with vegetation. It is the customer’s responsibility to keep the area free of vegetation. Keeping your meter and regulator boxes clear of debris and vegetation will help you in case you need to turn off your water—EID meter services staff also appreciate it! Knowing how to shut off your water ahead of time can prevent water damage to your property in the event of an earthquake, winter freeze, or other emergency.

Scheduled 2013 Regular Board Meetings

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Board meetings generally occur on the second and fourth Monday of each month. The dates marked (T) take place on a Tuesday.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and California law, it is the policy of the El Dorado Irrigation District to offer its public programs, services and meetings in a manner that is readily accessible to everyone, including individuals with disabilities. If you are a person with a disability and need materials in an alternative format, or if you require any other accommodation, please contact the ADA Coordinator at the number or address below at least 72 hours prior to the meeting or when you desire to receive services. Advance notification within this guideline will enable the District to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility. The District ADA Coordinator can be reached at: Phone: (530) 643-4404, e-mail: ada.coordinator@eid.org
Although the prorated charges will not show as a printed line item, the total amount due is the correct amount billed. For more information, please visit our website at www.eid.org.

Message from the General Manager
An Introspective Look at Ourselves

Jim Abercrombie

Over my 30-year career in managing utilities, I have been successfully measuring utility performance in several key areas: public health and safety, compliance, customer satisfaction levels, service reliability, and financial and efficiency measures. These are key performance indicators that measure the overall performance of the business.

In the coming months, I will be sharing with you how EID performs as measured against our peers in the water and wastewater industries. I think it’s important to periodically take an introspective look at ourselves and make sure that what we’re doing is really value-added for you, our customer, and that we’re doing it in a cost-effective manner. It’s only by measuring key performance indicators that we can make sure we are delivering high quality and reliable water and wastewater services at a reasonable cost. Stay tuned to hear more about this as we move further with the project.

I am also happy to report that the District recently hosted three very important guests to tour our facilities and shared with them how we conduct our business: Felicia Marcus, a newly appointed member of the State Water Resources Control Board, and two of her staff members, Barbara Evoy, Deputy Director of Water Rights, and Les Grober, Assistant Deputy Director of Water Rights, toured our Deer Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant and received an overview of our Process 184 activities, regulatory requirements, and costs of such regulatory mandates. They also learned about how important our water rights are to the District and our customers. By getting to know us a little better, learning about our projects, and touring our facilities, Board member Marcus said it enlightened her and her staff as to the challenges we face each and every day while operating our business. It is through effective communication and positive relationships that we can succeed in minimizing future unnecessary regulatory requirements while at the same time protecting public health and safety, and the environment.

The News—Briefly
New Rates in Effect January 2013

As adopted by the EID Board of Directors on March 26, 2012, and as a result of the findings from a recent cost of service study, effective January 1, 2013, water rates will increase by 11% and wastewater rates will increase by 5%. New recreational turf rates will be in effect as of January 1, 2013. A majority of our customers also indicated that they prefer to receive information about the District via the Waterfront. For more survey information, please visit our website at www.eid.org.

Customer Survey Results Tabulated

In September, 2012, surveys were sent to 4,000 randomly selected water and wastewater customers. In order to make a direct comparison to the last two surveys conducted, we asked the same questions.

The response rate was outstanding at 25% (918 responses)—even higher than the last survey done in 2010. Consistent with past surveys, water quality and reliability were identified as most important with 717 customers ranking water quality as most important followed by 491 customers ranking water reliability as most important. Cost came in third with 473 customers ranking it most important, followed by 418 customers ranking security of water supply as most important.

“I am happy that our customers value the level of service they receive,” said General Manager Jim Abercrombie. “About 90% of our customers said that they are satisfied or very satisfied with the service we provide. However, the ratings for customers’ perceptions of the reasonableness of the costs of water and wastewater services are lower than we’d like to see. I believe these ratings are attributable to our recent rate changes, which were necessary to implement to pay for our reinvestment in our infrastructure. As always, we will continue to ensure that customers receive the highest value of service possible for the rates that they pay. The information obtained in the survey is very useful to us as we conduct our day-to-day business and plan for the future.”

Q & A: EID’s Smart Irrigation Rebate Program

EID Communications and Community Relations Director Mary Lynn Carlson (right) spoke with Water Efficiency Coordinator Sharon Fraser and Water Efficiency Technician Bill Cassady about EID’s smart irrigation rebate programs. Bill is shown far right conducting a water audit.

I understand that EID offers a “smart” rebate program. Can you tell me about this program?

EID offers what are called smart irrigation rebates for the upgrade of older irrigation technology to new “smarter” technology, including irrigation controllers that sense weather conditions to estimate water needs, and low-efficiency irrigation nozzles that apply water in an efficient manner to reduce runoff and evaporation. These newer devices, along with water efficient drip irrigation systems, can use less water while still maintaining a beautiful landscape.

What is covered by the program?

Rebates are available for the upgrade or retrofit of existing irrigation systems only, so new installations are not eligible. If you have a standard irrigation controller (also called a timer or clock)—where you currently enter the number of days per week or how many minutes to water—a rebate is available to upgrade it to a smart irrigation controller that is programmed to water with the weather. Retrofitting existing fixed spray heads (also called pop-ups) with new high-efficiency nozzles or converting a system to drip irrigation are also eligible for a rebate. The new nozzles can even be retrofitted into most standard spray bodies.

How will I know what to upgrade?

EID offers complimentary landscape water surveys to answer this question and to help you be more water efficient. The survey is performed by Bill Cassady, our certified landscape irrigation auditor. Bill will review and discuss with you possible water efficiency improvements for your existing irrigation system.

Where do I apply for a landscape survey?

Simply fill out a water survey request form that’s available on our website or in our headquarters lobby, or give us a call and we’ll mail one to you. After your request has been submitted, you will receive a call to schedule a time for Bill to meet you at the site. The survey itself usually takes less than an hour to complete.

How much is the rebate?

The total possible rebate per eligible water meter—one that has at least 12 months of recorded potable or recycled water usage—is $850, but there are different maximum amounts for potable water: up to $400 for a weather-based irrigation controller; and up to $450 is available for materials such as new water efficient nozzle or drip irrigation. You also have the option of using up to $150 out of the $450 portion (leaving $300 for materials) for the labor of a licensed landscape contractor. All approved rebates are posted as a credit on your billing statement.

How do I get the rebate?

After your landscape survey is conducted, you will receive a rebate request form by mail that will list the water efficiency improvements eligible for a rebate. If you wish to proceed and implement the recommendations, you can either make the purchases and do the installation yourself or hire a licensed landscape contractor to provide the materials and do the installation. Once your project has been completed, fill out the rebate request form you received after your landscape survey, sign/date at the bottom, and mail it to us with copies of your receipts or contractors invoice.

What is the time frame to participate in this program?

Rebates will be available on a first-come, first-served basis due to limited funding. Submit your survey request as soon as possible, but no later than May 1, 2013, to allow time to schedule your landscape survey and complete the water efficiency improvements. To be eligible for a rebate, return your request form prior to June 1, 2013. Bill will need to revisit your site to verify the new installations, but once this step has been completed, your rebate will be posted as a credit on your next billing statement. After the program ends, we will still continue to offer complimentary landscape surveys to our customers.

Who should I contact for more information?

You may call our water efficiency staff at (530) 642-4126 or send an email to officeofwaterefficiency@eid.org. You can also visit our website at www.eid.org and select “I Want To... learn more about EID’s water efficiency programs” from the main menu. Next, select “Landscape” to review the complete terms and conditions of the program or to download a survey request form. Scan the following QR code with your smart phone.

“Rebates are available for the upgrade or retrofit of existing irrigation systems.”

—Sharon Fraser
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What is covered by the program?

Retailers are available for the upgrade or retrofit of existing irrigation systems only, so new installations are not eligible. If you have a standard irrigation controller (also called a timer or clock)—where you currently enter the number of days per week or how many minutes to water—a rebate is available to upgrade it to a smart irrigation controller that is programmed to water with the weather. Retrofitting existing fixed spray heads (also called pop-ups) with new high-efficiency nozzles or converting a system to drip irrigation are also eligible for a rebate. The new nozzles can even be retrofitted into most standard spray bodies.

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How much is the rebate?

The total possible rebate per eligible water meter—one that has at least 12 months of recorded potable or recycled water usage—is $850, but there are different maximum amounts for programs. The maximum is up to $400 for an equipment upgrade for a weather-based irrigation controller; and up to $450 is available for materials such as new efficient water nozzles or drip irrigation. You also have the option of using up to $150 out of the $450 portion (leaving $300 for materials) for the labor of a licensed landscape contractor. All approved rebates are posted as a credit on your billing statement.

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ATTENTION: Business Owners and Facility Managers

Rebates are available in 2013 for new high-efficiency WaterSense rated toilets and urinals for commercial and institutional customers, including businesses, schools, churches, government, and HOA buildings.

Contact us at (530) 642-4126 prior to making a purchase and we’ll schedule a brief site survey to determine your eligibility and pre-approve your rebate. Only fixtures are eligible for a rebate — tanks, toilets, toilet/urinal flush valves, and waterless urinals— which must be self-installed and then inspected by EID. Rebates are posted as a credit on the billing statement.

Request for Updated Emergency Contact Information

To ensure we have the most up-to-date information in the event of a water emergency, outage, or boil water advisory, please provide the District with your best contact information.

Please complete the form that is enclosed with your bill and return it with your payment.

Or, if you prefer, e-mail us your information at billing@eid.org.

We will NEVER share your personal information with third parties.

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EID Hosts Tour and Joint Meeting

On November 9, EID hosted a tour for Felicia Marcus, the state Water Resources Control Board’s newest Board member and two State Board staff members. Joining Ms. Marcus were Barbara Evory, Deputy Director, Division of Water Rights and Les Grober, Assistant Deputy Director, Division of Water Rights.

The afternoon tour kicked off at District headquarters with a welcome and District overview presented by General Manager Jim Abercrombie. Tom Cumpton, EID’s general counsel, presented an update on EID’s water rights, which was followed by an overview of Project 184 activities and regulatory requirements presented by Dan Corcoran, EID’s environmental manager.

The afternoon concluded with a tour of EID’s Deer Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant in Cameron Park, co-hosted by Elizabeth Wells, EID’s engineering manager, Vickie Caulfield, EID’s wastewater and recycled water manager, and Steven Boren, EID’s wastewater operations and maintenance supervisor. The discussion focused on EID’s use of recycled water from the plant to reduce its demand on potable water. Read more about the State Board tour in the general manager column on page 2.

On December 11, EID hosted a joint meeting of the Mountain Counties Water Resources Association and the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), Region 3, at District headquarters. Approximately 80 water industry and county government leaders attended the meeting. The agenda was action packed and included a presentation by Barrie Gyant, U.S. Forest Service Deputy Regional Forrester for Resources on forest service priorities and the national forest role in California water issues. Dan Ray, Chief Deputy Executive Officer, Delta Stewardship Council, discussed the status of the final draft of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan. Rounding out the agenda was a lively panel discussion on water rights moderated by Cindy Tuck, ACWA Deputy Executive Director, Government Relations; Tom Cumpton joined panelists Roger B. Moore, Partner, Rossmann & Moore, and David Aladjem, Partner, Downtown Brand, in a discussion on water rights and the possible implications that Bay Delta regulatory actions could have on EID’s District water rights as well as other holders of senior water rights.

New Board Officers

Newly elected Board president, George Osborne, Division 1, is handed the gavel from outgoing Board president Bill George, Division 3, at the December 10 meeting. George Wheeldon, Division 4 (center) was elected vice-president. Also pictured is Alvin Day, representing Division 5, and John Fraser who represents Division 2.

Look for the QR Codes

Use a scanner on your smart phone on the QR (quick response) code at right to browse quickly to the EID homepage. QR code scanners are available for free through your smart phone’s app store. In addition to web pages, QR codes can also go to phone numbers, email addresses, and short texts. Keep an eye out for these codes in the future (and in this Waterfront) as we use them to provide a shortcut to information that may be of interest to you.

The Waterfront