Did You Know?

Scheduled 2013 Regular Board Meetings

flushed down the toilet they can get caught on roots cause blockages or sewer overflows. Once they’re sanitary wipes get caught in the system and can pack in the packaging says. disinfectant cleaning wipes, sanitary hand wipes ‘flushable’ are anything that are often labeled as ‘flushable’ are anything but. Items like baby wipes, disinfectant cleaning wipes, sanitary hand wipes and the like contain oils and lotions and do not break down like toilet paper, no matter what the packaging says.

Sanitary wipes get caught in the system and can cause blockages or sewer overflows. Once they’re flushed down the toilet they can get caught on roots and grease and other debris inside the pipeline. “Recently in El Dorado Hills we had a sewage spill that was found to be caused, in large part, by disposable wipes,” said Vickie Caulfield, EID wastewater operations manager. Since any sewage spill is considered a violation of California regulations, they can result not only in extra maintenance costs, but fines, and potential disruptions in service as well.

“Flushing disposable wipes is a convenience that has the potential to result in costly maintenance or property damage,” said Caulfield. “Please put them in the trash instead. The only things that should be flushed down the toilet are urine, feces, and toilet paper.”

Sending fats, oils, or grease (FOG) down your sink drain or toilet can lead to sewer blockages or overflows. Once they’ve been flushed down the toilet they can get caught on roots and grease and other debris inside the pipeline.

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Gaining control of the Sly Park Unit wasn't easy. It literally took an act of Congress to make it happen. Former Congressman John Doolittle, who represented this district, agreed to sponsor legislation that led to the transfer. It took several years of negotiations with the government to come to fruition. The transfer bill was signed into law by President Bill Clinton in 2000. It took three more years and additional legislation to finalize the transfer in late 2003. We owe a great deal of gratitude to Former Congressman Doolittle for his efforts. Fortunately, he was able to join us as an honored guest for the 10-year anniversary event and share his thoughts about the whole process.

With the transfer, EID not only owns the water rights, but also a water treatment plant, 63 miles of water line, two dams, canals, a diversion dam and tunnel, a 7.6-mile conduit, campgrounds, trails, and park land surrounding the lake.

Speaking at the transfer ceremony, EID Board President George Osborne explained that the Sly Park Project was originally conceived by EID in the 1930s to provide a reliable and stable water supply for agricultural endeavors and consumption by the citizens of Placerville. The Great Depression and World War II held it up and it was later constructed, not by EID, but by USBR as part of the American River Division of the Central Valley Project. Groundbreaking was held in the spring of 1953 and the project was completed in 1955.

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Proposed 2014 Budget Reflects 6% Reduction in Previously Planned Water Rate Increases

At its October 15 meeting, the EID Board of Directors, during a 2013–2014 Mid-Cycle Budget Workshop, were presented with a proposed 2014 operating budget in the amount of $44.3 million.

Projected 2013 revenues are expected to be about $1 million higher than originally budgeted, while projected 2013 year-end expenditures are expected to be slightly lower than the adopted budget, approximately $375,000.

Mark Price, EID’s finance director, reported that the proposed 2014 budget has a $8.2 million reduction in expenses that include approximately $400,000 less than the previously adopted 2014 budget but is 1.1% higher than the adopted budget. The proposed budget also includes reducing a previously-adopted rate increase of 11% for water services down to a 5% increase, effective January 1, 2014. The previously-adopted rate increase for wastewater and recycled water services will remain at 5% effective January 1, 2014.

“This proposed reduction in rate increases for water services is due to expense reductions related to the early implementation of the Employee Pension Reform Act (PEPRA), which the employees of the District agreed to over four years early; the delay of the forecasted bond sale for specific significant long-lived capital assets; and continued diligence by staff to contain costs. The District will also continue to stay on course with the financial plan built within the 2012 Cost-of-Servicestudy of the Board.

The Board will vote on the proposed budget at their next Board meeting on October 28.

Q & A: Ensuring that Safety is Number One

In this edition of the Q&A, EID Director of Communications and Community Relations Mary Lynn Carlson discusses the topic of safety with Safety-Security Officer Ron Kilburg (on the right) and Hydroelectric Division Manager Dan Gibson.

I understand EID recently won an award for safety. Can you tell me about the award? We received the “Larry C. Larson Safety Award,” given by the California–Nevada Section of the American Water Works Association. The award recognizes EID’s drinking water division for making employee safety an operational priority. Few utilities are so honored. Management and staff within the division do an excellent job ensuring that the District’s 100%-safety principle is not just a catchy slogan, but is actually put into practice.

They were evaluated on implementation of 21 best industry safety practices including employee involvement and recognition, accountability, management commitment, and safety record to name a few.

Share with me some of the safety issues and concerns that are unique to EID. EID’s business is complex. It involves more than just water treatment. It also involves sewage treatment, recycled water services, hydroelectric, and recreational services.

An example of a challenging safety environment, which requires extreme vigilance and caution, is Project 184, our hydroelectric operation, which conveys water from the District’s alpine lakes to our treatment facilities. Employees must safely access the outside of elevated wooden flumes as high as three stories in order to perform repairs safely by using a specially-designed personal fall arrest system that includes a body harness, self-retracting lifeline, and a special horizontal lifeline.

Without this system, an accidental fall could lead to serious injury. This work goes on during the winter season which is particularly hazardous, when ice and snow pose additional hazards for the crews. With one wrong move, an employee could slip into a partially frozen canal and be immediately exposed to life-threatening situations.

EID staff recently developed this safety system and it is currently being instrumental in testing the system’s reliability with a full-sized mannequin. Because of these improvements, I am confident that flume repairs will be performed safely and efficiently into the future.

Last year, District operations performed more than 500 confined space entries without incident. Examples of confined spaces are sewer manholes and basins and water pressure regulating vaults throughout the District.

We have nearly 100 employees trained and authorized to enter these potentially dangerous spaces after pre-planning for rescue and testing the atmosphere for toxic gases. Our staff is highly trained to safely enter any one of the over 10,000 spaces at District facilities that span a distance from Caples Lake to El Dorado Hills and Swansboro to Outingdale.

Lastly, water, wastewater, hydroelectric, and recreation staff follow very specific procedures to isolate hazardous energy sources to prevent any electrical or water pressure—from causing injury. These procedures make up the District’s lockout/tagout program. Over 400 times a year, staff utilizes the lockout/tagout program when completing these potentially dangerous procedures. I am continuously impressed with our staff’s commitment to working smart and safe.

How does EID compare to other utilities in terms of safety statistics? While we are not an injury-free organization, our safety record demonstrates a solid culture where safety is part of how we do business. At the end of the third quarter this year, the District’s injury rate is 68% below other utilities. The standard for comparison is the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for water, sewer, and other systems. The numbers really reflect the commitment of our staff members to safety. Without this level of employee involvement, the statistics would look completely different.

We are currently the largest water agency in the Association of California Water Agencies—Joint Powers Insurance Authority Workers’ Compensation insurance pool, and are one of the risk pools top safety performers. Our safety performance translates into exceptional workers’ compensation insurance rates, and the best use of rate-payer resources. I am pleased with our successes and continue to strive toward continuous improvement.

I know that the District has a safety committee that meets regularly to discuss safety concerns and issues and work out solutions. Can you tell me more about this? Yes. Our safety committee has been very helpful in keeping safety real. What I mean by that is the committee members are dedicated to continuous improvement. Safety improvements suggested and adopted by the committee have contributed to a sevenfold reduction in the cost of avoidable damage when compared to years before the improvements.

What are some of the most pressing safety issues you are tackling at the moment? Cal OSHA is requiring all businesses to provide hazardous materials awareness training before December 1, 2013. We have been planning for this for some time and will meet the deadline. The safety improvements include a massive administrative evaluation of documents.

Continued on page 4
Recently, EID celebrated its 10-year anniversary of ownership of Sly Park. A decade ago, EID purchased the Sly Park Unit from the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR). Why was this purchase so important, you might ask? It boils down to two words—local control. When the Sly Park Unit was first built in 1955, it was owned by the federal government under the control of USBR. After the purchase, EID managed and operated the entire unit.

Gaining control of the Sly Park Unit wasn’t easy. It literally took an act of Congress to make it happen. Former Congressman John Doolittle, who represented this district, agreed to sponsor legislation that led to the transfer. It took several years of negotiations with the government to come to fruition. The transfer bill was signed into law by President Bill Clinton in 2000. It took three more years and additional legislation to finalize the transfer in late 2003. We owe a great deal of gratitude to Former Congressman Doolittle for his efforts. Fortunately, he was able to join us as an honored guest for the 10-year anniversary event and share his thoughts about the whole process.

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With share with me some of the safety issues and concerns that are unique to EID. EID’s business is complex. It involves more than just water treatment. It also involves sewage treatment, recycled water services, hydroelectric, and recreational services. Because of the diversity of these sources—like electricity and water under pressure—from extremely hazardous, when ice and snow pose additional hazards particularly hazardous, when ice and snow pose additional hazards.

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Last year, District operations performed more than 500 confined space entries without incident. Examples of confined spaces are sewer manholes and basins and water pressure regulators and controls throughout the system. EID staff are highly trained to safely enter any one of the over 10,000 spaces at our treatment facilities. Employees must safely access the system and Dan Gibson and his staff were instrumental in testing the system’s reliability with a full-sized mannequin. Because of these improvements, I am confident that fall repairs will be performed safely and efficiently into the future.

Continued on page 4

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Did You Know?

Flushable Wipes Clog Pipes—Trash Them Instead

Toilet paper dissolves in a matter of seconds once it gets flushed. Sanitary wipes are a different story.

The truth is, sanitary wipes that are often labeled as ‘flushable’ are anything but. Items like baby wipes, disinfectant cleaning wipes, sanitary hand wipes, and the like contain oils and lotions and do not break down like toilet paper, no matter what the packaging says.

Sanitary wipes get caught in the system and can cause blockages or sewer overflows. Once they’re flushed down the toilet they can get caught on roots and grease and other debris inside the pipeline.

“Recently in El Dorado Hills we had a sewage spill that was found to be caused, in large part, by disposable wipes,” said Vickie Caulfield, EID wastewater operations manager.

Since any sewage spill is considered a violation of California regulations, they can result not only in extra maintenance costs, but fines, and potential disruptions in service as well.

“Flushing disposable wipes is a convenience that has the potential to result in costly maintenance or property damage,” said Caulfield. “Please put them in the trash instead. The only things that should be flushed down the toilet are urine, feces, and toilet paper.”

Sending fats, oils, or grease (FOG) down your sink drain or toilet can lead to sewer clogs, which could result in wastewater backing up into your home, business, or neighborhood. And that could mean costly clean-up and repairs. You can dispose of household FOG by putting it in a sealed container or mixing it with something absorbent—paper towels, shredded newspaper, or cat litter would do the trick—before placing it in the trash.

Remember to Adjust Your Irrigation System!

With winter coming, remember to adjust your irrigation system accordingly. This is especially important for residential sewer customers as your 2014 residential sewer rates will be based on your water use for the months between November 2013 and February 2014.

Did You Know?

EID offers complimentary plumbing retrofits for your home or business to help you reduce interior water use. Receive low-flow faucet aerators and showerheads for self-installation by contacting us at 530-642-4126 or officeofwaterefficiency@eid.org.

Sly Park Honored

Readers of the Mountain Democrat have once again honored Sly Park by voting it “Best Recreation Facility” in that paper’s annual Readers’ Choice Awards. This is the seventh consecutive year the park has received this award. Sly Park was also named “Favorite Kids Activity” in Style magazine’s annual Readers’ Choice Awards. This is the second year Sly Park has been honored in this category.

Ten-Year Anniversary at Sly Park Celebrated

On Monday, October 7, a small ceremony was held near the boat launch at Jenkinson Lake to mark the tenth anniversary of the transfer of Sly Park from the United States Bureau of Reclamation to EID.

EID General Manager Jim Abercrombie acted as master of ceremonies. “It’s important to celebrate our successes,” he said. “And this was a huge success for EID.”

Speakers included former Congressman John T. Doolittle who was in office at the time and instrumental in the effort to make the transfer a reality. EID Board President George Osborne spoke about the benefits of the acquisition to the District and its ratepayers.

El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce CEO Laurel Brent-Bumb spoke about the economic and social benefits of Sly Park to the wider community. There were short presentations and resolutions given by C. Ross Branch, field representative for Congressman Tom McClintock, and Trish Sweeney, field representative for Assemblyman Frank Bigelow.

Read more about what ownership means to EID on page 2 in the “Message from the General Manager.”

Capital Improvement Plan Asset Tour of Priority Projects

On September 23, EID held a public tour of two capital improvement plan (CIP) projects. EID has an extensive CIP which is under constant review and adoption of the CIP, the District can ensure that long-term funding is secured to pay for these important projects.

This year’s tour included visiting the remote location of Flume 41 in Pollock Pines. Board members, along with members of the public, were driven down a remote access road to see work currently being performed that involves securing a section of flume to the side of a cliff that runs high above Highway 50. This priority project is one of the most complex flume replacement projects the District has undertaken. The flume—last rebuilt in 1948—is seriously degraded and hangs along a section of cliff that is adjacent to a recent landslide area.

The final stop was at Reservoir A water treatment plant where participants were able to see the active construction of the plant’s chlorine conversion project. This regulatory-driven project will ensure the plant meets compliance with the California Department of Public Health and Uniform Fire Code regulations, Article 80—Hazardous materials. Reservoir A is the District’s last drinking water treatment facility to be converted. “This final conversion was challenging because Reservoir A has been in full operating capacity during the construction and conversion process,” said EID Senior Engineer Bob Rice. “Reservoir A produces and serves the majority of District customers with the water from this plant. The conversion will provide an immediate safety and reliability improvement for our customers.”

To learn more about the District’s CIP, visit our website where you can find documents posted under About Us > Document Library or under I Want To… > Learn more about District finances.