

# Irvine Ranch Water District Pipelines

The Newsletter of Irvine Ranch Water District / April 2003  
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## Draft EIR and Draft Master Plan Released for Natural Treatment System to Clean Urban Runoff Project Expected to be Largest Watershed-Wide Urban Retrofit Project in Nation

Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD) has released the Draft Environmental Impact Report and Draft Master Plan for the Natural Treatment System (NTS) project. The project will use man-made wetlands to remove sediment, nutrients, pathogens and other contaminants from dry weather runoff in the San Diego Creek Watershed and improve water quality in Upper Newport Bay. The project is expected to be the largest watershed-wide urban retrofit project for runoff treatment in the nation.

Plants such as bulrush and cattails and the beneficial bacteria within the wetlands soils provide natural cleanup of pollutants that would otherwise flow to the Bay and the ocean. The natural "technology" used for this project has been used successfully at the San Joaquin Marsh in Irvine and also at the Playa Vista Wetlands in Los Angeles County.

The release of the environmental planning documents marks the beginning of a 60-day comment period, which will end on May 12. Official comments on the Draft EIR should be submitted in writing to: Norris Brandt, Irvine Ranch Water District, Box 57000, Irvine, CA 92619-7000.

The EIR and Master Plan are available online at [www.naturaltreatmentsystem.org](http://www.naturaltreatmentsystem.org). Hard copies of the documents may be reviewed at the following public libraries: UC Irvine Main Library, Irvine/Heritage Park Regional, and the main

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## Aqua Splash Makes Its Debut

Irvine Ranch Water District is now producing

its very own bottled water. The water, taken from the District's Well 10 is purified and bottled at a bottling plant in Redlands and carries the IRWD "Aqua Splash" label. The IRWD Board of Directors approved a formal bottled water policy at their March 10 meeting.

IRWD receives many requests each year to supply water for community events but previously did not have an efficient means of providing water for such activities.

Designed as a tool to educate customers about the high quality and safety of IRWD's water, the bottles will be distributed free of charge to non-

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## Are You Ready for the Big One? April is Earthquake Preparedness Month

When a major disaster such as an earthquake occurs, police, fire, utilities and medical services could be overwhelmed. It may take several days to restore electricity, gas, water or telephones and traveling anywhere may be difficult, if not impossible.

The first 72 hours following an earthquake are critical, so you should be prepared to be self-sufficient for at least that long. **A supply of stored water may be your most important survival item. Seven gallons of stored water per person can last two weeks.** Water should be stored in carefully cleaned, non-corrosive, tightly covered containers. Commercially bottled water is one option. Containers of heavy, opaque plastic with crew-on caps are best if you bottle your own

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## Irvine Desalter Community Meetings Coming Soon

For more information check the community calendar section of the IRWD Web site at [www.irwd.com](http://www.irwd.com)

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## **Draft EIR and Draft Master Plan Released for Natural Treatment System to Clean Urban Runoff**

libraries in Lake Forest, Tustin, Orange, Newport Beach and Santa Ana.

"Irvine Ranch Water District is pleased to be taking a leadership role on this cutting edge project," said IRWD General Manager Paul Jones. "We believe that this will become a national model for the treatment of urban runoff."

IRWD has taken the lead on this project as a result of the success of its San Joaquin Marsh project in treating runoff from San Diego Creek. In that project, water is taken from San Diego Creek and allowed to spend 7-10 days flowing through a series of ponds in a constructed wetlands. Over half of the nitrates and tons of phosphorus and sediment are removed during natural treatment. IRWD now plans to expand this project by constructing smaller wetlands in locations throughout the watershed, including Irvine, Lake Forest, Tustin and Orange.

Initially, 65 possible sites within the 118-square mile watershed were studied during the master planning process. Those sites have now

been reduced to the 31 best locations in terms of treatment effectiveness, constructability, land availability and cost.

The project has been developed in consultation with the County of Orange and the cities within the watershed, who face tough regulations on Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), or limits of pollutants that can flow to Upper Newport Bay. The project is expected to make significant strides toward meeting water quality objectives for San Diego Creek.

"During the last year and a half IRWD has held briefing meetings on three separate occasions with members of the environmental community to provide status and project updates on the Natural Treatment System," said Jack Keating of the Upper Newport Bay Friends and Naturalists. "As someone who is concerned with water quality in Upper Newport Bay, I appreciate IRWD's efforts to develop a system whose goal is to improve water quality in the Bay. I hope that this collaborative effort will continue and ultimately the community and Bay will all benefit."

Following the environmental review process, design of the first 16 of the 31 sites is expected to take place this summer and fall. Construction on the initial sites could begin as early as this fall.

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## **Dialysis Patients and Others with Special Needs Should Notify the Water District**

If you or someone in your family is a dialysis patient you need to be aware of the routine disinfection used by Irvine Ranch Water District and how it may affect your treatment.

IRWD uses chloramines, a combination of chlorine and ammonia, to make the water safe to drink. Chloramines are preferable because they are a more stable and long-lasting disinfectant, produce fewer byproducts and they don't cause taste and odor problems like chlorine alone.

Dialysis patients, however, need to remove chloramines from the water because it comes into direct contact with the bloodstream during treatment. Dialysis treatment centers use special filtration systems to remove disinfectants from the water. If you undergo home dialysis treatment you also need to take such steps. You should talk to your health care provider for specific information about the types of recommended water treatment to make it suitable for dialysis. Both IRWD and the Metropolitan Water District maintain a chloramine target level of 2.5 milligrams per liter.

Persons on dialysis or with other special water-related medical needs should notify the IRWD Customer Service Department at (949) 453-5300 so that a notation can be made on your account. The District will then make every attempt to ensure that your water service is not interrupted.

## WATER CONSERVATION TIPS

### Suggested Weekly Watering Schedule for the months of April and May

WEEKLY WATERING SCHEDULE FOR SPRAY HEAD IRRIGATION SYSTEMS			
	Turf grass	Trees, shrubs groundcover	% Option
April	3 days	2 days	70% **
	2 cycles* of 4 minutes	2 cycles* of 4 minutes	
	3 days	2 days	80% **
May	3 days	2 days	80% **
	3 cycles* of 3 minutes	3 cycles* of 3 minutes	
	3 days	2 days	80% **

\*By "cycling" your irrigation timer to turn on for the suggested number of minutes an hour apart, you reduce runoff and gain deeper watering and healthier root growth. Start with this weekly schedule and increase the times only if your plants show signs of stress. If stress occurs only in isolated areas, check your irrigation system before increasing the time. If it rains, keep the system off.

\*\*Some irrigation controllers have a feature by which the watering time can be set by changing the percentage instead of specifically entering the days, cycles and minutes.

## Water Conservation Tips

- ◆ This is the growing season for most plants, making it the optimal time to fertilize. For this growth stage, look for a balanced, organic fertilizer suitable for Orange County area to promote even growth.
- ◆ NOW is the time to water deeply to encourage deep root growth. Aerating your lawn can improve root growth. Orange County has predominantly heavy clay soils, which absorbs water at a slower rate. To get the deep water penetration, try watering for short periods twice or even three times in one day at least an hour apart. This watering pattern produces better root growth than watering a little every day.
- ◆ Water your lawn only when it needs it. Check by stepping on the grass. If it springs back up when you move, it doesn't need water. If it stays flat, use the sprinkler. Most residents will need to water their lawns two days per week, approximately nine minutes per day. Trees and shrubs generally require about half (some shrubs even less) of what the lawn needs. If you're watering every day or every other day, you're providing more than most plants need. Check the moisture of the soil 3-6" below the surface. With our heavy clay soils, the surface may look dry, but the clay remains moist beneath the surface.
- ◆ Important Note: Landscapers may turn sprinkler controllers up too high. Watch for runoff and check for broken sprinkler heads. Runoff will carry fertilizers into the storm drain and contribute to pollution in our waterways.

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## Aqua Splash Makes Its Debut

profit, non-religious organizations holding events within the cities served by the District. The water cannot be sold. Water is supplied in half-liter (16.9 ounce) bottles and packaged in cases of 24. Requests must be made in full case quantities only. Upon approval of the application, a scheduled appointment date and time will be set for the applicant to collect the water at the IRWD Warehouse.

Customers interested in applying for a qualifying event should contact the IRWD Public Affairs Department at (949) 453-5500 to obtain a request form and its accompanying policy. The request forms should be completed a minimum of two weeks prior to the event. Request forms and the Bottled Water Policy may also be obtained through the District's web site, [www.irwd.com](http://www.irwd.com).

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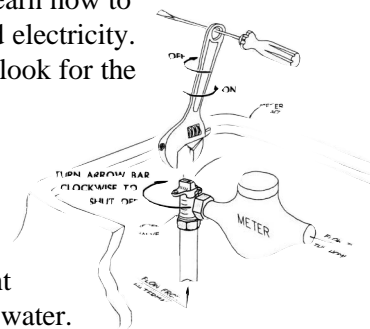
## Earthquake Preparedness Month

water. All stored water should be clearly labeled and the water replenished every three to six months.

After a quake, tap water could be polluted. Water that is boiled for five minutes will usually be safe from contamination. If boiling is not an option, strain the water through paper towels, paper coffee filters, or several layers of clean cloth to remove any sediment. Treat the water with household **liquid** chlorine bleach. Add eight drops of bleach per one gallon of clear water and 16 drops if the water is cloudy. Be sure to include an eyedropper in your emergency kit. **Do not use granular forms of household bleach; they are poisonous.** Mix water and bleach thoroughly and let stand for 30 minutes. Purify only enough water at a time to last a maximum of 48 hours.

You should also learn how to shut off gas, water and electricity. To shut off the water, look for the main valve where water enters the property, usually in a concrete box near the street. Lift the cover and then use a crescent wrench to turn off the water.

Some valves have a circular grip that can be turned clockwise to shut the water off and no special tools are needed. Mark the shut-off valve with fluorescent paint or tape so you can find it in the dark.



## Community Calendar

### CELEBRATE UCI - Saturday, April 19 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Come to UCI's annual Open House, one of the campus' oldest and most festive traditions. Now in its 25th anniversary year, this Spring event features games and rides for children, an Earth Day celebration, academic information, car show, campus tram tours, class reunions, Wayzgoose Medieval Faire with food booths, demonstrations, prize drawings and much more. It's an excellent opportunity to invite family, friends and alumni to visit and see what's new. Events and Parking are FREE. Web site: [www.uci.edu/celebrate](http://www.uci.edu/celebrate). For more information call UCI at (949) 824-5182.

### SHADETREE PARTNERSHIP EVENTS

- **Saturday, April 26** - Tierra Nativo (Native Planting) Event in the Mission Viejo Wilderness Open Space.
- **Saturday, May 17** - Lake Forest I HOA Tree Planting (Phase V) - Hundreds of trees to be planted in greebelt and public access areas.

Community service hours are available for all volunteer activities. For more information call (949) 453-5670 or visit their Web site at [www.shadetreepartnership.org](http://www.shadetreepartnership.org).

### CITY OF IRVINE EVENT

- **Wednesday, April 30** - "Let's Talk Water" forum at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Irvine Civic Center (1 Civic Center Plaza). A panel of water quality and urban runoff experts will discuss the new Federal, State, and County rules and regulations and how they impact Irvine. IRWD General Manager Paul Jones will serve as moderator. Learn how you can get involved in keeping water clean and safe.
- **Saturday, May 31** - The Irvine Fine Arts Center presents its 9th Annual Studio Arts Festival from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Irvine Fine Arts Center (14321 Yale Avenue at Walnut) at Heritage Park.

For more information, please call (949) 724-6380 or visit the City of Irvine's website at [www.ci.irvine.ca.us](http://www.ci.irvine.ca.us).

### MOTHERLESS DAUGHTERS DAY LUNCHEON - Saturday, May 10

Motherless Daughters of Orange County, a non-profit organization which exists to support women whose lives have been impacted by early loss of their mother, will hold their seventh annual luncheon from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Tustin Ranch Golf Club. For more information e-mail [mdoc2003@hotmail.com](mailto:mdoc2003@hotmail.com) or call (949) 552-6074.

### PUBLIC SAFETY EMERGENCY SERVICES EXPO - Sunday, May 18

The City of Costa Mesa hosts their annual event from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Placentia Fire Station #4, 2300 Placentia Avenue, Costa Mesa. Events include fire demonstrations, police demonstrations, fun and food. For more information contact Shawn Brosamer at (714) 327-7420 or (714) 754-5666.

### IRVINE JUNIOR GAMES • Sunday, May 18 at Irvine Stadium

Irvine school children will compete in various track and field events. Proceeds benefit childcare at Irvine elementary school sites. To volunteer, donate money, or for more information, call the Irvine Junior Games at (949) 786-6454.

### SEA AND SAGE AUDUBON ACTIVITIES

- **Saturday, August 2** - Summer Barbecue Picnic under the stars at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary. Mark your calendar. For information call (949) 261-7963.

The mission of Irvine Ranch Water District, a public agency, is to provide reliable, high quality water and sewer service in an efficient, cost effective manner and environmentally sensitive way that provides a high level of customer satisfaction.

### IRWD Board of Directors

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### General Manager

Paul D. Jones II

### Pipelines

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For comments, suggestions  
or questions, call  
(949) 453-5500.

### 24 Hour Service (949) 453-5300

Should you discover a  
disruption in your water  
service or other problems  
call the IRWD 24-hour  
emergency line and a repre-  
sentative will assist you.

Visit the IRWD Web site:

[www.irwd.com](http://www.irwd.com)

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