

Irvine Ranch Water District Pipelines

The Newsletter of Irvine Ranch Water District / April 2004
Volume 2004 Number 04

Save Now or Pay Later:

Prudent Agencies Plan For Infrastructure Replacement

Have you started saving for your children's college education? If not, you may be in the same predicament that many cities, water and sewer agencies will face in coming years. While the two topics don't seem related, it's all about planning ahead.

Families who begin regularly putting money aside for college when their children are young will be ready to face the huge tuition bills when they come due. The saving will have been less painful because it was carried out over a long period of time. On the other hand, the family that fails to start saving until their children are near college age may be overwhelmed by trying to come up with a huge amount of money in a short time.

That's the situation many water and sewer agencies are facing these days. The news is full of articles about the nation's crumbling infrastructure. That's the huge-and expensive-network of pipelines, pump stations, reservoirs and associated facilities that make up water distribution and sewage collection systems in every community. Many such facilities are now reaching the end of their useful lives, which can occur as soon as when they are 30 years old. The pipes need to be replaced, but all too often no money has been set aside for these huge costs. Broken pipes can cause interruptions in water service or, in the case of sewer pipes, environmental damage.

The IRWD Story

Irvine Ranch Water District has taken a different approach. IRWD has for some time practiced long-range financial planning to prepare for the inevitable need to repair and replace sections of the system. The IRWD board has carefully analyzed the cost and timing of infrastructure refurbishment and since the late 1970s has set aside money in a replacement fund to pay for an appropriate portion of these expected costs. In this manner, there will not be a need to dramatically

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**Upgrade to better-performing
FREE TOILETS!**
*During the next toilet exchange event in Irvine
on the first Saturday of May 2004*

WHEN:
May 1 – Pick up FREE new toilets
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
May 15 – Drop off old toilets only
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

WHERE:
Irvine Ranch Water District
headquarters parking lot
15600 Sand Canyon Avenue
Irvine, CA 92618

Three Easy Steps:

1. Bring your current water bill, photo-ID and a credit card to the toilet exchange event at IRWD and take home your ultra-low-flush toilet(s.) Limit two toilets per residence.
2. Two weeks later, return your old, pre-1992, water-guzzling toilet(s) to the same IRWD location and you may keep your new toilet(s) for FREE!
3. Enjoy the high performance of your new toilet(s) while saving, on average, 10,000 gallons of water per year per new toilet.

For more information, call 949.453.5563
or visit www.mwdoc.com/officialagency.html



IRWD Program is sponsored by these agencies.

This event was also published in last month's newsletter.

April is Earthquake Preparedness Month

The first 72 hours following a major disaster, such as an earthquake, are critical so you should be prepared to be self-sufficient for at least that long.

It may take several days to restore electricity, gas, water or telephones and traveling anywhere may be difficult, if not impossible.

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Infrastructure Replacement

increase rates in the future to pay for the needed infrastructure repair and replacement.

The District also follows a sophisticated preventive maintenance program to ensure that facilities can last as long as possible and that potential problems can be detected early. Even though at 43 years old, IRWD's system of water and sewer pipelines is relatively young compared to some areas of the county, IRWD is already spending an average of \$10 million per year in replacement costs. As more portions of the system begin approaching the end of its expected useful life, there is likely to be a much greater need for such replacements in the future.

Nationwide, the estimated costs to replace aging infrastructure are staggering. At least two major reports have been completed on this topic: one by the Water Infrastructure Network (WIN) and another more recent study by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). While they differ slightly in their findings, the funding gap is monumental under either version, varying from \$11 billion to \$23 billion per year. For those water and sewer agencies hoping that the federal government will come to their rescue, the outlook is grim. The CBO report states that "federal support does not necessarily increase investment in water infrastructure but may prompt cuts in state and local spending or its diversion to other uses." *The message is clear: local agencies need to plan ahead now or dramatically increase their rates to make up the shortfall in the not-too-distant future.*

Despite having prudently set aside over the decades dedicated infrastructure replacement funds to repair critical facilities, agencies such as IRWD are criticized for having what some incorrectly call "reserves." Agencies that have developed infrastructure replacement funds are now in a position of defending what we believe are prudent financial decisions to state and regional agencies that have not practiced similar fiscal discipline. Despite this criticism, IRWD is committed to maintaining safe and reliable water and wastewater infrastructure, and encourage other agencies to develop similar policies.

Because it's not a matter of *if* these critical water and wastewater facilities will wear out, but *when*.

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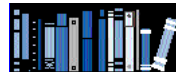
Earthquake Preparedness

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. Bottled water is one option. If you bottle your own, use containers of heavy, opaque plastic with screw-on caps. Water should be clearly labeled and 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 isn't an option, strain the water through papers towels, paper coffee filters or several layers of clean cloth. Treat the water with household **liquid** chlorine bleach. Add eight drops of bleach per one gallon of clear water or 16 drops if the water is cloudy. Be sure to include an eyedropper in your emergency kit. **Do not use granular forms of bleach; they are poisonous.** Mix water and bleach thoroughly and let water stand 30 minutes.

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.



Know Your H₂O

Did you know...

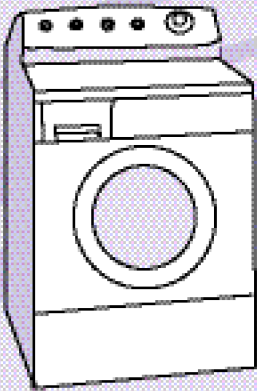
- Irvine Ranch Water District has provided free water education programs to public, private and home schools within its service area for over 25 years.
- Age-appropriate curricula, aligned to the California state content standards, are available for each grade K-6. Programs for grades 7-12 are tailored to the specific needs of the class and teacher.
- To date in the 2003-04 school year, IRWD has provided classroom programs to 1,276 students.
- Teachers wishing to schedule a program should call the IRWD Public Affairs Department at (949) 453-5500.

Water Conservation Tips



Take advantage of this limited-time offer now!!!

\$100 REBATE



...on select water-efficient washing machines.

For a list of qualifying washers or a rebate application, visit www.mwdoc.com/efficiency.html or call 1-800-954-4344.

How water-efficient washing machines save you money over time:

1. Qualified washers use 35 to 50 percent less water and 50 percent less energy per load.
2. By using only 18 to 25 gallons of water per load, you can save 6,000 or more gallons of water per year.
3. The washer design causes less wear and tear and fewer wrinkles on your clothing.
4. Better water extraction means less dry time and more energy savings.

This Program is sponsored by these agencies and your local water agency:



Check with your local energy providers for additional rebates on high-efficiency washing machines.

- 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 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. See suggested watering schedule below. 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.

Suggested Weekly Watering Schedule for the months of April and May

WEEKLY WATERING SCHEDULE FOR SPRAY HEAD IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

	Turf grass	Trees, shrubs groundcover	Percent Option
April	3 days, 2 cycles* of 4 minutes	2 days, 3 cycles* of 4 minutes	70%**
May	3 days, 3 cycles* of 3 minutes	2 days, 3 cycles* of 3 minutes	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. Spring is the most active growth period for turf grass and other plants. Be sure to water adequately.

**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.

SEA AND SAGE AUDUBON ACTIVITIES

- **Summer Camp 2004** - for children. Enrollment brochures are available from Audubon House or visit www.seaandsageaudubon.org, or call Camp Coordinator Grace McElhiney at (714) 969-9617.
- For more information visit their Web site at www.seaandsageaudubon.org or call the Audubon House at (949) 261-7963.

BACK-TO-BACK SPECIAL EVENTS AT THE UPPER NEWPORT BAY on Saturday, May 1

- **GREAT EARTH WALK** from 8 to 11 a.m. - an exciting, new event to raise money for our restoration and education at the Bay.
- **ESTUARY AWARENESS DAY** from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Shellmaker Island
There will be environmental exhibits, arts and crafts activities for the children and nature education stations where young and old alike can learn about the natural history of the Bay. Free boat tours will be given around the Bay. Entertainment will be provided by a local high school band and other groups and a variety of foods will be available for purchase. Estuary Awareness Day is free and free parking will be available.

For more information visit their Web site at www.newportbay.org or call (949) 640-6746.

CITY OF IRVINE

- **Free performance by California Concert Artists at Irvine Civic Center** - The Irvine Cultural Arts and Activities Program will host a free Spring Concert featuring the California Concert Artists. Light refreshments will be served at 2:30 p.m., with performances beginning at 3 p.m. on **Sunday, May 23**. For more information about the concert, call (949) 451-5366 or the City of Irvine Special Events Info Line at (949) 724-6606.
- **Thursday, May 6 from 8:30 to 11 a.m. - 2004 Family Friendly Business Forum** at the Irvine Civic Center (1 Civic Center Plaza). The forum, titled Supporting the Business of Life: Making Family-Friendly Programs Work for You, is designed to assist Irvine businesses to integrate family friendly policies and benefits that enhance the quality of life for families who live or work in the City of Irvine. For more information or to attend, call Shelby Clatterbuck at (949) 724-6635
- **Wednesday, May 12 - the City of Irvine is hosting a "Let's Talk Transportation" Forum from 6 - 8 p.m.** in the Council Chambers at the Irvine Civic Center - 1 Civic Center Plaza (corner of Alton and Harvard). Learn about new construction as well as the challenges and issues relating to transportation in our community. The "Let's Talk" forum will consist of several presentations given by representatives from the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) and the City of Irvine, followed by a question and answer session. For more information, please call (949) 724-6380 or visit www.ci.irvine.ca.us for more information.
- **Saturday, May 22 - Tenth Annual Studio Arts Festival at Irvine Fine Arts Center from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.** - Free to the public, the festival highlights more than 100 Orange County artists displaying a selection of handcrafted items including ceramics, jewelry designs, glass work, fiber, woodworking and 2D art. The event will be held at the Irvine Fine Arts Center, 14321 Yale Ave. (at Walnut) in Heritage Park, Irvine. For more information, please call the Center at (949) 724-6880 or visit www.ci.irvine.ca.us.

IRVINE GARDEN CLUB • Monday, May 3 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The speaker is Tom Ash, horticulturist. He will be showing the latest landscape designs in Irvine. The Irvine Garden Club meets the first Monday of the month at IRWD headquarters, 15600 Sand Canyon Avenue in Irvine. The goal of the club is to learn from one another and share gardening tips. For information call (949) 551-3962.

YOUNG MASTERS ART SHOW • Saturday, May 8 from 1 - 4 p.m. at the Irvine City Hall

View the works of almost 500 creative artists from the Irvine Unified School District K-6 grades. The opening day festivities will include entertainment, hands-on crafts and refreshments. Free admission. The artwork will remain on display for two weeks. For more information please call (949) 798-5020.

MOTHERLESS DAUGHTERS OF ORANGE COUNTY EVENT

Saturday, May 8 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. - the Irvine-based Motherless Daughters of Orange County will be holding their annual Motherless Daughters Day Luncheon on at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites, located at 1240 South Walnut in Anaheim. Advanced ticket requests received by April 26 are \$30 (\$25 for members). RSVP by sending your check made payable to Motherless Daughters of Orange County to: MDOC, c/o 9053 Suva, Downey, CA 90240. For further information, please call (714) 772-9006 or e-mail mdoc2003@hotmail.com.

CITY OF COSTA MESA • Sunday, May 16 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The City of Costa Mesa is hosting their annual "Public Safety Emergency Services EXPO" at Placentia Fire Station #4, 2300 Placentia Ave., Costa Mesa. Events: fire demonstrations, police demonstrations, displays, fun and food! Contact: Barb Marcosa at (714) 754-5091.

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.

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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 representative will assist you.

Visit the IRWD Web site:

www.irwd.com

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