

Irvine Ranch Water District Pipelines

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Please, walk on the grass! Synthetic turf, above, was recently installed at IRWD's headquarters. Director of Water Resources and Environmental Quality Dick Diamond (inset photo) examines the "work in progress."

Synthetic Turf Installed at IRWD Headquarters

Two young girls, apparently daughters of a customer coming in to pay her water bill, were doing cartwheels on the front lawn at IRWD Headquarters recently.

"They were enjoying it," said Dick Diamond, water resources and environmental quality director. "We want to encourage the community to check out our new lawn."

That lawn stays nice and green and doesn't use any water at all. In fact, all of the irrigation was capped off when the red fescue grass was removed and replaced with synthetic turf in March.

This faux grass in no way resembles that rough stuff that can cause serious skinned knees and bruises if you fall on it. It is soft and the blades even spring up after they have been walked on.

continued on page two...



IRWD Principal Engineer Steve Malloy, center, and General Manager Paul Jones, second from right, receive the 2005 Award of Excellence from the Orange County chapter of Consulting Engineers and Land Surveyors (CELSOC), and a State Assembly resolution for the San Joaquin Reservoir Conversion Project. Others pictured include Richard Bardin, president of CELSOC of Orange County; Dhiru Patel of Lee and Ro Engineering, and Steve Tedesco of TetraTech Engineering.

Celebrate Water Awareness and American Wetlands Month in May

Water Awareness Month encourages Californians to "Use Water Wisely, It's a Way of Life" and American Wetlands Month focuses on the importance of protecting wetlands with the theme, "It Pays to Save Wetlands." Both are observed in May.

Even though this has been the second wettest season on record in Southern California, we basically live in a desert. There are not many natural water sources and it has to be imported from somewhere else. Water Awareness Month reminds us that water is a precious natural resource and that conservation should be practiced by all who live here.

Water Awareness Month is in its 18th year. Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD) offers many events and activities for customers to highlight the statewide program. We offer free conservation devices on a one-time basis for customers, such as

continued on page three...

continued from page one...

Synthetic Turf Installed at IRWD Headquarters

The synthetic turf was installed after months of research by the Water Resources staff members. Visits were made to homes and businesses that have the turf, companies contacted and samples received. One of the biggest users of the synthetic turf locally is Irvine High School's football field.

"IRWD installed it to provide a venue to showcase the synthetic turf and promote its use for conservation," Diamond said.

It took a day and a half to install the turf and that included ripping out the old grass and capping the irrigation. A bed of crushed rock was installed and tamped down, then the turf rolled out like a big carpet. It's held in place with six-inch spikes. Once in place, sand and rubber "crumbs" from recycled tires were scattered on the lawn to keep the grass blades upright.

So what you see is grass that needs no watering, no fertilizers and no pesticides. Kids can play on it and not have grass-stained clothes. But what if you have dogs? Is synthetic turf Fido friendly?

"One of the houses I went to with synthetic turf had two dogs that fully 'utilized' the turf," Diamond said.

The material holding the polyvinylchloride grass is a porous fabric. If you have dogs, they can romp on it, do the other stuff dogs do on grass and your new lawn will not be the worse for wear. And no more of those pesky brown spots like you get on real grass!

IRWD has applied for a small grant from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to install synthetic turf in public places. Announcements about selections should be made soon.

"An ideal application is street medians," Diamond said. "It doesn't need irrigation and also eliminates runoff which degrades asphalt and carries pesticides and fertilizers. It's a win-win for everybody."

I R W D i n t h e C o m m u n i t y



Irvine Ranch Water District staffed a booth at the Woodbridge Village Fair in Irvine. Bottled water and items with a water conservation message were distributed.



Irvine Ranch Water District sponsored a booth at the Children's Water Festival in April. More than 700 students from all over Orange County passed through the booth and learned about groundwater by building edible aquifers of ice cream, soda and sprinkles.

continued from page one...

Water Awareness Month

low-flow showerheads, sink aerators, garden hose nozzles and toilet leak detection dye tabs. Stop in the headquarters office at 15600 Sand Canyon Avenue during business hours to pick up these devices. Information is available about free water-saving toilets and rebate programs for toilets and water-saving clothes washers.

If you want to landscape your yard while saving water and lowering your water bill, we have videos from Sunset Magazine available for loan to our customers.

Here are a few handy tips to help you save water:

- Turn off water while brushing teeth or shaving.
- Use a brush and bowl of water, instead of running water over fruits and vegetables.
- Use a broom or rake rather than a hose to remove leaves and debris from driveway, walk, patio and pool deck. This saves water and prevents urban runoff.
- Cover your swimming pool to slow down evaporation.
- Choose native or low water use plants for your yard.
- Keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator instead of running it at the tap until it cools.

Saving Wetlands

American Wetlands Month was inaugurated in 1991 by the Environmental Protection Agency and its partners in federal, state, tribal and local governments and private and nonprofit organizations as a way to educate Americans about the value of wetlands as a natural resource.

Events all through the month of May nationally will highlight the importance of protecting wetlands and focus on the many economic values of wetlands, such as flood control and improving water quality.

We also invite you to visit the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary in Irvine to enjoy the beauty and serenity of reconstructed wetlands that help clean urban runoff.

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.
- **Water deeply to encourage deep root growth.** Aerating your lawn can also 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 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. Trees and shrubs generally require about half (some shrubs, even less) of what the lawn needs. If you're watering every 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.
- **Prevent runoff:** 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 May and June

WEEKLY WATERING SCHEDULE FOR SPRAY HEAD IRRIGATION SYSTEMS			
	Turf grass	Trees, shrubs, groundcover	Percent Option**
May	3 days, 3 cycles* of 3 minutes	2 days, 3 cycles* of 3 minutes	80%**
June	2-4 days, 2-3 cycles* of 3-4 minutes	2 days, 3 cycles* of 3 minutes	100%**

*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.

**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. If you don't have the instructions for your controller, check the manufacturer's website. Many controller manufacturers provide online access to the owner's manual.

IRWD OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED ON THE FOLLOWING HOLIDAY:

- Monday, May 30

SHADETREE PARTNERSHIP EVENTS

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

THE 6TH ANNUAL ORANGE COUNTY HOMEOWNERSHIP FAIR • Sunday, June 5 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Centennial Park in Santa Ana

As part of National Homeownership Month in June, the Affordable Housing Clearinghouse has partnered with HUD, City of Anaheim, City of Santa Ana, Community Action Partnership of Orange County, County of Orange Housing and Community Services, National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals of Orange County and Neighborhood Housing Services of Orange County, to create the Homeownership Fair to reach prospective first time homebuyers in Orange County. At the fair, they will have a variety of resource booths offering information about available homebuyer programs, as well as homebuyer education classes to prepare and inform prospective first time homebuyers with accurate knowledge of the homebuying process. For more information, call (949) 859-9255.

IRVINE GARDEN CLUB - Monday, June 6 starting at 6:30 p.m.

Dan Jacobs from the Orange County Water District will give a presentation on the Groundwater Replenishment System. The meeting is held at the Irvine Ranch Water District offices, 15600 Sand Canyon Avenue in Irvine. The group meets the first Monday of the month. The goal of the garden club is to learn from one another and share gardening tips. For information call Carol Green (949) 551-3962.

MODELS OF SUCCESS CHARITY FUNDRAISER at the Irvine Hyatt Regency Saturday, June 11 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Women Helping Women will sponsor its first annual "Models of Success" fundraiser luncheon and silent auction. The luncheon will feature the success stories and makeovers of four women who have been helped by Women Helping Women. Since 1995, Women Helping Women has provided professional business apparel, image consulting and employment search support to aid low-income women in attaining and sustaining employment. There is never a charge or obligation to the client or the non-profit agencies that refer clients for service. In 2004, Women Helping Women provided services to over 1,800 low income women in Orange County. The fundraiser luncheon cost is \$60. For more information please contact Jeanne Flint, Executive Director, or Katherine O'Brien, Development Director at (949) 631-2333. *Women Helping Women is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. 711 West 17th Street, Suite A-10, Costa Mesa, CA 92627*

21st ANNUAL 4th OF JULY FIREWORKS CELEBRATION AND CONCERT ON THE GREEN

Irvine Police Association presents this event at Irvine High School Stadium (next to Heritage Park). Gates open at 3 p.m. Game booths, balloon jumpers, face painting, door prizes and local music groups performing throughout the day. Patriotic concert at 7:30 p.m. and fireworks festival at 9 p.m. **Advance tickets:** \$40 for family tickets (two adults and up to four children); \$12 for adult and \$7 for seniors (60+) or children 13 and under. **Family tickets will not be sold on the 4th of July.** For ticket information call Vince Palazzolo at (949) 724-0488 or for information only visit their Web site at www.irvinepa.org.

FAMILIES FORWARD

Families Forward is requesting donations of basic food items for the pantry. Items most needed include canned stew, canned tomato products, pasta and pasta sauce, baked beans, refried beans, evaporated milk, and rice mixes. Donations may be dropped off at 9221 Irvine Blvd, Irvine. Hours of operation are Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Friday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Support and donations are greatly appreciated.

LIBRARY TODAY...LEADERSHIP TOMORROW

Leadership Tomorrow is a non-profit organization that expands knowledge, empowers citizens and promotes community involvement. Their latest community project is to outfit a library for Harper Preschool in the Santa Ana Heights area of Costa Mesa. The school serves both special education and low-income preschool students free of charge. The community response has been wonderful and nearly 2,000 books have been donated, which is sufficient to stock the library. However, monetary donations are still needed to purchase bookshelves, a circulation desk and other furniture items for the library. Persons wishing to donate may send a check made payable to Leadership Tomorrow with "Harper PreSchool" in the memo area. Donations may be mailed to Marilyn Smith, Irvine Ranch Water District, 15600 Sand Canyon Ave., Irvine, CA 92618. All donations are tax deductible through Leadership Tomorrow, Tax ID # 33-0262785. For additional information call (949) 453-5321.

ASSISTANCE LEAGUE OF IRVINE

New to Irvine and want to get involved? Recently retired and have some extra hours to fill? A stay-at-home mom who wants adult interaction? An empty nester who enjoys volunteering? A professional who wants to give back to her community? Be part of this nationally recognized, dynamic group of like-minded women - Assistance League® of Irvine. New members are welcome anytime. Visit National Assistance League's Web site at www.nal.org/home2.cfm. For further information call (949) 798-5020.

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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