

Irvine Ranch Water District Pipelines

The Newsletter of Irvine Ranch Water District / June 2006
Volume 2006 Number 06

Consolidation with Santiago County Water District Approved

A proposal to combine Santiago County Water District (SCWD) with Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD) was approved unanimously April 12 by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). The consolidation will become effective July 1, 2006.

The boards of directors of both agencies had earlier unanimously approved the decision to consolidate and had mutually filed the application to be approved by LAFCO.

The consolidation will provide economies of scale and efficiencies that equate to better value for all customers of the combined districts, including lower rates than the SCWD customers are currently paying. The consolidation will also result in greater system reliability.

SCWD board members Jim Carter, Maryann Brown, Steve Kerrigan, Bob Hunt and Bruce Newell will serve on an advisory committee to the IRWD board for a period of three years to ensure an orderly transition of service.

SCWD serves a population of 2,500 in the Silverado, Williams and Modjeska Canyon areas of unincorporated Orange County. IRWD serves a population of 322,000 including the city of Irvine and portions of Lake Forest, Tustin, Newport Beach, Costa Mesa and Orange.

e-Bill is Here!

Now you can receive and pay Irvine Ranch Water District bills online anytime...24/7. Anywhere...at work, home, or on the road! Schedule your payment in advance!

Irvine Ranch Water District, in partnership with CheckFree, is pleased to bring you an e-Bill service that offers the convenience of receiving and paying your water bill online, free of charge. When you sign up for e-Bill you will no longer receive a paper bill. Instead, you'll be able to go online and view your most recent bill. It has the same details as the paper version but instead of receiving it through the mail, you will view and pay it online. Not only will this save you time, but this optional service is FREE.

Here's how it works: once enrolled, every month we'll send you an e-mail to let you know that your IRWD bill is available for viewing and payment. No more stamps to buy, checks to write, or envelopes to mail. Save time by paying your bill on-line.

You can sign up through IRWD's Web site (www.irwd.com) or you may choose to sign up with an authorized e-Bill payment provider. Payment providers are typically a bank, credit union, brokerage or other portal that offers you the added benefit of being able to pay your bills online.

For more information please visit IRWD's Web site (www.irwd.com) or call Customer Service at (949) 453-5300.

**New and Improved IRWD Account Access -
see details on page three...**

IRWD and Local Cities Grow Four More Synthetic Turf Sites

When it comes to watering the lawn, Irvine Ranch Water District makes a habit of reminding customers about using as little water as possible while still keeping landscape attractive. But when it comes to water conservation, no water at all beats low water use hands down.

That's why IRWD has teamed up with the cities of Irvine, Lake Forest, Newport Beach and Tustin to demonstrate that the new generation of synthetic turf looks nothing like the tacky "fake grass" you might remember from decades ago. So far, public response to the demonstration sites in each city has been favorable.

In addition to the water savings resulting from these installations, the demonstration sites require no fertilizers, no pesticides and no mowing. Synthetic turf also reduces "dry-season" urban run off caused by faulty landscape irrigation, and it cuts down the amount of green waste, like lawn clippings, going into landfills.

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Synthetic Turf Sites

Synthetic turf costs \$6 - \$9 per square foot. The cost of the test plots is being shared among IRWD, the participating cities, Metropolitan Water District, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. While IRWD had already installed synthetic turf in front of its headquarters building at 15600 Sand Canyon Avenue (reported in the May 2005 Pipelines) the water district wanted to partner with several of the cities it serves in order to provide greater visibility for the "faux" grass in parks and other areas where the public can easily view and evaluate it.

Each participating city installed the synthetic turf in plots that range from 1,300 to 2,600 square feet:

- The City of Irvine installed a test area of 2,168 square feet within the Woodrow Community Park, in a prominent area surrounding the flag poles.



- The City of Newport Beach installed 1,323 square feet of synthetic turf at Bonita Canyon Sports Park in an area adjacent to the parking lot that is near a baseball diamond, restroom/storage facility, and a playground area, allowing for good exposure to the various park user groups.



- The City of Lake Forest installed a 1,746 square foot plot at Concourse Park, a new facility located in the Portola Hills portion of the City. The synthetic turf demonstration site is adjacent to the parking lot and a tot lot.



- The City of Tustin installed 2,600 square feet of synthetic turf in area in Cedar Grove Park known as the "amphitheatre." Access to this attractive "faux" turf site is excellent, as it is near walking trails, jungle gym equipment and a parking lot.



Signage was installed at each site to call attention to the demonstration plots and to help local residents discover whether synthetic turf is something they would consider for their own yards.

To view color "before and after" photos of these installations and to find more information about synthetic turf, visit the home page of IRWD's website at www.irwd.com and click on the "synthetic turf" link.

- Cut back on fertilizing. Use a balanced, organic or slow-release formula, and water it into the soil thoroughly. Over-fertilizing can lead to higher water and mowing demands. Ask your local nursery about fertilizing.
- 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, turn on the sprinklers. Trees and shrubs generally require about half (some shrubs even less) of what the lawn needs. Mature trees generally need watering which allows for deep infiltration on an infrequent basis (about twice a month). 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.
- Check your sprinkler system. Look for clogged heads, broken sprinklers or risers and misdirected spray. Adjust the angle so that spray doesn't wet the pavement. Turn the system on valve by valve. If water hits walks, fences or runs into the street, fix the problem.
- Prevent runoff. Landscapers may turn sprinkler controllers up too high. Check the irrigation times yourself. Watch for runoff. Runoff will carry fertilizers into the storm drain and contribute to pollution in our waterways.

Suggested Weekly Watering Schedule for the months of June and July

Weekly Watering Schedule for SPRAY HEAD IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

JUNE

Turf grass: 3-4 days, 2-3 cycles* of 3-5 minutes

Trees, shrubs, groundcover: 2 days, 3 cycles* of 3 minutes

Percent option: 100%**

JULY

Turf grass: 4-5 days, 3 cycles* of 3-4 minutes

Trees, shrubs, groundcover: 2 days, 3 cycles* of 4 minutes

Percent option: 100%**

See notes on next page.

New and Improved IRWD Account Access

- **eBill now available** - now you can receive and pay your IRWD bills online. See details on page one or visit www.irwd.com.
- **User name and password improvement** - you can select your own user name and password and immediately have access to your account information online. If you have been issued a password by mail, your old password is no longer active. You must create a new user ID and password for account access.
- **New and improved account access** - you have the ability to review account details, update information such as your name, bill mailing address, contact phone number and e-mail address.
- **Multiple account access** - for residential or commercial accounts, you now have the ability to create one user name and password for all your accounts. Once set up, you'll be able to view all your accounts using just one user name and password.
- **Online bill presentment** – bill presentment is now available online for customers who have signed up for eBill.

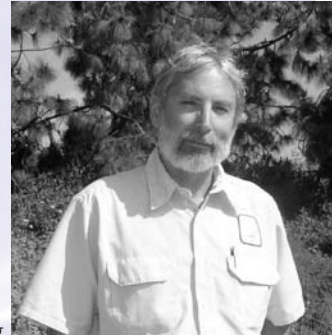
Check out Irvine Ranch Water District's Web site at www.irwd.com.

MARSH MINUTES...

(This is part of a continuing series designed to better familiarize our customers with Irvine Ranch Water District's San Joaquin Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary.)

Lou Denger

IRWD's Man-About-the-Marsh is Lou Denger. He knows every bit of wildlife and plants that make the San Joaquin Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary their home. He is also well-acquainted with the 12 miles of trails at the 300-acre marsh, since he spends a good deal of time patrolling the area.



If you see a man on a green open-air Gator vehicle out on the trails, that would be Denger. He is observing 25 years with the District and has had the responsibility of overseeing the operation of the marsh for the past 10 years.

Denger joined IRWD a year after he graduated from Humboldt State University with a degree in wildlife management. He was hired to work in the Water Quality Laboratory and eventually worked up to a supervisory position.

Ten years ago, plans were underway to rehabilitate the San Joaquin Marsh and an IRWD employee was needed to keep an eye on things in the field. Denger was selected for that task and worked with the design and construction teams. Since the work was completed, Denger's job is to ensure that all is well in the 300-acre marsh, manage day-to-day operations and to supervise the landscape crews.

Now, since Denger did such a great job working with the design and construction team for the marsh, he has a new responsibility – helping to plan the Natural Treatment System (NTS). It's a series of manmade wetlands that will expand on the water quality work already being done in the marsh. More than 30 smaller wetlands throughout the San Diego Creek watershed will clean urban runoff before it flows to Upper Newport Bay. Plants like cattail and bulrush species along with co-existing microbes naturally remove 50 to 70 percent of the nitrates from the runoff. One of the first NTS sites, located at Shady Canyon Drive and the 405 Freeway, is set to go online soon.

Watering Schedule Notes: *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 HOLIDAYS:

- Monday, July 3 and Tuesday, July 4

SHADETREE PARTNERSHIP EVENTS

- **Saturday, June 24 from 8:30 to 11 a.m.** - Shadetree Partnership Nursery Event on the UCI campus

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.

SEA AND SAGE AUDUBON

- **“Seasons of Nature Walk” on Sunday, July 16 from 9 to 11 a.m.**

All ages are welcome to participants in this free event where you will take a closer look at the summer birds, plants and insects of the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary. R.S.V.P. by July 15 to the Audubon House at (949) 261-7963.

IRVINE POLICE ASSOCIATION’S 22nd ANNUAL 4th FOURTH OF JULY CONCERT ON THE GREEN AND FIREWORK FESTIVAL

Celebrate the City of Irvine’s 35th Anniversary

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 live band performances throughout the event. Fireworks festival at 9 p.m.

- **Advance tickets:** \$40 for family tickets (two adults and up to four children). Family tickets will not be sold on the 4th of July.

- **Individual tickets may be purchased at the Irvine High School football stadium box office the day of the event.** Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$7 for seniors (60+) or children two through 13. Children under two are free.

For ticket information call Vince Palazzolo at (949) 724-0488 or for information only visit their Web site at www.irvinepa.org.

FAMILIES FORWARD NEWS

Families Forward is a non profit organization in Irvine dedicated to helping low income and homeless families in Orange County. Families Forward has a transitional housing program, a food pantry, counseling and career coaching. The food pantry serves up to 50 families per week and survives solely on donations from the community. Presently, the food pantry is extremely low on certain food items such as jelly, peanut butter, canned fruit, bottled juice, juice drinks, canned meats and rice. If you are interested in donating these items or organizing a food drive in your community, school, work or church please contact Families Forward at (949) 552-2727. Your support is greatly appreciated.

As a service to residents we feature a calendar of community events in “Pipelines.” Events or activities of community-wide interest can be included in the calendar on a space available basis. We reserve the right to print those items of most interest to the public. If your group has an event you would like to include, please submit written information at least two months prior to your event. Please include date, time, place, contact person’s name and telephone number. Mail your request to: Public Affairs Department, IRWD, P.O. Box 57000, Irvine, CA 92619-7000, fax your request to (949) 453-0527, or e-mail your request to velazque@irwd.com.

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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