

Irvine Ranch Water District Pipelines

The Newsletter of Irvine Ranch Water District / September 2006
Volume 2006 Number 09

Free Water Awareness Tours

The Fall tours will be held on Saturday, October 14 and Saturday, October 21.

Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD) offers free Water Awareness Tours to all its customers.

These tours, open to those who live or work within IRWD boundaries, are an excellent opportunity to gain valuable information about the water system, wastewater treatment, and recycled water use.

The free tours start promptly at 8 a.m. and conclude at approximately 2 p.m. Lunch is provided. The tours fill very quickly and are first-come first-served based on the date we receive your reservation. You will receive a call if your selection is not available. We are unable to accommodate children under 16 years of age.

Customers may register on the IRWD Web site at www.irwd.com or call (949) 453-5500.



Huell Howser interviews Irvine resident Dr. Joseph Renzi (center) and Mark Tettemer, water resources manager for Irvine Ranch Water District, about Renzi's weather-based irrigation controller. Dr. Renzi, who installed the controller because of the rebate offered by IRWD, said he loves the device because it automatically adjusts his yard's irrigation system according to current weather conditions and continues making needed adjustments even when he's out of town.



Huell Howser and friends get up close and personal with synthetic turf in Windrow Park in the City of Irvine. From left to right are Steve Bourke, landscape maintenance supervisor for the city of Irvine, Mark Tettemer of Irvine Ranch Water District, and Huell Howser. Windrow Park is one of five synthetic turf demonstration sites sponsored by IRWD at public locations throughout their service area to allow customers to more easily view the various types of turf products available. The turf requires no water and minimal maintenance, while helping to reduce urban runoff. Demonstration sites are also located in the cities of Newport Beach, Lake Forest and Tustin. *see story on page three...*

FREE Fall Residential Landscape Workshop



WHEN:
Friday, September 29
6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

WHERE:
IRWD Headquarters
15600 Sand Canyon Avenue
Irvine CA, 92618

Fall 2006's workshop features both fact-filled talks and plant displays by local irrigation, gardening and landscape specialists. Attendees will also receive a **free** plant selection CD, entitled "Southern California Heritage Gardening Guide."

Workshop topics may include:

- How to water for plant health and low water bills
- Irrigation system basics
- Landscape design basics

Limited seating. Reserve your seat(s) online at <http://www.irwd.com/FreePrograms/workshops.php>

If you do not have internet access, please call 949-453-5327 to make your reservation.

The water use efficiency segment of "California's Water" will air Sept. 26 at 6 p.m. and Sept. 27 at 12:30 a.m. on KCET in Los Angeles. For air dates on other PBS stations statewide, visit ACWA's web site at www.acwa.com/television/air_date.asp

SHADETREE PARTNERSHIP EVENTS

- **Saturday, August 26 from 8:30 to 11 a.m.** - Shadetree Partnership Fifth Annual "Hot August" Nursery Event and Barbecue
- **Saturday, October 28 from 8:30 to 11 a.m.** - Pre-Halloween Nursery Event at the Shadetree Partnership Nursery. Groups welcome. RSVP by Monday, Oct. 23 with the number of volunteers.

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 - Pancake Breakfast and Book Sale, Saturday, October 28 from 7:30 to 10:30 a.m. Sea and Sage will host its 14th Annual Pancake Breakfast at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary in Irvine. Spotting scopes will be set up at in the marsh for your convenience. Cost: \$7 for adults, \$4 for children 10 and under and children under three are free. For reservation and directions, call Audubon House at (949) 261-7963.

CITY OF IRVINE EVENTS

- **Monday, October 9 starting at 12:30 p.m.** - **Seventh Annual Jack Williams Memorial Golf Tournament** "Breaking Barriers, Changing Perceptions," is the theme for the seventh annual Jack Williams Memorial Golf Tournament taking place at the Oak Creek Golf Course in Irvine. Sponsored by the City of Irvine Disability Services section, the event focuses on raising awareness of the needs of persons with disabilities by promoting inclusion within the community. Tournament fees are \$120 per person and include 18-holes of golf, tee gift, warm-up bucket, golf cart, lunch, dinner reception and awards ceremony immediately following the event. A variety of contribution opportunities are also available including sponsorship packages, team entries, and raffle and silent auction donations. Event proceeds benefit Disability Services Programs and its home-delivered meals program for persons with disabilities. For more information or to request a registration packet, contact Tournament Chairperson Susie Blanco at (949) 724-6633.

FAMILIES FORWARD NEWS

The summer supply of donated food continues to remain low, so food items are in great demand. Families Forward is a work that is based on community support and involvement. It appreciates the continued support of community members to its various programs. Please send or deliver donations to Families Forward, 9221 Irvine Blvd., Irvine, CA 92618. For more information call (949) 552-2727.

ASSISTANCE LEAGUE OF IRVINE THRIFT AND GIFT SHOP

17801 Main Street, Suite H (Sky Park South), Irvine • (949) 955-3437

Irvine's best kept secret for fabulous finds at great values. They are a non-profit volunteer organization, benefiting the Irvine community. They feature gently used clothing, household items, toys, books, shoes and much more. Donations welcome during normal business hours: Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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 can simply 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 will 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.

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 IRWD Customer Service at (949) 453-5300.

Huell Howser Films in Irvine

Several locations in Irvine will be featured in an upcoming program hosted by TV personality Huell Howser. The segment, which highlights water conservation, is part of Howser's latest PBS series called "California's Water." The program will air in September on PBS stations statewide. The "California's Water" series is sponsored by the Association of California Water Agencies, of which Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD) is a member.

IRWD coordinated the filming of three segments on California-friendly landscaping, weather-based irrigation controllers and synthetic turf.

First stop was in Irvine's Shady Canyon community, where all 400 homes feature native, California-friendly or Mediterranean plants. Landscape architects Leo O'Brian and Carissa Paez of The Irvine Company told Howser that the design restrictions within the community prohibit turf in the front yards, but the public has embraced the concept and home sales have been brisk in the community.

The camera crew then visited Irvine resident Joseph Renzi of Turtle Ridge, who told Howser about his positive experience with his weather-based irrigation controller. He said he enjoys being able to set the controller once and then not worry

about fluctuations in weather patterns. IRWD's Water Resources Manager Mark Tetterer was also interviewed and said that studies have shown homes with the weather-based controllers use about 20% less water overall than normal homes, while greatly reducing urban runoff.

Filming then moved to Irvine's Windrow Park, where Howser interviewed IRWD's Tetterer and Steve Bourke, landscape superintendent for the City of Irvine. They checked out an area of the park that has had synthetic turf installed as a pilot program to show the community that "faux" turf looks nothing like the old Astroturf, and to allow the city and water district to monitor how it stands up to repeated use over time. IRWD has installed other test plots in front of its headquarters building and in other parks in the cities of Tustin, Lake Forest and Newport Beach.

After leaving Irvine, Howser and his crew headed to Chino to tape segments on interior water conservation featuring high efficiency washing machines and new dual-flush toilets.

The water use efficiency segment of "California's Water" will air Sept. 26 at 6 p.m. and Sept. 27 at 12:30 a.m. on KCET in Los Angeles. For air dates on other PBS stations statewide, visit ACWA's web site at www.acwa.com/television/air_date.asp

Suggested Weekly Watering Schedule

Weekly Watering Schedule for SPRAY HEAD IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

SEPTEMBER

Turf grass: 3-4 days, 1-3 cycles* of 2-3 minutes
Trees, shrubs, groundcover: 2 days, 2 cycles* of 4 minutes
Percent option: 70%**

OCTOBER

Turf grass: 2-3 days, 1-3 cycles* of 2-3 minutes
Trees, shrubs, groundcover: 2 days, 2 cycles* of 3 minutes
Percent option: 50%**

**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.

In September, plant water needs drop by as much as 30 percent even if the temperature is hotter, for two reasons. First, the days are shorter. Second, plants begin to slow their growth phase, where they need less water. In some years, humidity is also higher, increasing your level of discomfort, but decreasing plant water needs as it slows the rate of evaporation. This rapid drop in water needs will continue in October and November.

see conservation tips on back page...



Water Conservation Tips

Efficient irrigation saves money.

- Start cutting back on your watering. By the end of September, plants will need as much as one-third LESS water than they did in August, even though the days are still warm. Why? Because the days are shorter, so plants do not lose as much water during the day as they did in mid-summer. Also, plants are slowing their growth rate-the opposite of the spring growth phase. Watch for signs of stress. Lawns show stress when grass blades turn wiry and don't pop back up when stepped on. Plants and bushes show stress when leaves droop or start to turn color. Domestic plants will easily recover from minor stress. If runoff occurs, reduce the watering time, but water twice in the same day at least an hour apart. Shrubs and trees will need about half of what turf requires.
- Brown grass. Warm season grasses go into dormancy and turn brown this time of year. No amount of water will change that! Some landscapers will "overseed" with an annual rye grass to keep a lawn looking green. You will need to water more frequently to get the seeds to germinate, but only a few BRIEF minutes each day for a couple of weeks-just enough to get the seeds wet.
- Lower the mower blade. If you increased the height during the warm months, return to the recommended height for your type of turf. Hybrid Bermuda: 1/2 to 3/8 inch; Tall Fescue: 2-2½ inches.
- PLANT! Fall is the best time of year for planting in Southern California. The soil is still warm, but the days and nights are cool. Winter rains are just around the corner to encourage good, deep root systems so plants will be ready for a surge of growth in the spring.
- Change the battery. If your irrigation controller has a backup battery, now is a good time to install a fresh one.

see watering schedule on page three...

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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Pipelines

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P.O. Box 57000
Irvine, CA 92619-7000

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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Irvine Ranch Water District residential customers may qualify to receive

up to **\$430** rebate

per each eligible High Efficiency Toilet (HET) purchased to replace a toilet installed prior to 1992.*

Today's HETs perform better, can cut water use to 1.28 gallons-per-flush or less, and are more durable and reliable than traditional ball and flapper models. Most HETs utilize either pressure-assisted flushing or dual-flush technology to achieve greater water savings.

To view the list of eligible HET toilets or print an application, visit <http://www.irwd.com/Conservation> and click on residential rebates or call 949-453-5563 for further details.



*Limit 3 rebates per residence, while funding lasts.