

# Irvine Ranch Water District Pipelines

The Newsletter of Irvine Ranch Water District / April 2007  
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## California Friendly Garden Contest Announced

Do you have a beautiful and colorful garden that uses very little water? Does your landscaping have state-of-the-art sprinkler systems that save water? Then your garden might be a good candidate for the Roger's Gardens California Friendly Garden Contest, co-sponsored by Irvine Ranch Water District.

The contest launches this month and the deadline to enter is June 17. The grand prize is a \$2,500 "SMART" controller, a certificate and garden plaque. The contest divisions are:

- **Best Aesthetics**, which includes curb appeal, color, form, texture and plant health.
- **Best Use of Plants**, which includes plants appropriate for Orange County's Mediterranean climate, appropriate plant combinations, innovative plants and creative use of plants.
- **Best Water Efficiency**, which includes a well-designed irrigation system, minimum water runoff and water conservation.
- **Do-it-Yourself**, which includes a garden



designed, installed and maintained primarily by the homeowner with less than 20 percent professional assistance.

Winners in each of the divisions will receive \$500 and a certificate.

Criteria for entry include:

- Residential properties only.
- Must be within the boundaries of Orange County.
- The garden must be at least one month old.
- No employees or family members of Roger's Gardens or the sponsors.

California Friendly is described as, "Smart and sustainable landscaping is the most visible feature of the California Friendly home, with outdoor spaces designed in harmony with the surrounding environment using beautiful and less-than-thirsty plants, state-of-the-art irrigation controllers and precision sprinkler heads."

If you think your garden fits the bill and you would like to enter the contest, log on to [rogersgardens.com/gardencontest](http://rogersgardens.com/gardencontest) after April 11 for information and an application.



Irvine Ranch Water District held another successful residential gardening workshop on March 16. The workshop featured both fact-filled talks and plant displays by local irrigation, gardening and landscape specialists. Irvine's local cable TV news program taped a story which aired on ICTV Channel 30 and can be viewed at IRWD's Web site, [www.irwd.com](http://www.irwd.com).

## Earthquakes Can Happen!

Even though it's been a while since an earthquake of major proportions has struck Southern California, experts warn the public not to become complacent. We live in earthquake country and a major earthquake could strike at any time.

April has been designated as Earthquake Preparedness Month in memory of the 1906 earthquake that devastated San Francisco and to heighten the importance of being prepared.

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. Several 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 screw-on caps are best if you bottle your own 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 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 shutoff valve with fluorescent paint or tape so you can find it in the dark.



*Terry Loomis, right in top photo, treasurer for Irvine Ranch Water District, was named Principal for the Day at Lake Forest Elementary School in March. He and “real” Principal Michelle Vaught visited a kindergarten class and read and sang, “The Wheels on the Bus” to the students. Then they toured the computer lab where Loomis was impressed by the students’ computer knowledge.*

## IRWD Information Is As Close As Your Computer

Need to know your IRWD account balance at midnight? Want to access the latest Water Quality Annual Report on a weekend? Care to sign up for a tour or request a brochure? These items and a great deal more information are available seven days a week through the IRWD Web site ([www.irwd.com](http://www.irwd.com)).

The site also features water education information for teachers and “kid friendly” water information and games for students.

So next time you're Web surfing, visit the IRWD Web site and give it a try!



- **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. Aerating your lawn can also improve root growth.
- **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

*Weekly Watering Schedule for SPRAY HEAD IRRIGATION SYSTEMS*

### APRIL

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

### MAY

Turf grass: 2-4 days, 2-3 cycles\* of 3-4 minutes  
 Trees, shrubs, groundcover: 2 days, 3 cycles\* of 3 minutes  
 Percent option: 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.*

*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 CLOSED ON THE FOLLOWING HOLIDAY:**

- Monday, May 28, 2007

**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](http://www.shadetreepartnership.org).

**SEA AND SAGE AUDUBON BAT WALKS**

- **May 25, June 8 & 22, August 10 & 17 from 7 to 8:45 p.m. at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary.** Are you and/or your friends looking for a unique experience? Have you done just about everything you thought there was to do in Orange County? The Bat Walk is one activity that truly deserves the designation of "unique." Local bat specialist Stephanie Remington dispels many myths about bats with a slide presentation and a walk after dark around the San Joaquin Marsh with sonar detectors tuned to the frequencies of the two most common species of bats living in the area. Cost is \$12 per adult and \$6 for children 7-12. Call (949) 726-0858 for questions and registration.

**CITY OF IRVINE EVENT**

- **Saturday, April 28 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Irvine Youth Job Fair.** Irvine Youth Employment Services is hosting a free Youth Job Fair at the Lakeview Senior Center, located at 20 Lake Road, Irvine. The fair is open to residents age 16 and older. Applicants are encouraged to dress professionally, bring a resume or listing of paid and/or volunteer experience, and three references in order to complete employment applications. Employers will be on-site conducting interviews for more than 300 full-time, part-time, temporary, seasonal and permanent employment opportunities. Employers are seeking to fill a wide range of positions in retail, administrative, customer and food service. Numerous opportunities are available for those 18 and older. For more information call (949) 724-6740, Ext. 7, or visit [www.IrvineYouthEmployment.com](http://www.IrvineYouthEmployment.com).

**TUSTIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOUNDATION AWARDS DINNER • Thursday, May 17**

Teachers of the Tustin Unified School District, which includes schools in Irvine, Tustin and parts of Santa Ana, will be honored at the Teacher of the Year Excellence Awards Dinner. The public is invited to this celebration. Tickets can be purchased from the Tustin Public Schools Foundation at (714) 832-6299 or [www.tpsf.net](http://www.tpsf.net).

**ASSISTANCE LEAGUE OF IRVINE**

- **Assistance League of Irvine Thrift and Gift Shop,** 17801 Main Street, Suite H (Sky Park South), Irvine, (949) 955-3437. 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.

*Assistance League of Irvine is a nonprofit volunteer organization dedicated to providing programs and services that will enrich and improve the quality of life in Irvine.*

**FAMILIES FORWARD**

- **Supplies are dwindling.** Non-perishable items needed are canned chicken, canned fruit, juice, juice boxes, crackers, stew, canned pasta, soups, baked beans and refried beans. Toiletary supplies such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, toilet paper, tissues and paper towels are extremely low also. Donations may be brought to the Families Forward warehouse at 9221 Irvine Blvd., Irvine 92618. Office hours are Monday-Thursday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- **Volunteers needed.** Want a great place to volunteer and feel like you are making a difference? Be a Families Forward volunteer. For more information call (949) 552-272.
- **Food Drive on Saturday, May 5.** Volunteers from various churches will collect food donated by shoppers at local grocery stores in Irvine and deliver it to the Families Forward warehouse. You may bring food donations directly to the warehouse on this date from noon to 4 p.m.

*Families Forward exists to help families in need achieve and maintain self-sufficiency through housing, counseling, education and other support services.*

**CASA VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) is seeking volunteers to serve as advocates and mentors for abused children. An information session will be held on **Tuesday, May 15 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.** and **Wednesday, June 13 from 6 to 8 p.m.** at the Irvine Heritage Library, 14361 Yale Avenue, Irvine. R.S.V.P. (714) 619-5155.

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

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