

Irvine Ranch Water District Pipelines

The Newsletter of Irvine Ranch Water District / November 2007
Volume 2007 Number 11

IRWD in the Community...



IRWD Customer Service staff participated in the Silverado Country Fair. Residents had the opportunity to meet the staff and learn more about Irvine Ranch Water District projects.



Alex Murphy of IRWD's Water Quality Department answers a student's question about his science fair project at the Irvine Unified School District's annual Ask-a-Scientist Night. This annual event provides assistance for students working on their science fair projects from professionals in scientific fields. IUSD said this year's event garnered the highest attendance numbers ever.

Don't Let Your Holiday Meal Create a Spill!

Grease poured down drains is the leading cause of sewage spills.

Grease needs to be handled carefully all year round, but especially at this time of year. With the holidays upon us, many families are cooking special meals to share with friends and relatives. But the larger quantity of grease created by cooking a turkey, ham or roast can result in problems within your home's sewer pipes or within your neighborhood if not disposed of properly.

Never pour grease down your sink drain, toilet or garbage disposal! Instead, pour grease into a can and refrigerate or freeze until solid and then dispose of the can on trash day. An empty soup can works well for everyday cooking; however for larger holiday meals you may want to save a coffee can to hold the grease.

Wipe excess grease from pots, pans and utensils with paper towels before washing. These simple steps will help IRWD protect the environment by preventing sewer spills.



MWD to Begin Fluoridation of Imported Water Supply

As we have mentioned previously, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), which provides 35 percent of Irvine Ranch Water District's (IRWD) drinking water, will begin adding fluoride to water supplies this month to help prevent tooth decay.

MWD imports water from the Colorado River and Northern California. Naturally occurring fluoride in our water supply ranges from 0.1 to 0.4 parts per million. MWD will adjust the levels of fluoride to the optimal range for dental health of 0.7 to 0.8 parts per million.

Customers receiving water from MWD will

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MWD to Begin Fluoridation of Imported Water Supply

see no difference in the taste, color or odor of their water as a result of fluoridation. Fluoride levels in drinking water are limited under California state regulations to a maximum of 2.0 parts per million.

IRWD will not fluoridate its well water, which in most of its service area represents about 65 percent of the drinking water delivered to its customers. Naturally occurring fluoride in well water from the Orange County Groundwater Basin normally contains levels between 0.1 and 1.6 parts per million. IRWD customers receive well water from mid-April through mid-October. The rest of the year, customers receive mostly imported water.

MWD began exploring fluoridation in 1995 when a new state law was signed requiring fluoridation of any public water supply with at least 10,000 customers once the funding was available to do so. The cities of Fountain Valley and Huntington Beach fluoridated their water prior to the 1995 law.

Adding fluoride to water is not a new concept. Water suppliers across the country have been fluoridating water since 1945. Fluoride works to strengthen tooth enamel so teeth become more resistant to decay, and it reverses newly formed cavities. Drinking fluoridated water as part of your regular diet will provide about 60 percent of the protection necessary to fight cavities.

Parents of children taking fluoride supplements are encouraged to check with their dentist or health care provider to determine whether the supplements are still recommended.

**Additional information is available
at MWD's web site at
www.mwdh2o.com/fluoridation/index.html
or by calling the MWD Water Quality
Information line at (800) 354-4420.**

Additional Fluoridation Information Resources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<http://www.cdc.gov/OralHealth/factsheets/fl-background.htm>

California Department of Public Health
<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/drinkingwater/pages/fluoridation.aspx>

National Cancer Institute
<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/Risk/fluoridated-water>

American Dental Association
<http://www.ada.org/public/topics/fluoride/news.asp>

American Water Works Association
<http://www.awwa.org/Publications/MainStreamArticle.cfm?ItemNumber=2577>



Recent winners in the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's "Water is Life" poster contest were honored by the IRWD Board of Directors in September. Shown are Tia Thomson, left, of Tustin Ranch Elementary, and Jasmin Kung, right, of Turtle Rock Elementary. Not pictured is Grace Jung of Brywood Elementary.

Seasonal changes of water sources

If you call Irvine Ranch Water District to find out where your water comes from, the answer may depend on what month it is and where you live within the District.

In general, IRWD supplies 65 percent of its drinking water from local wells that tap into the Orange County Groundwater Basin. The remaining 35 percent of our drinking water supply must be purchased from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), who imports water from the Colorado River and Northern California.

Between April and October, most of the District receives well water. However, a few areas at higher elevations, such as Foothill Ranch, Portola Hills and Newport Coast, receive imported water year-round.

Between October and April, the entire District generally receives MWD water. Because Southern California usually receives most of its rainfall in the winter, IRWD shuts off its groundwater wells during that time to allow the groundwater aquifer to recharge naturally. Because your water source may vary or be made up of a blending of these various sources of water, you may notice a difference in the taste or hardness (mineral content) of the water at different times of year. None of these factors affect the safety of your water.

Both IRWD and MWD use chloramines, a combination of chlorine and ammonia, to purify water. Both fish owners and kidney dialysis patients need to take steps to remove these disinfectants from the water prior to using it.



- **Continue to cut back on your watering.** By the end of November, plants will need up to half of what they needed in August. Why? Because the days are shorter. As you continue cutting back on the amount of water you're providing your landscape, 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.
- **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 weeks-just enough to get the seeds wet.
- **Avoid "topping" trees.** Topping can severely damage a tree. Topping cuts off a major portion of the tree's food manufacturing ability and eliminates a large percentage of the tree's food reserves. This can kill older trees. Topping removes the canopy of the tree, which normally cools the area up to 15 degrees during the summer and insulates the area during the winter. Removing this protection can cause an increase in energy consumption to cool the home and an increase in water consumption on exposed landscape. Contact a certified arborist to see if there are alternatives to topping in your particular situation.
- **Fall is an excellent time to plant California natives and other "California friendly" vegetation.**

Suggested Weekly Watering Schedule

Weekly Watering Schedule for SPRAY HEAD IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

NOVEMBER

Turf grass: 1-2 days, 1-2 cycles* of 2-3 minutes
 Trees, shrubs, groundcover:
 1 day, 2 cycles* of 4 minutes
 Percent option: 40%**

DECEMBER

Turf grass: 1-2 days, 1-2 cycles* of 1-2 minutes
 Trees, shrubs, groundcover:
 1 day, 2 cycles* of 3 minutes
 Percent option: 30%**

*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.

Irvine Ranch Water District will be closed for the following holidays:

- Thursday and Friday, November 22 & 23
- Monday and Tuesday, December 24 & 25, 2007
- Monday, December 31, 2007 and Tuesday, January 1, 2008

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.

SEA AND SAGE AUDUBON EVENTS

- **Become a member** of the National Audubon Society and the Sea and Sage Audubon Chapter. For more information visit their web site at www.seaandsageaudubon.org or call the Audubon House at (949) 261-7963.

RAFFLE TO BENEFIT ORANGE COUNTY COASTKEEPER

- **Win a 2008 Lexus Luxury Hybrid Sedan** - When you purchase your ticket(s) for \$100 each, you may win a 2008 Lexus LS600h, the world's first hybrid luxury sedan. You'll also be helping to fund Orange County Coastkeeper's programs to preserve and protect wetlands, watersheds and the coastline. Only 3,000 tickets will be sold. The drawing is scheduled for Dec. 12 at 6 p.m. at OC Coastkeeper, 3151 Airway Avenue, Suite F-110, Costa Mesa, CA 92626. Enter to win by visiting <http://www.coastkeeper.org/raffle/> or calling (714) 850-1965.

FAMILIES FORWARD

- **Adopt-A-Family Program** - The holiday season is upon us - a very difficult time for many families who are in crisis. The Adopt-A-Family Program helps families enjoy the holiday season in December. This program matches a donor to a family in need and is given the family's wish list. Donors purchase items from the family's wish list and bring them to the Families Forward office. Families Forward insures that the recipient family receives the gifts prior to the holidays. To learn how you can contribute to this program e-mail Annie Harrington at aharrington@families-forward.org or call (949) 552-2727, Ext. 231. Gift cards to grocery stores, Target, Mervyns, Costco and gas cards are also greatly appreciated. Help brighten the holidays for a family in need.
- *Families Forward exists to help families in need achieve and maintain self-sufficiency through housing, counseling, education and other support services.*

ASSISTANCE LEAGUE OF IRVINE

- **Assistance League of Irvine Thrift and Gift Shop** - 17801 Main Street, Suite H (Sky Park South), Irvine, (949) 955-3437. 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.
- To learn more about Assistance League and membership call (949) 725-9188. 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.

CALIFORNIA COASTAL ART & POETRY CONTEST

- **The California Coastal Commission** invites California students in kindergarten through 12th grade to submit artwork or poetry with a California coastal or marine theme to the annual Coastal Art & Poetry Contest. Up to eight winners will be selected to win \$100 gift certificates to an art supply or book store, and each winner's sponsoring teacher will receive a \$40 gift certificate for educational supplies. Students may have their work featured on Commission webpages and materials. Entries must be postmarked by January 31, 2008 to be eligible for this year's contest. For rules and entry form, visit www.coastforyou.org, e-mail coast4u@coastal.ca.gov, or call (800) Coast-4U.

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

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