

**GENERAL MANAGER - IRVINE RANCH WATER DISTRICT**  
[Irvine, CA]



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**GENERAL MANAGER**

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**Irvine Ranch Water District**  
(Irvine, CA)

ROBERTS CONSULTING GROUP INC

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# GENERAL MANAGER – IRVINE RANCH WATER DISTRICT

## [Irvine, CA]

### THE AREA

Located in the south-central portion of Orange County, the Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD) encompasses approximately 181 square miles. IRWD serves the City of Irvine, one of the nation's largest planned urban communities, and portions of Costa Mesa, Lake Forest, Newport Beach, Orange, Tustin and the unincorporated area of Orange County. IRWD extends from the Pacific Coast to the foothills, with elevations ranging from sea level to 3,200 feet. This is a semi-arid region with a mild climate and an average annual rainfall of 12 to 13 inches.

Orange County is the third largest county in California in population and one of the largest in the U.S., with a population of approximately 3.14 million. IRWD provides water and wastewater services to an increasingly diverse population of approximately 340,000 night time residents that grows to a daytime population of approximately 500,000 people when workers enter the large employment areas within the service area.

Orange County is known for its numerous tourist attractions, cultural opportunities, Mediterranean climate, beautiful beaches and large wilderness and natural areas. The County is a leading California business center and home to some of the nation's leading companies in the biotechnical, medical, electronic, computer, information, video game, cosmetic, clothing, finance, and other fields.

Outstanding educational opportunities are also available within or near the IRWD service area. Irvine Unified, Newport Mesa and Tustin Unified are the largest public school districts served by IRWD. There are numerous public and private colleges and universities located within the service area, including the University of California, Irvine; California State University, Fullerton; Chapman University; Irvine Valley College; and Rancho Santiago Community College, among others.

### THE DISTRICT

The Irvine Ranch Water District was established in 1961 as a California Water District under the provisions of the State of California Water Code. Today, IRWD is a premier agency and an employer of choice. The average employment tenure of IRWD employees is close to 20 years. The District provides high quality drinking water, reliable wastewater collection and treatment, ground-breaking recycled water programs, and environmentally sound urban runoff treatment to more than 340,000 residents in central Orange County. IRWD has a total of 101,600 connections, including over 84,000 residential connections and almost 5,000 commercial connections. In the prior fiscal year, IRWD delivered over 80,000 acre-feet of water, of which 63% was treated (potable), 28% recycled and 9% untreated (non-potable).

As an independent public agency, IRWD is governed by a five-member, publicly elected Board of Directors who are elected at-large for four-year terms. These officials are responsible for the District's policies and decision making. Day-to-day operations are supervised by the General Manager. IRWD has about 300 employees and a combined annual operating and capital budget of approximately \$250 million.

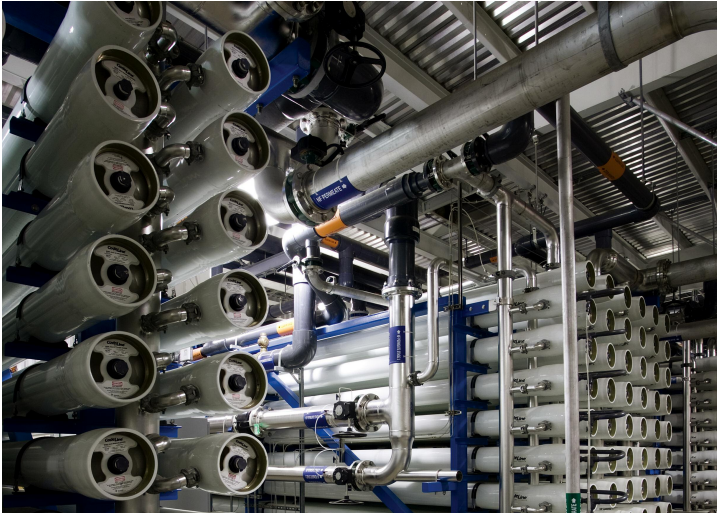
IRWD's capital budget of approximately \$140 million includes a diverse mix of challenging and complex capital projects that are essential to accomplishing the District's long-term goals in water supply diversity and reliability, wastewater treatment and disposal, water recycling and biosolids management. These projects range from expansion of the District's largest wastewater treatment and recycled water treatment plant, to groundwater and surface water membrane treatment facilities, water banking facilities in Kern County, and various projects under design including a biosolids dewatering, digestion, energy recovery and pelletization.





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IRWD's mission is to provide high quality water and sewer service in an efficient and cost effective manner, in an environmentally sensitive way that provides a high level of customer satisfaction. The District's core value is customer satisfaction and the vision is to achieve greater customer and employee satisfaction, increased reliability and resource conservation, and excellent external relationships with suppliers and others. Other core values include: 1) a commitment to recruiting and retaining top quality employees, and providing a work place environment, training, and a recognition and reward system that enhances employee performance and satisfaction; 2) a dedication to providing, conserving and protecting water resources for customers and to enhance the environment; and 3) sharing resources with the community through education and employee involvement.

### Domestic Water Sources

Only 27 percent of IRWD's total water supply is purchased from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. Imported water comes from the Colorado River via the Colorado River Aqueduct and from Northern California via the State Water Project. To alleviate IRWD's total dependency on imported water, in 1979 the District began to develop a series of local wells in an area called the Dyer Road Wellfield. These wells extract high quality water from the Orange County Groundwater Basin.

### Water Quality

Providing their customers with safe, high quality drinking water is a main priority of Irvine Ranch Water District. IRWD ensures that the water supply meets all State and Federal regulations. Water Quality staff continuously monitor the water supply, conducting over a quarter of a million laboratory tests each year from water taken from over 70 sample points throughout the District. IRWD's state-of-the-art Water Quality Laboratory is one of the best equipped water laboratories in Southern California.

Water imported from the Colorado River and Northern California is purified at the Metropolitan Water District's Diemer Filtration Plant before it enters the IRWD distribution system. Local well water is purified at disinfection facilities as part of the District's Dyer Road Wellfield before it is provided to customers. The District also operates two groundwater membrane treatment plants that provide additional potable supplies. One plant, the Deep Aquifer Treatment System (DATS) located in the City of Santa Ana, removes organic color while the second plant, the Irvine Desalter Project (IDP) located in the City of Irvine removes salts

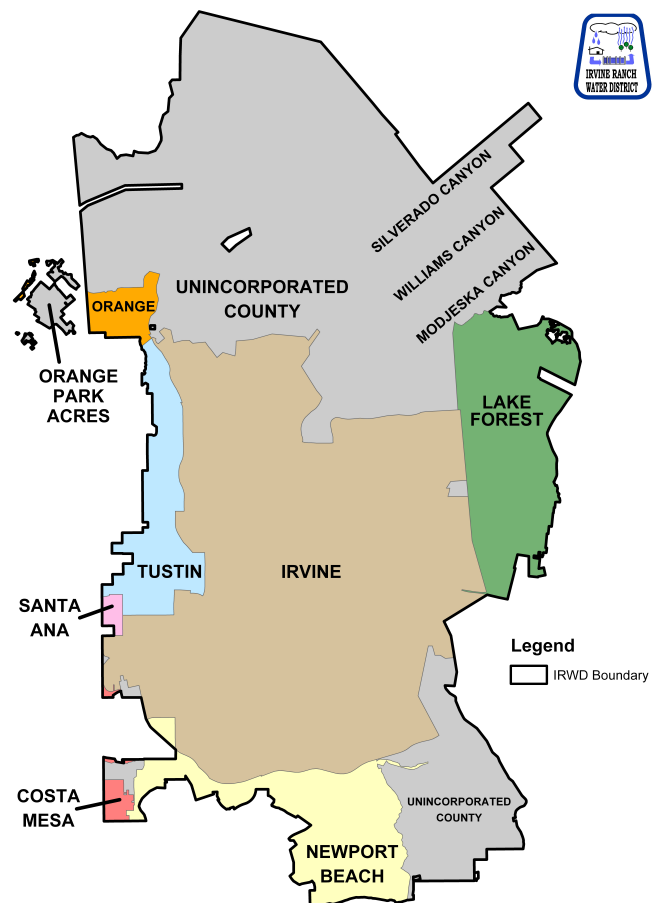
and nitrates. The District also operates a non-potable treatment facility as part of the IDP that removes volatile organic compounds in the groundwater emanating from the former El Toro Marine Base. This component of the project serves to remediate contamination in the groundwater while providing additional supplies to supplement the District's recycled water system. Based upon the success of these groundwater treatment projects, the District is now constructing an additional groundwater treatment facility to remove salts and nitrates from water pumped from District wells in the City of Tustin.

### Sewer

IRWD's sanitary sewer system collects all wastewater coming from homes and businesses within the IRWD service area. Sewage is currently conveyed to two treatment plants through more than 800 miles of sewer distribution pipelines. The Michelson Water Recycling Plant in Irvine currently treats up to 18 million gallons of wastewater per day, but is being expanded in the District's largest current construction project to add another 10 MGD of capacity. IRWD is currently in the planning stages to add a major biosolids facility to reduce long-term cost of sludge disposal to its customers. The Los Alisos Water Recycling Plant in Lake Forest treats up to 5.5 million gallons per day. It is anticipated that these expansions will reduce reliance upon two other treatment plants not owned by IRWD.

### Recycled Water

IRWD had the first unrestricted use permit for recycled water and has been a pioneer in several other advancements in the use of recycled water. Recycled water now makes up more than 21 percent of IRWD's total water supply, reducing the need to import expensive water and helping to keep water rates low.



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### Urban Runoff Treatment

By special legislation, IRWD obtained the authority to treat urban runoff. While counties and cities have primary responsibility for storm drains, IRWD began an innovative program in the early 1990s to use reconstructed wetlands to naturally treat urban runoff on a watershed-wide basis before it flows into sensitive estuaries. The IRWD Natural Treatment System diverts water from San Diego Creek to wetlands for a period of seven-to-ten days. Bacteria within the ponds naturally remove nutrients and other pollutants from the water before it returns, much cleaner, to the creek to continue its journey to Upper Newport Bay and the ocean.

### Water Rates

In the early 1990s, IRWD adopted a budget based ascending block rate structure. The IRWD allocation system is based on science, taking into consideration both indoor water use and the actual evapotranspiration rate needed to maintain healthy landscaping in the area.

The rates charged to customers are among the lowest in Orange County. The budget based ascending block rate used by the District is intended to promote the efficient use of water and maintain revenue stability year in and year out – not just during drought years. The less imported water that IRWD has to buy, the lower the rates are for those who practice good water management.

### Consolidations

Over the last ten-plus years, IRWD has consolidated with five water districts: Santa Ana Heights Mutual Water Company (1997), Carpenter Irrigation District (2000), Los Alisos Water District (2001), Santiago County Water District (2006) and Orange Park Acres Mutual Water Company (2008). The integrated services of IRWD allow for reduced overhead and administrative costs, as well as lower rates and charges to customers of the consolidated districts.

### Public Policy Initiatives

IRWD is actively involved in water resources public policy and governance. The District works with fellow water and wastewater agencies, as well as statewide and national associations, to advance innovative and effective public policy in a variety of fields. IRWD works tirelessly to promote policy initiatives that advance new and innovative technologies and programs; keep water rates low and stable; and protect the quality and reliability of water. Recent legislation that they have sponsored and/or promoted includes:

- \* Water Conservation – weather-based irrigation technology; conservation rate structures; and statewide conservation policy.
- \* Recycled Water – indoor recycled water use; California plumbing code; and water softeners.
- \* Water Resources & Supply Reliability – Delta/water package; and clean and renewable water bonds.
- \* Finance & Governance – Water Resources Development Act; homeowner financing for septic conversion; bond financing; and federal appropriations.

### Strategic Objectives

IRWD's strategic objectives include the following: customer satisfaction, water reliability, water quality, sewer reliability, cost effectiveness, employee satisfaction/development, environmental commitment, innovation and communication. The General Manager meets with the Board of Directors on a quarterly basis to set annual goals (at the beginning of the calendar year) and to discuss and prioritize Target Activities related to the District's strategic objectives and established goals. It is then the responsibility of the General Manager to ensure timely execution of these activities and to communicate them to all employees at regularly scheduled department meetings.





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### THE CANDIDATE

#### Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

The selected candidate should have exemplary oral and written communication skills (clear and concise). In addition, he/she should have thorough knowledge of laws, regulations and legal opinions relating to water rights, water supply and transmission activities, water quality, environmental activities, wastewater and water reuse activities, and flood and drainage control activities. The selected candidate should be able to manage, perform and accomplish multiple tasks, assignments and objectives. The ability to effectively work with the local community, local governments and other water and wastewater agencies is required.

#### Management Style and Personal Traits

The ideal candidate will be visionary, innovative, forward thinking, entrepreneurial, a team builder and collaborative. He/She should empower staff (not autocratic); delegate, yet monitor operations; and be able to select, motivate and develop staff. The General Manager should properly balance his/her time between internal management and external responsibilities. The Board has viewed this position as a “sixth member” of the Board and they desire someone who will keep them informed in a timely, complete and accurate manner. Finally, this person should be a confident leader who is politically sensitive, straightforward, decisive, tactful, a good listener and have a sense of humor.

#### Education and Experience

- \* Desire a bachelor's degree in business administration or engineering, with a master's degree in business administration, public administration or engineering.
- \* If employed as an engineer, registration as a Professional Engineer in the State of California is preferred.
- \* Desire ten years of experience in upper management or in a department head position with at least five years as a chief executive or assistant chief executive. Experience may have been gained with a special district, general purpose local government, investor-owned utility or consulting organization.
- \* It is important that candidates have demonstrated success in the oversight of water, wastewater and recycled water operations as well as large construction programs.
- \* The selected candidate should have knowledge of and experience with California water resource, policy and legal issues. California experience would be a plus, although candidates from all geographic areas will be considered.
- \* Community involvement is very important since the General Manager will need to deal with the cities in the service area, the County, the State and the Federal government.
- \* The Board desires someone who has a stable employment history, but remains ambitious.



### THE POSITION

Under the direction of the Board of Directors, the General Manager organizes, controls and directs the overall activities of Irvine Ranch Water District. He/She acts as liaison with the Board of Directors; administers all functions of the District through department directors; and represents the District to professional organizations, governmental agencies, environmental interests and the community.

Specific duties and responsibilities of the position include, but are not limited to:

- \* Preparing, supervising the preparation of, and recommending District policy for action of the Board of Directors.
- \* Insuring that the Board of Directors is informed of major activities of the District and the extent to which the objectives are being met; discussing possible agenda items with management staff; determining items to be presented; reviewing agenda items to be presented prior to meeting of Board of Directors and Committees.
- \* Implementing policy or procedural decisions of the Board; providing for adequate guidelines for management to implement new or revised policies or procedures.
- \* Preparing, in conjunction with department directors, and recommending overall District plans, budgets, operating philosophies and objectives.
- \* Seeking counsel of the Board of Directors, individually and collectively, on difficult decisions or issues.
- \* Directing efforts of the District's legal counsel; presenting and resolving legal attention and informing Board of litigation or potential liability.



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- \*Providing for a well-staffed, motivated and efficient organization including operations (water, water quality and wastewater collection and treatment), administrative services (information systems and customer service), public affairs, human resources, engineering and construction, water resources and finance departments.
- \*Making decisions on critical issues within the framework of established policy or guidelines of the Board of Directors; establishing priorities where conflicts or schedules require.
- \*Managing, negotiating and continuing the growth of the District's Water Banking programs and water supply development and storage initiatives in Kern and Kings counties.
- \*Providing oversight of the District's annual capital improvement program.
- \*Providing oversight and encouraging active participation in on-going succession planning activities including training, educational incentives and future staffing needs.
- \*Preparing, or supervising the preparation of, objectives for each department; establishing organizational controls and measuring performance against approved objectives.
- \*Reviewing financial, operations and other reports periodically; identifying trends; presenting and highlighting results to the Board.
- \*Encouraging cooperative efforts of all department and division heads; developing subordinates through succession planning, training, delegation of authority, monitoring performance, and providing feedback and counseling to key personnel.
- \*Monitoring and reviewing expenditures through budgets and other guidelines; identifying and resolving questions regarding variances from expected expenditure levels.
- \*Evaluating personnel needs of the District and skill levels required in key staff positions.
- \*Selecting, or reviewing the selection of, consultants; approving capital expenditures within established authorization limits.
- \*Representing Irvine Ranch Water District and providing leadership to outside professional associations, environmental organizations, citizen interest groups and other water or sewer agencies; representing the District in appearances before legislative bodies, regulatory agencies.
- \*Developing and participating in advocacy to obtain approval of state and federal legislation to support the District's and water industry's interests, including the acquisition of outside grants and other projects or program funding.
- \*Communicating and interfacing with general managers in other districts; negotiating agreements with other districts at the local, regional or state levels.
- \*Appearing before City Councils in the service area, wholesale water and wastewater agencies, the Orange County Board of Supervisors and the Orange County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO); establishing close working relationships with City Managers, County of Orange CEO and department heads, Orange County LAFCO Executive Officer, and agencies served by or involved with the District.
- \*Providing for a community image stressing high quality service, efficiency, environmental values and community concern.
- \*Ensuring appropriate staff safety and training.
- \*Performing other special projects or studies as required.

This is an at-will position serving at the pleasure of the Board. The position is open due to the current General Manager having accepted a similar position with a larger organization, after twelve years with IRWD.

## COMPENSATION

The salary for this position is competitive, with hiring dependent upon the qualifications and experience of the selected candidate. In addition, benefits are provided which include: vacation, holidays and sick leave; choice of HMO and PPO medical insurance plans; dental plan; vision care plan; life insurance; long-term disability; retirement (CalPERS 2.5% at age 55, with the District currently paying 2% of the 8% employee contribution); deferred compensation plan; Medicare; retiree health plan; Section 125 plan; educational reimbursement and incentives; automobile allowance; and bonus potential.

## HOW TO APPLY

Send resumes by August 29, 2011 (email preferred) to:

### ROBERTS CONSULTING GROUP INC

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*Equal Opportunity/ADA Employer*

Additional information about Irvine Ranch Water District can be found on their website at [www.irwd.com](http://www.irwd.com).

