



The newsletter of IRWD

pipelines

July 2012 | Number 6

IRWD Implements Prudent Budget



The Irvine Ranch Water District Board of Directors has adopted a \$111 million operating budget for the 2012-13 fiscal year. The operating budget provides the funds needed to supply potable, recycled water and sewer service to IRWD customers. Modest increases in rates and charges for these services will take effect on July 1, 2012.

One of IRWD's critical business objectives is to keep costs, and therefore rates, as low as possible for all customers. Over the past two years, IRWD's operating budget has decreased slightly due to reductions in expenses to offset uncontrollable cost increases.

This year, increases in IRWD rates and charges to our customers are primarily due to uncontrollable cost increases that include an average seven percent increase in the cost of imported water from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, through the regional wholesaler the Municipal Water District of Orange County, and a five percent increase in the cost of groundwater from the Orange County Water District. Additionally, sewer charge increases have been passed through to our customers from the Orange County Sanitation District. Despite these increases, IRWD consistently has among the lowest rates in Orange County.

IRWD takes the budget process seriously and is committed to being strategic, responsible and transparent. Over a three month period, the budget is discussed and revised in a series of public meetings with the IRWD Board of Directors. These meetings are open to the public and participation is encouraged. In addition, each IRWD customer was mailed a Notice of Proposed Water and Sewer Rate Change. These notices along with easy-to-use bill calculators were also placed on the IRWD website.

Despite the economic downturn, IRWD finds itself in a strong financial position. This did not happen by accident, but through careful fiscal planning over the course

of many years. IRWD uses a long-range planning approach that is similar to a family who regularly puts money aside over time to pay for the eventual cost of their children's college education. By planning for the future, it's not necessary to dramatically increase customer rates to pay for new infrastructure (pipes, pumps, reservoirs, etc.) or for the inevitable repair and the replacement of these types of facilities as they begin to age.

Residential Rates for 2012-13

In keeping with our pledge to keep rates as low as possible, residential water and sewer rates increased minimally throughout IRWD. For the typical customer, the average total cost of all water and sewer rate increases per month are as follows: Irvine Ranch rate area is \$1.05 (based on an average usage of 18 ccfs*), Los Alisos rate area is \$1.20 (based on an average usage of 18 ccfs) and Orange Park Acres rate area is \$1.79 (based on an average usage of 62 ccfs).

Water rates will increase in the Irvine Ranch rate area by \$.02 per ccf from \$1.22 to \$1.24. There was no change to the existing low volume rate of \$0.91. In the Los Alisos area, the base rate will increase by \$0.09 and change the current base charge for water from \$2.05 to \$2.14. In the Orange Park Acres rate area the base rate increases by \$.02 per ccf from \$1.74 to \$1.76.

The fixed water service charge will increase by \$0.55 in the Irvine Ranch and Orange Park Acres areas, but will remain the same in Los Alisos. Sewer rates in the Irvine Ranch and Los Alisos areas will increase to \$17.20 per month, from \$16.90.

Complete Rate Information is Available Online

IRWD posts the annual operating and capital budgets online, as well as other financial documents that provide transparency for our customers. Our financial information is offered in a clear and easy-to-read format. For more information about IRWD, including our budget and a complete list of new rates and charges, please visit our website at www.irwd.com, or call an IRWD customer service specialist at (949) 453-5300.

**One ccf is one hundred cubic feet of water or 748 gallons.*

2012 Water-Related Science Fair Winners



Every year IRWD commends Irvine Unified School District students for their water-related science fair projects. Winners for 2012 are, from left, Gopal Vashishtha, Zach Howard and Louis Primeau. Not pictured, Elizabeth Chang. Each student's school receives \$100 to support the purchase of science equipment or books.

Take Control of Your Controller ~ Step 4

Using multiple start times to cycle and soak is a smart way to improve efficiency and reduce runoff. Curious how long to water for? Worry not – let IRWD suggest a watering schedule for you.

Program A – Grass in Summer – 4 days, 3 cycles of 3 minutes. Select the four days that you wish to water. Select three start times, preferably in the morning with an hour of soaking in between. Schedule 3 minutes for each zone.

Program A Example:

Watering Days: Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday.

Start Times: 5 a.m.; 6 a.m.; 7 a.m.

Watering Duration: 3 minutes

Program B – Shrubs or Trees in Summer – 2 days, 3 cycles of 4 minutes. Select two days that you wish to water. Select three start times, preferably in the morning with an hour of soaking in between. Schedule 4 minutes for each zone.

Program B Example:

Watering Days: Monday & Friday.

Start Times: 5 a.m.; 6 a.m.; 7 a.m.

Watering Duration: 4 minutes



“Cycle and soaking” with the irrigation controller results in deeper watering and healthier root growth while reducing runoff. Next month, in Step 5, you will learn how to use the seasonal adjust or watering index feature to quickly make seasonal watering adjustments!

Did you Know?

Q: How can I calculate what my water bill will be each month?

A: IRWD customer bills are calculated using a personalized water budget based on number of occupants, size of landscaped area and various other factors. To get an estimate of your water budget and what your bill will be each month, visit www.irwd.com and click on Understanding Your Bill on the left-hand side. Use the rate calculator on this web page (with or without your IRWD account number) to determine your average monthly bill based on your water usage.

Customer Service Information

[IRWD Website Link & Social Media Channels](#) »

24 Hour Customer Service

(949) 453-5300

Email: customerservice@irwd.com

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Irvine, California 92618

Visit us: www.irwd.com

 Join our fan page:
Irvine Ranch Water District

 @IRWDnews
@AlwaysH2OSmart
@IRWDemergency

 View our YouTube channel:
www.youtube.com/IrvineRanchWD



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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