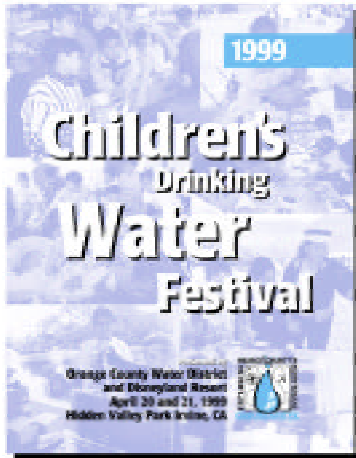


Orange County WD joins Disneyland to Sponsor Kids' Drinking Water Festival

Orange County Water District's (OCWD) Groundwater Guardian Team and the Disneyland Resort are presenting the nation's largest children's drinking water festival this

month (April) at Hidden Valley Park in Irvine.

Entering its third year, the drinking water festival is a fun, environmental education program designed to teach elementary school children about the interdependence of water, soil, plants, trees, animals and people.



Children's Drinking Water Festival Guide

Last year, the event drew about 3,500 students from throughout Orange County. This year, nearly 5,000 students and teachers from public and private schools registered to attend.

During the two-day festival, "Exploring Orange County's Hidden Treasure: Groundwater," students and teachers participate in more than 50 interactive, hands-on educational demonstrations.

Together with some of the area's leading environmentalists, students explore the water cycle and discover that water is a finite, irreplaceable resource. They also pinpoint the sources of water pollution and learn about nature, the environment and water conservation.

"By offering information, resources and assurances that children can make a difference, we start them on a life-long path of environmental stewardship," says Irv Pickler,

president of the OCWD board of directors. "The 1999 Children's Drinking Water Festival is an exciting concept in environmental education."

Financial support for the event, both public and private, is essential. By making a tax-deductible contribution, sponsors help fund the festival's interactive presentations and transportation costs for schools attending the event. The festival is expected to be held again next year, and interested organizations can learn about sponsorship opportunities by calling Sharon Lien at OCWD, (714) 378-3362.

This year's sponsors are invited to a VIP luncheon and behind-the-scenes tour of the festival. Additionally, advertising space for sponsors is being made available in the official program.

Mojave W.A. Delivers First Supplemental Water to Barstow

More than 100 people joined Mojave Water Agency on April 3 to witness the first-ever delivery of supplemental water to Barstow, Calif.

This event represented the beginning of operation of the Mojave River Pipeline, an underground pipeline built to replenish depleted aquifers in the river basin area. Augmenting the region's groundwater is critical, because all water in the desert area is derived from wells fed by the Mojave River.

The keynote speaker was U. S. Representative Jerry Lewis, who has represented the high desert for two decades. His help was critical

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for Mojave W.A. to obtain \$43 million in federal funding to build the pipeline.

Other honored guests included Jeff Hays, district director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA); Kathy Davis, San Bernardino County supervisor; Katy Yslas-Yent, Mayor of the City of Barstow; and Beverly J. Lowry, president of the board of directors of Mojave W.A.

The program included presentation of a check to Mojave W.A. by the USDA, representing the \$525,000 loan that paid for constructing the percolation pond at the ceremony site.

The pond is the first of four recharge sites

associated with the project.

Mojave W.A. is the state water contractor for an area of nearly 5,000 square miles of the Mojave Desert in San Bernardino County, with a population of nearly 400,000. Municipalities within Mojave W.A. include Adelanto, Apple Valley, Barstow, Hesperia, Victorville and Yucca Valley.

Pipeline construction began in February 1997 at the California Aqueduct in Adelanto and will be 72 miles long when fully completed in 2003. Regular deliveries of water to the two Barstow area percolation ponds near Lenwood and Hodge are expected to begin this summer.

Mills Honored with Prestigious Engineering Award

The Association of Ground Water Agencies' (AGWA) president, William R. Mills, Jr., has been awarded the 1999 Institute for the Advancement of Engineering's (IAE) Leadership in Engineering Award for Water Resources.

Mills is general manager of Orange County Water District.

According to IAE, Mills was selected for the award based on his outstanding contributions toward improving the nation's water supply over the last 25 years. The IAE, whose members are in Los Angeles and Orange Counties, recognizes excellence in the engineering profession.

Mr. Mills has achieved national recognition as a leader in the field of water reclamation and reuse, working as a consultant for 20 years. Since 1987, he has served as OCWD's general manager.

In his position at OCWD, Mills is responsible for developing long-range plans for

the district aimed at diversifying Orange County's water sources to include groundwater, imported water and reclaimed water, while improving the quality of surface and groundwater supplies.

During his tenure, more than \$200 million has been spent on the construction of water recycling plants, increased groundwater production and restoration of groundwater sources. Restoration of sources is important both in Orange County and in its upper watershed in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. Water from those sources affects Orange County.

A registered geologist and professional engineer in the state of California, Mills is a diplomate of the American Academy of Environmental Engineers and a fellow of the American Society of Civil Engineers. He earned his bachelor's degree in geologic engineering from the Colorado School of Mines and his master's degree in civil engineering from Loyola University.



Newsletter Articles Invited

The editors of this publication, *Notes from the Underground*, invite and encourage any organization to submit pertinent articles to be considered for publication

Articles must be of interest to individuals and organizations concerned with groundwater in southern California. Items may not be designed primarily to advertise or promote a specific commercial product, process or firm. Editors reserve the right to accept or reject materials and to edit items as necessary.

Notes from the Underground is the official newsletter of the Association of Ground Water Agencies and is published quarterly on the Internet. It is not available in printed or hard-copy form.

AB 3030 Process Pays Many Dividends

[Third in a series on the successful development and implementation of an AB 3030 groundwater management plan]

Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD), in 1993, undertook development of an AB 3030 groundwater management plan.

Potential water shortages, increasing costs and water quality problems provided the need for a comprehensive approach. The area to be covered by the plan encompassed 256 square miles, nearly half of EMWD's service area.

Mark Twain is said to have remarked,

"Whiskey is for drinking, water is for fighting." That certainly is true in the arid southwest where there are few issues as highly charged as groundwater.

The AB 3030 groundwater management process is largely a public involvement strategy.

As EMWD found out, the benefits of a public involvement program can far outweigh the project itself. The overall image of an agency can be positively affected and the program originator viewed as an aware, concerned and responsible agency. Additionally, public input can provide unanticipated perspectives and information which can greatly enhance any project.

Initially, public reaction to the proposed plan, particularly from the agricultural community, was one of concern and suspicion about limits on groundwater production, "pump taxes" and reclaimed water quality.

Although the law requires only two public meetings, EMWD initiated an aggressive public involvement program. Thirty meetings were conducted within a twenty-two month period to inform and provide data to the public. Any individual or group that wanted to meet was accorded a meeting.

There were meetings and workshops with cities, agencies, regulators, private groundwater producers, downstream water rights holders, the general public and, of course, the ubiquitous attorneys.

As the cycle of meetings wound down, a programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared. It provided a more comprehensive consideration of broad policy, environmental effects, mitigation measures and alternative actions than would be practical in project-specific EIRs. It set the stage for

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further California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) reviews.

The adopted plan assured farmers that it would not impose any limit on groundwater production, would not establish a pump tax, that the urban sector would underwrite the costs of implementation and that the groundwater/reclaimed water exchange aspect of the program would be voluntary.

A plan evolved that most of the agricultural community supported, some of them enthusiastically. Protest at the adoption hearing was minimal, far less than 1%, with only one individual speaking against adoption and many speaking in favor - including the attorney representing the farmers who originally opposed any groundwater management plan.

By informing and involving the public, support for the adoption of the plan was assured and perception of the district as a trustworthy, aware and concerned service agency was achieved.

LA's Pollock Wells Reopened, Treatment Plant Goes Online

Los Angeles' Department of Water and Power (DWP), on March 17, restored another source of water supply for the city with the opening of its Pollock Wells Treatment Plant.

The state-of-the-art facility allows DWP to pump and treat water from two wells that were closed in the early 1980s for water quality reasons.

Regulators and water officials attended the dedication, which culminated with activation of the pumps to begin the treatment process.

"The significance of this project is more than merely providing another source of water," says Gerald Gewe, DWP's manager of water resources and planning. "This project will preserve 2,400 acre-feet of water rights in the

San Fernando Basin. Los Angeles has approximately 90,000 acre-feet per year of water rights in the basin. To replace the 2,400 acre-feet would cost \$1 million."

According to Gewe, the earlier closure of the wells resulted in the groundwater table rising and excessive groundwater being discharged into the Los Angeles River and being wasted.

The new treatment facility uses liquid-phase granular activated carbon to remove groundwater contaminants, primarily perchloroethylene and trichloroethylene. This is the first time this type of treatment has been used by DWP.

"I am pleased that DWP has provided the means to restore the pumping of Pollock Wells and eliminating the waste of nearly three percent of Los Angeles' entire San Fernando Basin adjudication," said Mel Blevins, watermaster of the Upper Los Angeles River Area.

"I commend DWP for its leadership role in the investigation and cleanup of groundwater contamination in the San Fernando Valley," noted David Seter, section chief of the South Coast Groundwater Section of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. "This project is an important component in cleaning up groundwater for public use."

Located in Atwater Village, the \$3.8 million facility pumps 3,000 gallons per minute of groundwater from two Pollock wells. The water passes through four vessels where contaminants are absorbed onto the granular activated carbon and removed from the water. Following this process, the water is chlorinated before entering the distribution system, where it is blended with water from other DWP sources.

The Pollock Wells Treatment Plant was planned and designed entirely by DWP personnel, who also managed the construction contract with Swinerton Industrial, Inc.

