

pipeline

A NEWSLETTER FOR CUSTOMERS OF THE OTAY WATER DISTRICT

FALL 2006

Milestones Achieved in Pipeline Project

The Otay Water District and local contractors, Ortiz Construction and TC Construction, are busy working to complete the new recycled water supply-link project to connect with the City of San Diego's South Bay Water Reclamation Plant. The project includes a six-mile long, 30-inch in diameter recycled water pipeline, a pump station capable of pumping 16-million gallons per day, as well as a 12-million gallon recycled water reservoir.

The pipeline runs through the South San Diego communities of San Ysidro and Montgomery and is encased in a tunnel under the Otay River. The pipeline was installed underneath railroad lines and an I-805 overpass. Since part of the installation took place in heavily traveled streets, some of the work was done at night to decrease impacts to the community. Currently, the pipeline installation is more than 95 percent complete and the pump station and reservoir are 70 percent complete.

Once the facilities come online in the spring of 2007, the City of San Diego will sell up to 10 million gallons per day of recycled water produced at the South Bay Water Reclamation Plant to the OWD. Recycled water is used for irrigating parks, golf courses, road medians and open space

in eastern Chula Vista. With the recycled water from the South Bay Water Reclamation Plant and another 1.3 million gallons from its existing supply, the OWD expects that approximately 15 percent of its total water demand will be met using recycled water.



Representatives from OWD and Ortiz Construction prepared to install the final section of 30-inch in diameter pipe as the project nears completion.

The Otay Water District has operated as a California Special District since 1956 to provide safe, reliable and affordable water to the residents of our Southern California service area.



OTAY WATER DISTRICT
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Spring Valley, CA 91978-2096
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Otay Water District Receives Prestigious Excellence in Safety Award

Reduces Insurance Costs
by more than \$90,000

The Special Districts Risk Management Authority (SDRMA) recently honored the OWD with their 2006 Earl F. Sayre Property and Liability Safety Award for Excellence. The SDRMA, which provides property, liability and workers' compensation insurance for the OWD, presented the award in September at their annual conference. SDRMA has a membership of 718 Special Districts in California. The OWD received the award from among 90 large agency members.

The OWD was presented with this award for its efforts in developing safety and loss prevention policies and procedures including: attendance by board members in seminars and workshops related to the Brown Act and ethics training; establishing Human Resources policies and procedures; financial stability as evidenced by a successful audit; staff enrollment in the on-line safety training; and, an employee safety orientation program.

In recognition of its efforts, the OWD was credited \$90,800 towards its insurance program.

"The OWD received the award from among 90 large agency members."

Report Valve Theft

Not only in California, but also throughout the nation, there has been a rash of thefts from public water agencies. Thieves are stealing backflow prevention devices from along public streets, in front of businesses, apartment complexes, even public parks, often in broad daylight. Backflow parts are sold as scrap to metal recyclers for a few cents per pound. Such thefts are not limited to backflow devices but also include brass water meters, fire hydrant caps, irrigation valves from public parks, and even urns from cemeteries.

Under OWD policy, maintaining a backflow prevention device is the responsibility of business customers and property owners. Replacing stolen backflow devices, which are used to prevent contamination of the public's water supply, can be costly.

There are things you can do to reduce your chance of being a victim of backflow theft. Several companies market metal enclosures to cover the backflow devices, which are bolted to concrete pads. The public is also urged to be on the lookout for anyone tampering with or stealing these items.

The OWD is working closely with law enforcement and will prosecute anyone stealing or buying the stolen parts. Not only is this a crime, it involves tampering with the public water supply and all cases are

forwarded to the District Attorney for prosecution. Area scrap dealers have also been warned to be on the lookout for these items. If you witness anyone stealing fire hydrant caps, backflow prevention devices, water meters, or irrigation valves, immediately call the local police or County Sheriff.



Otay Water District Board of Directors

The Board of Directors meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 3:30 p.m. in the Boardroom. The public is encouraged to attend at 2554 Sweetwater Springs Blvd., Spring Valley, CA

President

Jaime Bonilla, Division 2
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History of the Water Conservation Garden

The beginnings of the Water Conservation Garden go back many years before its gates opened in 1999. Faced with drought in 1991, and the real possibility of water shortages, two local water agencies created the East County Water Conservation Committee to search for solutions. The committee, which included the staff of the Otay and Helix Water Districts, and Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College, began discussing ways to promote water conservation.

It was in these troubled times that the concept of creating a water conservation demonstration garden was first proposed. To get the concept off the ground, the two water districts pledged to help fund the construction of a Xeriscape demonstration

garden with the college donating the land as a complement to their existing education programs. Fundraising efforts continued throughout the 1990s with the Water Conservation Garden finally opening in the spring of 1999.

Today, the Garden has attracted more supportive partners including the San Diego County Water Authority, the City of San Diego, Padre Dam Water District, with the Sweetwater Authority set to join in January, 2007.

In our region, with half of all water still being used for irrigation, outdoor water conservation is as important today as it was during the drought years of the early 1990s. However, today we have a valuable

resource to help educate residents in ways to reduce their outdoor water use. As a result of the foresight of the East County Water Conservation Committee and the hard work and creativity of many people, the Water Conservation Garden has become the premier water conservation resource in San Diego County.



The Water Conservation Garden is located at 12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West in El Cajon. For more information visit www.thegarden.org.

California-Friendly Landscape Contest

By Nan Sterman
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My very favorite activity is visiting gardens. Actually, my very favorite activity is buying plants, but my second favorite activity is visiting gardens, which was why I happily accepted the invitation to judge this year's California Friendly Landscape Contest.

For a day and a half, I had the pleasure of visiting gardens across the county with my friend and colleague, landscaper Tom Piergrossi, and our "driver," Otay Water District's William Granger. This year, most of the gardens in the final round of judging were in the central and southeastern part of the county. We visited seven gardens, each of which was worthy of an award.

Our task was to evaluate gardens that were both beautiful and water-wise, meaning that they use low water plants adapted to California's Mediterranean climate. Some of the plants are native

California, while others come from other Mediterranean climates of the world such as South Africa, the west coast of Chile, southern Australia, and the Mediterranean of course. We also looked to see how efficiently gardens were watered, how well they were mulched (extremely important for weed control and water retention), the overall design, usability of the garden spaces, and so on.

We had the pleasure of touring most of the gardens with the people who designed them or the people who live in them. Hearing their stories gave us a wonderful perspective on their efforts and motivation. Every single person we met, every garden we saw was exemplary, regardless of its size or whether it was created by a professional or a home owner. Two gardens were planted almost entirely in natives, one was a small suburban lot while the other was a sprawling rural property. Both were a wonderland of flora and fauna.

It was extremely difficult to make our decisions, despite our scoring sheets and notes. How do you compare apples to oranges – or in this case, rockrose to manzanita?

Congratulations to all of this year's California Friendly Landscape Contest participants. You are shining examples for the rest of us!

The California-Friendly Landscape Contest will continue next year and is expanding throughout the county. Information is available by calling: Otay Water District Conservation Specialist, Pam Rega, at 619.670.2291.



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