

IWVWD General Manager's Column  
September 23, 2013

## **Water District Activities Heat Up as Temperatures Cool**

**By Don Zdeba**

Though our local weather hasn't quite cooperated, we have officially turned the calendar on summer. School is back in session and students have had a month to get back into the academic routine. The fall season generally sees a significant increase in activities in the Indian Wells Valley and we at the Water District are no exception. I would like to take this opportunity to update you on some significant projects in progress or planned.

In July, Onstott Construction began making permanent asphalt patch repairs where our crews have made temporary patches when repairing leaks. Onstott is expected to finish paving within the next month.

Bids were received July 29<sup>th</sup> for the West Ward Avenue and North Primavera Street pipeline extension, a distance of approximately 8,500 linear feet. We will soon finalize a contract with Downing Construction, based in Yucaipa, and begin construction in early fall.

Bids for recoating the interiors and making minor repairs to four of the District's eleven storage tanks were received September 4<sup>th</sup>. Based on the lowest qualifying bid, the contract has been awarded to J. Colon Coatings, Inc., based in Alta Loma. This project will extend through the winter months into early spring. The storage tank at Cerro Coso Community College is one of the tanks included within the scope of this project. We are coordinating work at this site to take place during the scheduled winter break in classes in order to minimize the possibility of impacting service to the college.

We continue to plan for the lowering of our pipeline and services along West Ridgecrest Boulevard, between Mahan Street and China Lake Boulevard, to accommodate the City's reconstruction of this street scheduled to begin next spring. This will be a major project and require a high degree of coordination among the utilities that have infrastructure within the project area.

We are working with DCSE, a company based in Laguna Hills, on the second phase of our three phase project to implement a comprehensive Geographic Information System (GIS) for the District. GIS will allow us to better manage, preserve, update and access existing and new data. It will also greatly improve our efficiency by integrating and interconnecting all of our departments. The second phase involves digitizing the documents and drawings that have been scanned during the first phase of the project.

Finally, we are in the process of upgrading our website to make it a user-friendly resource for our customers. With the significant increase in use of on-line web payments among our customers, the website has become an important outreach tool. It is expected the new website will be unveiled in mid to late October.

It is also noteworthy that Indian Wells Valley Water District was recently awarded the Special District Leadership Foundation's District Transparency Certificate of Excellence in recognition of its outstanding efforts to promote transparency and good governance. Qualifying for this award involves meeting a comprehensive list of requirements that ensure we are sharing information with the public and facilitating engagement and oversight.

As a reminder, fall is the time to adjust your landscape irrigation. Lawns and plants begin to go dormant and require much less water. You can easily reduce your outdoor water use 40% to 70% and still maintain your landscaping.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the conservation efforts of our customers over this past summer. Beginning with May, there have been four consecutive months in which the District has pumped at least 3% less water when compared to the same month in the previous year. The most significant decline, 9.4%, occurred in August. It is often said, the cheapest water is the water you don't have to pump.

Please do not hesitate to contact our office at (760)375-5086 if you have any questions or concerns.