

Ditchbank



Questions? Please call (760) 339-9334

A newsletter for IID's agricultural water customers

www.iid.com/Water/NewsFromTheDitchbank

Online water ordering available for all ag customers

The Water Conservation Advisory Board recommended to have the True-Point online Web portal, which is used for placing water orders and consumption reporting, be made available to all IID ag customers.

This capability does not replace phoning in water orders, but is an added option to place and track water orders.

"It's another tool for our agricultural customers to be able to see all orders

placed, if they have been approved to run the next day and the status of current and past orders," said Carlos Villalon, assistant manager, Water Department, in charge of water operations.

The system also reports delivery details, such as time and flow changes.

"I can go online and print a report of all my water orders to have with me so I can verify those fields I've placed orders for – and I can do this any time of the day

or night," said Brawley-area farmer Wayne Olesh.

Olesh is the current WCAB vice chairman and the most active test user of the Web portal.

Interested IID agricultural water customers may go to www.iid.com/Water and look for the "Place/Review Water Orders" tab on the right. Please first read the letter and follow the instructions on how to apply for an IID Web portal online account.

Local Entity reviewing non-competitive fallowing applications

Local Entity coordinators Gustavo Reza and Glenn Sampson are completing their review of fallowing mitigation claims submitted by farm service providers in the non-competitive portion of the application process for the 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 fallowing years.

A total of 39 farm-service providers responded to the entity's call for claims due to fallowing in the Imperial Valley over the course of the three years listed above. Those claims take in over 2,811 distinct agricultural operations (not including fuel provid-

ers), according to Sampson, who added that the verification process is ongoing but should be complete in time for presentation to the Imperial Irrigation District Board of Directors, acting as the Local Entity, during its first regular meeting in July.

Following the non-competitive grant application process and the release of mitigation funds to approved applicants, the entity will launch the competitive part of its mitigation effort for the same three fallowing events. It is expected that both portions of the process will be completed in the fall.

Water Watch

2009 IID approved use = **2,817,297**
 2009 Forecast of IID use = **2,716,591**
 2009 Projected Under use = **100,706**

The above figures are projections made in acre-feet on June 30, 2009, by the Bureau of Reclamation; BOR also reported IID's 2009 use through that day to be 1,373,742 AF.

Regulations for Equitable Distribution Plan 3.1(b) states: "District shall track actual supply and demand during the SDI water year. If cumulative consumptive use through June of the SDI water year is less than 1.575 million AF, district may terminate the SDI declaration for that year."

Water card validation continues

The district continues to validate and process new water cards so current customer information, equitable distribution authorization and farm unit designations may be entered and executed into True-Point (the water order and billing system).

This effort is proving to be a substantial undertaking to accomplish without additional resources. Adding to this effort is the additional new water cards being received due to lease changes coming into effect.

"We ask that our customers continue to be patient during this transition as we work through the effort of validating and processing each new water card for the purposes of implementing the equitable distribution plan and updating our customers' accounts," said Michael L. King, manager, Water Department.

Hey, I'd like to know...

"When does a new water card need to be completed and returned to the district?"



This question comes from Jerry Williams of Williams & Williams Hay Contracting, Brawley

IID needs a new water card for a field when an owner or tenant change has occurred.

"The water cards are the source of our customer information," said Jeff Garber, IID general counsel.

IID will use the information from the water card to: update water delivery and water availability charges; authorize apportionment; contact customers in emergencies; and conduct correspondence.

The information contained on a water card includes:

- Current field owner and contact information.
- Designee, if any. (Used when an owner chooses to authorize someone else to represent them for water management purposes only).

- Current tenant.
- Equitable distribution authorization for those years when apportionment is in effect.

"It is even more important to have our customer's water account information current and accurate for those years in which a supply/demand imbalance has been declared, triggering the equitable distribution plan," said Michael L. King, manager, Water Department.

"The district needs to know when there is a change in any information that was last submitted on a water card," King added. "This is accomplished by completing a new water card. Maintaining accurate and current customer account information helps the district be more efficient, too. A lot of mail is returned because it was undeliverable. This costs the district resources, not to mention the effort to try and find the correct customer information."

For example, when there is a change in the ownership of a property yet the tenant remains the same, or a change of the owner's address, the district won't know who the new owner is or how to contact them unless a new water card is submitted with the new owner's information.

Completing a new water card should always be one of the activities whenever there is a transaction that changes the owner or tenant of a field.

Rights-of-way & easements: Please allow 16 feet

When it comes to having access to its canals, drains and utility lines, the Imperial Irrigation District has a right to access these structures through its rights-of-way. This right of access is most often granted by an easement.

Because IID needs to be able to maneuver its equipment and crews so it can maintain drains, canals and power lines, agricultural landowners are asked to keep a clear distance of at least 16 feet from the edge of all structures.

“Keeping haystacks and similar things from being too close to the canals and drains is very helpful,” said John Curtis, assistant manager, Water Department, construction and maintenance section. “When we go in to work and there is enough access, then we don’t have to bother the landowner.” Maintenance schedules are available at:

www.iid.com/Water/Maintenance&Construction

It’s also helpful as any burning haystacks located too close to power lines can damage poles and lines.

An easement is the right to use another person’s real property for a specific purpose. The most common type of easement is the right to travel over another person’s land, known as rights-of-way.

Property owners commonly grant easements by way of a recorded easement deed to the IID for the placement of utility poles, canals and drains. The owner of the property that is subject to an easement is said to be “burdened” with the easement because he or she is not allowed to interfere with its use.

For example, if the deed to a farm prop-



This photo shows an IID drain on the left and an acceptable distance of right-of-way access along the canal bank. (A minimum of 16 feet is needed for access). The hay bales here do not prevent district crews from having access to repair and maintain the drain.

erty permits IID to construct a canal across his property, the farmer cannot block access to the canal. Likewise, the district cannot do anything that exceeds the scope of its easement, such as widen the canal.

Easements by prescription, also called “prescriptive easements,” are implied easements in that they arise even though they are not expressly created or recorded. Easements, rights-of-way and prescriptive easements do not convey the title to the property in question; they only convey the right to utilize the property for a specific purpose.

Once a prescriptive easement becomes legally binding it holds the same weight as written or implied easements. The period of continuous use for a prescriptive easement to become binding is five years in California.



IID does not have access to its drain in this photo. The stacking of the bales so close to the canal edge is hazardous. Bales that tumble into a drain may redirect the water flow channel and cause erosion or plug a siphon, causing the water level to rise, resulting in higher maintenance costs.



The covered hay bales here are located too close to IID’s power poles. This too can impede the district in its work as power crews need to be able to access the lines. Putting hay bales too close to energy lines also presents a fire hazard. Please allow at least 16 feet of access.

District works on managed marsh infrastructure

The managed marsh project consists of approximately 959 acres of wetland and riparian habitat complex being constructed by the IID primarily to mitigate drain maintenance activities.

The cost for the managed marsh is being funded by the QSA Joint Powers Authority and not the IID Water Department.

The project is located south of Niland, adjacent to Highway 111 and Hazard Road. The marsh project is being built in three phases; the first phase (consisting of fields P1, P2 and P3) will be completed in October 2009, the second phase will be completed by December 2014 and the final phase will be completed in December 2019.

The photograph here shows the progress on construction of the managed marsh. The photo shows field P1 and a portion of field P2; field P3 is not shown.

In the photograph, field P1 has the berms in place and is nearly completed, while field P2 shows evidence of compaction in preparation of installing the berms. Since then, the IID earth moving crew, led by David Escobar and supplemented with equipment from outside sources, has made great progress. They will be finished with the construction of the berms in all three fields by the end of June, which is approximately three weeks ahead of the original schedule. Installation of the water delivery and discharge system has started and should be completed in August.



IID managed marsh field P1. Highway 111 is at the bottom, the “O” lateral and McDonald Road are on the left and Hazard Road and the “P” lateral are on the right.

Planting for the managed marsh will be started shortly after the water infrastructure is completed and should be finished in October. An Adaptive Management Plan that includes an invasive species control program will be developed for Phase I.

Here’s where you can find helpful information

Workshops, Meetings, Dates and Locations

www.iid.com/About/CommunityCalendar

Water Conservation Advisory Board

www.iid.com/Water/WaterConservationAdvisoryBoard

Land Lease Agreement Language

www.iid.com/Water/HelpfulLeaseLanguageforAgProperties

Information About New Water Cards

www.iid.com/Water/WaterCardUpdate

Local Entity

www.iid.com/Water/LocalEntity



Fallowing Programs

www.iid.com/Water/FallowingPrograms

Canal Cut-Out Schedules

www.iid.com/Water/CutoutSchedule

Drain Cleaning Schedule

www.iid.com/Water/DrainCleaningSchedule

Vegetation Management Schedule

www.iid.com/Water/VegetationManagementSchedule

Maintenance Schedule

www.iid.com/Water/MaintenanceSchedule