2016-2017 fallowing program

With the 2016-2017 Farm Unit Fallowing Program quickly approaching, farm unit operators are encouraged to coordinate any interest they may have among their respective parties.

Fields accepted for fallowing will be fallowed from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017. The payment rate will remain unchanged at $175/acre-foot. The board is expected to set the program size at the April 12 meeting.

While the 2016-2017 fallowing program will function similarly to the last two farm unit programs, participants are advised that there will be no pre-solicitation due to time constraints. Offers to fallow should be considered to be final, representing the maximum/minimum acreage the farm unit is offering to fallow.

Program notes:

- Farm units will receive target volumes and yields per field in late April or early May.
- Farm units can expect to receive about the same acreage accepted to fallow as last year; however, the accepted portion will depend on how many farm units offer to fallow and the final approved program size.
- Farm units may fallow partial fields; minimum partial size is 20 acres.
- Farm units may offer to fallow in excess of the farm unit’s target volume.
- Only enough of a valid proposal’s acreage needed to reach the farm unit’s target volume of water is guaranteed to be accepted.
- Any acceptance of offers in excess of a farm unit’s target will be proportioned equally on an acre-foot-per-acre basis across all farm units.
- The farm unit managers and participating landowners share in the proceeds.

To date, IID has conducted nearly two dozen successful fallowing programs to generate conserved water for Quantification Settlement Agreement water transfers, Salton Sea mitigation, pay back of inadvertent overruns and intentionally created surplus storage to assist in the management of IID’s annual Colorado River entitlement.

On-farm conservation program

On-Farm Efficiency Conservation continues to be a popular program in the Imperial Valley.

By the end of March, the district received applications for more than 1,500 fields proposing to contract to implement on-farm efficiency conservation programs in 2016. This is an increase of 20 percent over last year’s applications.

Administrators expect to start issuing contracts by the end of April for fields conserving water in 2016.

In 2015, more than 80,000 acre-feet of water was generated for conservation through the program. (Note: applications for 2015 conservation are no longer being accepted).
Hydrology update

**Colorado River:** As of Feb. 20, 2016, Lake Mead’s elevation was 1,084.21 feet, approximately 49 percent of capacity. While the Upper Basin snowpack is 96 percent of average, Lake Powell is expected to receive only 80 percent of the average April-July runoff. Reclamation continues to project a 17-37 percent probability that Lake Mead’s elevation will fall below 1,075 feet in 2017, which calls for reduced allocations to Arizona, Nevada and Mexico.

**California:** As of March 1, 2016, the statewide snowpack was reported at 83 percent of average while 38 percent of the state continues to be in the “exceptional drought” category. California urban water suppliers have saved a cumulative 24.8 percent since mandatory conservation requirements were established in June 2015. Mandatory conservation requirements were extended through October 2016 while the Department of Water Resources increased the State Water Project allocation from 15 percent to 30 percent for most of the project contractors.

Please respect power poles

IID prohibits any kind of tampering of its power poles as this could weaken the structure, potentially leading to power outages and potential dangers for utility crews and the public.

There is to be no posting of notices, graffiti or other acts of vandalism and manipulation of energy property in any way.

If you must work around a power pole and your work could cause you to come into contact with live power lines, California law establishes minimum distances that must be kept. If you don’t know the voltage a line carries, you must keep a minimum distance of 20 feet.

For specific power line and minimum distance information, contact IID’s Energy Department or Safety Section: David Shelton, Energy Safety and Quality Control, 1-760-339-9052, dgshelton@iid.com or Tim Hutchinson, Interim Lead Corporate Safety-Safety Tech III, 1-760-339-9376, tehutchinson@IID.com.

Congratulations

To John M. Rodrigues who is serving as the Water Department’s new assistant superintendent of Water Operations for the Northend Division.

John has worked 31 years at the district and has held several positions in the Water Department prior to this current promotion.

Keep current with important dates and deadlines

IID’s website has a dedicated page to help water customers plan for upcoming deadlines and events. Topics include:

- Following Program
- Apportionment & Equitable Distribution Plan
- On-Farm Conservation
- System Conservation

To view the latest on all of IID’s programs and to register for email alerts, visit: www.iid.com/waterdates