

UPDATE Regional Water Authority



The Regional Water

Authority Mission:

To serve and represent regional water supply interests and assist Regional Water Authority members with protecting and enhancing the reliability, availability, affordability and quality of water resources.

Member Agencies

California-American Water Company

Carmichael Water District

Citrus Heights Water District

Del Paso Manor Water District

Fair Oaks Water District

Florin Resource Conservation District/
Elk Grove Water Service

Folsom, city of

Fruitridge Vista Water Co.

Lincoln, City of

Orange Vale Water Company

Placer County Water Agency

Rancho Murieta CSD

Roseville, city of

Rio Linda/Elverta CWD

Sacramento, city of

Sacramento Suburban Water District

San Juan Water District

Southern California Water Co.

First Test of 'Subscription' Project Pays Off for Participating RWA Members

The first test of RWA members pooling dollars demonstrated how collaboration can save significant time and money. The subscription project involved the state's Drinking Water Source Assessment and Protection (DWSAP) program.

"To go out and get all this information on our own would have been just about impossible with our limited staff," said Sharon Wilcox, general manager, Orange Vale Water Company, one of the smallest providers that chose to participate. "I thought I'd try out the subscription concept on this project and it worked out beautifully."

Last spring, RWA offered agency members an opportunity to pool resources to hire one consultant to assist with tasks associated with the DWSAP assessment. Seven members decided to participate: Carmichael, Rio Linda, Sacramento Suburban Water District, Citrus Heights and Fair Oaks water districts and Orange Vale and Southern Cal water companies.

Under federal law, the California Department of Health Services (DHS) must assess potential contaminating activities near each well site or obtain a survey from the water agencies. Water agencies must present the DWSAP assessment results in annual CCRs.

The collaborative effort resulted in substantial cost savings. For example, the participants realized a unit cost of around \$500/well assessed, when consultant bids of \$3,000 to \$7,000 per well are typical, explained Bonny Starr, senior engineer, MWH Inc., the project consultant.

Participating providers received detailed maps of their well sites with the two, five, and ten-year time-of-travel protection zones delineated, and maps indicating where the zones are in relation to potential contaminating activities (PCAs) such as machine shops, dry cleaners, and known contaminant plumes. Additionally, each participating agency received a review of its delineated zones by the Department of Water Resources at no additional cost.

"We were able to save them money they might have paid individually to consultants who would be collecting the same kind of data and relying on the same resources seven times," Starr said.

The project was completed on time and under budget and the RWA demonstrated regional coordination strengths in working effectively with the state DHS.

Water Efficiency Program Updates

Programs to Help Agencies With BMP Implementation

The RWA Water Efficiency Program is designed to help participating agencies implement the best management practices (BMPs) for water efficiency on a regional basis. Recent grant funds have strengthened existing and new programs to reach that objective.

Beginning this fall through 2003, 12 new water efficiency projects will be launched, each designed to meet the requirements of at least one BMP. Program Manager Charlie Pike looks forward to the benefits the new projects will provide. "These projects will help RWA members and subscribers meet their best management practices effectively and affordably," said Pike. The upcoming programs include the following:

- creating methods for homeowners to conduct self-water audits (BMP 1)
- leak detection and repair programs (BMP 3)
- distribution water loss reduction workshop for unmetered systems (BMP 3)
- large landscape water efficiency audits for schools and parks (BMP 5)
- large landscape irrigation efficiency incentives (BMP 5)
- water and science lab equipment awards for middle and high school science fair winners (BMP 8)

- water efficiency surveys to 377 food service facilities (BMP 9)
- creation of a database of commercial, industrial and institutional (CII) customers (BMP 9)
- development of a community college CII vocational training program (BMP 9)
- cooperative education and marketing campaigns with local nurseries (BMP 12)
- integrated landscape workshops for homeowners (BMP 12)
- toilet replacement and rebate programs (BMPs 9 & 16)

WEP Business Plan In the Works

The Water Efficiency Program is developing its 2002-03 business plan and budget. The program is switching from a calendar year to a fiscal year to align with the RWA budget. The new budget will cover January 2003 through June 2004.

Coming Soon: New Rules of Thumb Booklets

The RWA Water Efficiency Program recently adapted "Rules of Thumb for Water-Wise Gardening" for use in our area. Originally prepared by the Santa Clara Valley Water District, the color brochure features everything from tips about how to design a landscape to the region's watering needs. "Rules of Thumb for Water-Wise Gardening" will be available to participating agencies this fall.



Regional Water Authority
BUILDING ALLIANCES IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

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Executive Director's Corner

In recent months, we have seen water issues at the forefront of statewide media coverage. Potential Colorado River cutbacks to Southern California have sparked even greater concern about statewide water shortages and competition for water in the coming years. This brings to light some important matters in our own region — Sacramento and Placer counties' population growth, urban supply wells being shut down due to groundwater contamination, and agreements to divert less surface water in dry years to protect environmental values of the lower American River. Ensuring a safe and reliable water supply for the residents of our region has become increasingly complex.

The RWA was formed, in part, to help its members cope with these complexities as well as to better position our region to compete in the statewide arena. The recent \$22 million Proposition 13 grant award to RWA validates the power and effectiveness of regional collaboration. With these grant funds, several RWA member agencies will now embark on a three-year construction program to develop the American River Basin Conjunctive Use program. This program, along with the recently launched RWA Water Efficiency Program, will substantially increase the region's supply reliability in a way that enhances protection for the lower American River, consistent with the historic Water Forum Agreement.

In today's changing water world, it is difficult to forecast the nature of the next "water crisis," but one thing is certain — working together through the RWA will help us meet these future challenges.

Ed Winkler

Water Forum Members Encouraged to Provide Input

A draft water flow management plan for the Lower American River has been developed, and is available for review by Water Forum members. Water Forum members are urged to provide input by attending public meeting this fall, before the plan proceeds to the external review stage in January. Meetings will be promoted through the Regional Water Authority and Water Forum mail list, or you can call the Water Forum office at (916) 264-1999.

BMP Certification? CUWCC Has Answers

A proposed new CALFED BMP certification program is likely to have the greatest impact on water suppliers with more than 20,000 connections, summarized California Urban Water Conservation Council Executive Director Mary Ann Dickinson, who spoke at the RWA board meeting September 12.

Still under development, the proposed program will require most water agencies to earn certification of their water conservation programs. State approval is not expected until 2005-06. For more information, contact CUWCC at (916) 552-5885 or visit their web site at www.cuwcc.org.



Extra, Extra! Read All About It!

RWA Grabs Headlines

The Regional Water Authority recently put its member agencies on the map. On September 3, *The Sacramento Bee* featured a story on the front page of its Metro section about the RWA's \$22 million conjunctive use grant from the Department of Water Resources. Calling the grant "a rare triumph for regional cooperation," the article highlighted the Sacramento region's capability to successfully compete with larger entities for state money. To read the complete article, please visit www.sacbee.com and search for "all for one and water for all" in the advanced search box.

Water Community News

SJWD Gets Expert Advice From FBI, Local Law Enforcement on Security Assessment



Special Agent Glenn Norling, FBI, Sacramento, discusses security issues at the San Juan Water District (SJWD) with Engineering Security Project Manager Jay Hesby, and SJWD Assistant General Manager Shauna Lorange. The district was one of the first in the nation to receive an EPA grant for an extensive security assessment to safeguard the facility against acts of terrorism.

RWA Welcomes City of Lincoln

The City of Lincoln recently joined the Regional Water Authority, bringing the total number of member agencies to 18. "The city of Lincoln is currently developing a conjunctive use program, so it's really beneficial for us to be a part of a group that places concerns about surface and ground water as top priorities," said Public Works Director John Pedri. The RWA welcomes other agencies throughout the region to become a part of this collaborative organization. For details on membership benefits, contact us at (916) 967-7692.

Paul Selsky Appointed to RWA Board

Carmichael Water District (CWD) Board Vice President Paul Selsky, was recently appointed to the Regional Water Authority Board of Directors. Selsky is a civil engineer with Brown and Caldwell and has served on the CWD board since 1996.

EGWS Arsenic Removal Program

The Elk Grove Water Service (EGWS) may potentially reduce arsenic in its wells from 24 parts-per-billion (PPB) to less than 1 PPB. The reduction must be made due to the lowering of the arsenic standard from 50 PPB to 10 PPB by the federal government in February. Water suppliers have until 2009 to comply with the new standard. "We couldn't be more pleased with what the water quality improvement will mean to our customers," said Mike Kenny, general manager, EGWS.

PCWA American River Pump Station

After years of working with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to find a way to restore a permanent pump station in the North Fork of the American River, Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) has reached a key milestone in the project. An environmental impact report was recently adopted, paving the way for PCWA to move forward with the pump station.

