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Busy at Work: Project Updates

On Bonita Way, a residential street in Citrus Heights, one seemingly normal house is more than it appears. There are no residents who live in this house. In fact, it is home to Citrus Heights Water District's new Bonita Way Storage Building.

The building is designed to appear as a residential house to blend in with the neighborhood. It includes a landscaped front yard that is designed to require minimal watering. The Bonita Way Well was built to enhance water supply reliability for CHWD customers. Completing construction of the storage building is the final step of a \$2.4 million groundwater well project that began several years ago.

This is just one example of several capital improvement projects CHWD has implemented to help maintain and update infrastructure, increase water supplies and continue to provide excellent service to customers. Other projects to replace outdated pipelines are currently underway or being planned.

Did you know that CHWD manages 265 miles of underground pipes? These pipes are remarkably durable, some lasting 60 years or more, but eventually they begin to degrade and must be replaced. CHWD continues to replace outdated pipes with new ones as leaks and reliability become problematic.

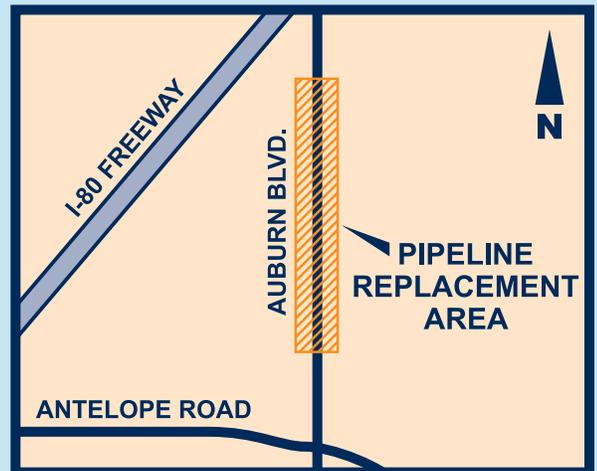
A major pipeline replacement was recently completed at one of Citrus Heights' busiest intersections—San Juan Avenue and Madison Avenue—with the installation of a new 12-inch water main. CHWD was dedicated to completing the project before the holiday season to prevent any traffic delays from construction—and completed it in record time, wrapping up major construction the day before Thanksgiving.

In early-to-mid 2011, CHWD will replace the water main on Auburn Boulevard from Cedar Drive to Linden Avenue. The District considers replacement of these 60-year-old facilities a high priority.

Continued on back page. (PROJECT UPDATES)

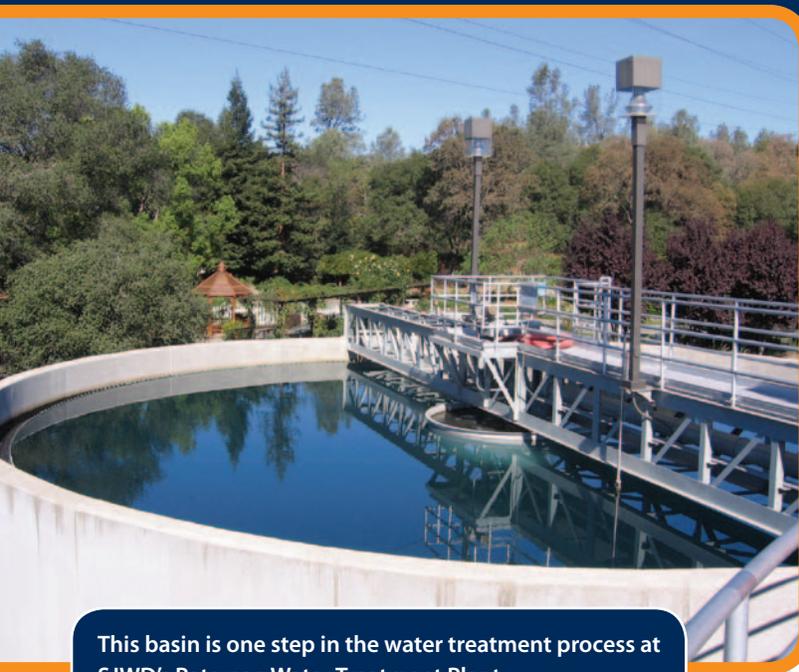


Construction crew pouring concrete as work on the water main replacement wraps up.



The Bonita Way Storage Building is nearing completion. It should be finished and landscaped by the end of February 2011.





WINTER WATER Conservation Tips

Wishing you had some extra cash after the holidays? The winter season is the perfect opportunity to save some money on your water bill while conserving water.

Automatic irrigation systems are a convenient way to keep your lawn and plants healthy during periods of warmer weather, but they are unnecessary during the winter months. The cold weather causes many plants to go dormant and therefore require little water. It is best to shut off your automatic system and allow our area's winter rainfall to give plants the water they need. If there is a period of no rain, water by hand or operate your irrigation system manually.

It is also important to wrap water pipes with insulation to keep them from freezing and possibly bursting. Pipes near exterior walls and in crawl spaces are the most likely to freeze. The first sign that a pipe is freezing is reduced water flow.

This basin is one step in the water treatment process at SJWD's Peterson Water Treatment Plant.

Where Your Water Comes From

You wake up in the morning, turn on the faucet and water comes out. This is something that you expect as readily as you expect the sun to come up each morning. But have you ever wondered where your water comes from?

Most of CHWD's water comes from Folsom Lake via the San Juan Water District (SJWD). CHWD staff and employees of other water agencies that receive water from SJWD recently took a tour of the San Juan Water District facility in Granite Bay and got an inside look at how water is collected, purified and distributed to your home.

This tour helped CHWD staff to gain a deeper understanding of how this water system works and will allow us to better serve you, our customers. This tour is not available to the public, so we wanted to share some interesting information about how water becomes part of CHWD's system.

SJWD collects water from the American River watershed that flows into Folsom Lake. This water goes through several filtration processes to remove impurities and to disinfect the water, making it safe for drinking. The water we receive from SJWD meets or exceeds all state and federal quality standards.

SJWD's pipelines transport this clean water to CHWD pipelines. Water is tested throughout the CHWD system to ensure that water quality continues to meet or exceed state and federal standards. CHWD then distributes the water to you through 265 miles of underground mains and more than 19,500 metered service connections. Water is also available for public safety and firefighting through approximately 2,400 fire hydrants throughout the District.

For more information on where your water comes from, visit www.chwd.org/where. ●



An uninsulated pipe is at risk of freezing and bursting during winter weather. It's also wise to unhook your hose during freezing weather.

Insulating your pipes helps protect them from freezing weather conditions.



If a pipe becomes frozen, you can thaw it by heating water on the stove, soaking towels in the warm water and wrapping them around the pipes. Use caution when handling hot towels to prevent scalding. Begin thawing nearest to the faucet and turn the faucet on to allow melted water to drip out.

A burst water pipe can damage your property and waste hundreds of gallons of water. It is important to know where the main water shut off valve for your home is located in case a pipe does burst. If you experience a water emergency and are unable to shut off the water, call CHWD day or night at (916) 725-6873. After business hours you will hear a recorded message with an emergency contact phone number.

For more tips on conserving water year-round, visit www.chwd.org/conservation. ●

Working Efficiently for You

Citrus Heights Water District is dedicated to keeping customer costs as low as possible while providing optimum customer service. CHWD is actively pursuing ways to reduce costs. However, for 2011 it is necessary to implement a customer rate increase to continue operations and fund necessary capital expenditure projects. Below are several examples of how CHWD is cutting costs and a reminder about the rate increase taking effect in 2011.

Bond Refinance

Citrus Heights Water District has taken advantage of historically low interest rates in the bond market to save more than \$60,000 per year for the next ten years by refinancing bonds. These bonds were originally sold in 2000 to provide funding for the installation of water meters and the Mitchell Farms groundwater well. By refinancing these bonds, CHWD will lower its annual costs while keeping the debt on the original payment schedule that will be paid in full by 2020.

Change in Hours of Operation

Since May 2010, the CHWD office has been open four days a week to reduce operating costs. The hours of operation are:

Monday–Thursday: 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Closed on Friday

The District office is located at 6230 Sylvan Road, Citrus Heights, CA 95610. If you experience a water emergency while the office is closed, call **(916) 725-6873**. You will hear a recorded message with an emergency contact phone number.

2011 Rate Increase Reminder

As of January 1, 2011, you will see a rate increase on your bill. The bimonthly service charge will stay unchanged for the third consecutive year; however, the cost for the water you use is increasing by 3.82 cents per unit for Tier 1 usage. One unit equals about 748 gallons of water. For the typical residential customer averaging 40 units of water in a two-month period, this will result in an average increase of \$1.52 per two-month billing cycle. For example, an average bimonthly bill that previously would have cost \$75.52 will now cost \$77.04.

This rate increase will provide the District with the necessary funds to continue our investments in capital infrastructure replacement and improvement projects. These projects are essential to maintain the integrity of CHWD’s water system and avoid costly repairs to the extent possible. Capital expenditure projects include those detailed on the cover: the construction of the Bonita Way Storage Building and the upgrade of major pipelines at the intersection of San Juan Avenue and Madison Avenue and on Auburn Boulevard, as well as other planned projects.

It is necessary to budget for capital expenditures to ensure that adequate funds are available when older facilities need to be upgraded. The District has identified \$2.5 million in projects for 2011, which is part of an anticipated \$26.9 million of necessary projects over the next 10 years. These projects make it possible for CHWD to maintain and update infrastructure, increase water supply reliability and continue to provide excellent service to customers. Details on current and upcoming projects can be found online at www.chwd.org/projects. ●

Cash Back for Water Savings? Check Out Rebate Options

Inside the average home, toilets account for more than one-third of the water usage. Replace your older, less water-efficient toilets (3.5 gallon per flush or higher) with new, ultra-low-flush or high efficiency toilets (1.6 gallon per flush or lower) and you may be eligible to receive a \$75 rebate as part of CHWD’s conservation program. At the same time, you can save thousands of gallons of water each year and permanently reduce your lavatory water usage by more than half. Rebates are subject to available funding. Check with CHWD for available funding before you replace your toilet.

You can also save money when you replace your clothes washing machine. CHWD is participating in a cooperative high-efficiency clothes washing machine rebate program with SMUD, the local publicly-owned electric provider. This program allows eligible customers, those with electric water heaters, to receive rebates up to \$250 from SMUD—including a \$50 sum provided by CHWD. For more information, visit www.chwd.org/rebates or contact SMUD directly for an application. ●

Bill Payment Options

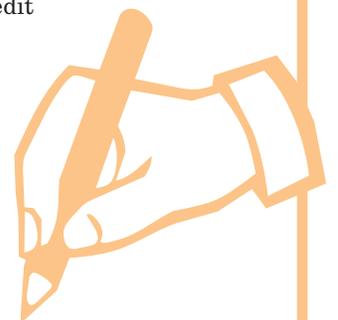
CHWD provides several convenient ways for you to pay your bill:

Electronic Funds Transfer – Your water bill payment can be automatically withdrawn from your checking or savings account each month. To find out how, visit www.chwd.org/payment and click on the “Sign up for EFT” icon. Complete and submit the authorization form along with a voided check to apply to participate in this program. Once approved, your bill will be paid on time every month.

Online at www.chwd.org/payment – Pay your bill quickly and easily with your credit or debit card by using CHWD’s online payment option. The payment page is VeriSign certified, assuring you a high level of security for your transaction.

By Telephone at (916) 725-6873 – Pay your bill quickly and easily with your credit or debit card by telephoning CHWD’s office during regular business hours.

District Office – And, as always, you can mail your payment to the mailing address shown on your water bill remittance stub or bring it to the District office at 6230 Sylvan Road, Citrus Heights, CA 95610. An after-hours payment box is available for non-cash and non-money order payments. ●





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Assessor/Collector

ECRWSS

Postal Customer and Water Consumer in Citrus Heights Water District

New Water Conservation Requirements on the Horizon for California

Continued from front page.

PROJECT UPDATES

The existing eight-inch water main will be replaced with a new 12-inch main. CHWD has budgeted \$937,204 for this project in 2011.

This project will also improve fire protection by upgrading four existing fire hydrants and installing six new fire hydrants in the area. The replacement was originally planned for 2008, but CHWD delayed the project in the interest of customers. This change reduced the impact of a rate increase implemented at that time.

In the spring of 2011, prior to the City of Citrus Heights' Safe Routes to Schools Project, CHWD will replace an old 16-inch water main on Mariposa Avenue from Greenback Lane to Limerick Way with a new 12-inch main. This work is projected to cost \$408,885.

For more information on current CHWD projects, please visit www.chwd.org/projects. ●

Reducing water usage per capita is a goal that the state of California is working to achieve over the next decade. In November of 2009, the 20x2020 Water Conservation Plan was passed by state legislators. The plan calls for the reduction of water usage by 10 percent by 2015 and 20 percent by 2020.

CHWD has always encouraged our customers to conserve water where possible, because water is a valuable resource that we must protect. It may seem that conservation isn't necessary because more water always falls from the sky. It is important, however, to remember that some years bring more precipitation than others and the amount of water available at any given time can be very limited. It is especially important that CHWD comply with these new standards in order to continue to be eligible for state-assisted funding on projects. CHWD has received more than \$1 million in state funds for past projects, thereby lessening rate increases needed to maintain District facilities and serve our customers at affordable rates.

For more information on the 20x2020 Water Conservation Plan, visit www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/hot_topics/20x2020. ●