

IWVWD General Manager's Column  
December 23, 2013

## **IWVWD Highlights 2013 and Looks Toward the New Year**

**By Don Zdeba**

As the year draws to a close, we have a tendency to reminisce about what we have accomplished during the past year and make resolutions for the New Year. Keeping with that tradition, I would like to share with you some of the highlights of the past year here at your Water District.

In February, we completed a successful migration to the newest version of Springbrook software used for billing, financial reports and inventory management. We followed that up with a complete redesign of our website by PMC which debuted in October. Since we began offering online bill payments, we have seen over 3,100 of our customers set up an online account that allows them to pay their water bill and also view a ten year history of their water consumption. We also made several enhancements to our website to provide more useful information in a user-friendly format. Our efforts to improve communication earned us the Special District Leadership Foundation's District Transparency Certificate of Excellence in October and we were also the California Region 7 Finalist for the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) 2013 Outreach Award presented at ACWA's Fall Conference held this month in Los Angeles.

Our GIS (Geographic Information System) project is well into the first of three phases. Scanning of documents and construction drawings was completed this summer. Once fully implemented, GIS will fully integrate most of the District functions thereby increasing overall efficiency and productivity by improving access to information. We also plan to add a Central Maintenance Management System (CMMS) software program to improve our ability to track the maintenance history and cost of District assets.

Some important capital projects were completed in the past year. The project involving installation of approximately 8,500 feet of 12-inch PVC pipe from Primavera Street to Herbert Street was completed this month. This project, awarded to Downing Construction, included boring beneath Jacks Ranch Road and was installed to improve flow for fire protection to the China Lake Acres area west of Herbert Street. In October, J. Colon Coatings started a major project involving four of the District's eleven storage reservoirs. The work involved is primarily recoating the interiors of the tanks, but also includes miscellaneous repairs and painting the exteriors. Currently, the Salisbury (D-zone) tank near Belle Vista Street and the No. 1 C-zone tank just north of Cerro Coso Community College should be close to completion. Work is in progress on the College Tank at Cerro Coso. The schedule has been coordinated with the college's winter break to minimize the effect on campus, however work is scheduled to continue for one to two weeks after classes resume January 18<sup>th</sup>. You may have noticed temporary tanks have been placed on site to meet the needs of the campus while the primary tank is out of service. A fifth temporary tank has been placed on campus and is devoted strictly for fire

protection during this time. The recoating of the four tanks is scheduled to be completed in April.

Lowering and re-paving of West Ridgecrest Boulevard is slated to begin next year. In preparation for this work, several utilities must coordinate to lower or relocate their facilities. PG&E and Verizon have been working the past several weeks to accomplish this task. We expect to go out for bids this month and begin the work in early February. Included in the scope of work will be replacing and lowering the water main between Downs and Norma streets. Also included will be lowering 58 valves, raising 54 valves, and replacing fire hydrants and 71 service laterals between Mahan Street and China Lake Boulevard. A total of 10,950 feet of old abandoned pipe must be removed and disposed of. We will certainly strive to minimize disruption during construction, but some inconvenience will be unavoidable.

In closing, on behalf of the Directors and Staff of the Indian Wells Valley Water District, I would like to wish you and your family a safe and happy Holiday Season and the very best in the New Year. It is our New Year's resolution to continue to live up to our Mission Statement to deliver the highest quality water at the best possible price while continuing to serve as respectful stewards of the environment. Please do not hesitate to contact our office at (760)375-5086 if you have any questions or concerns.