

Capital Improvement Projects Keep Water Flowing

The people at Sacramento Suburban Water District (SSWD) have been busy working on some exciting projects. The first phase of capital improvement programs for the service areas of Arcade and Northridge resulted in two new 5 million-gallon water storage tanks, larger capacity transmission pipes, and improvements to various systems and distribution pipelines.

Now SSWD is looking forward to phase 2 projects, which continue to focus on modernizing infrastructure, improving water quality and pressure, and providing better system reliability. Planned improvements, which require board approval, are in the areas of meters, mains, storage tanks, wells and water sources.

One such improvement will be the continued retrofitting and replacement of meters (see related story on page 3), mostly in the Northridge Service Area. There are also plans for additional distribution pipelines and another large capacity water storage tank, both of which are slated for 2003 or 2004.

In early 2003, construction is expected to begin on the

Enterprise/Northrop reservoir, which will be a 5 million-gallon above-ground steel tank and booster pump station. Half of the funding for its construction will come from a Proposition 13 grant provided by the State Department of Water Resources.

Another exciting phase 2 item is a new surface water development project, which will give SSWD more control over its water sources. This plan will allow the ability to pump surface water and decrease dependency on already-taxed underground wells. Especially during years of heavy rain and snow, SSWD will be able to take advantage of surplus run-off and replenish depleted wells.

Employees will also be busy providing system maintenance, replacing old and worn water mains and continuing the well rehabilitation program, in which wells are cleaned out and pumps are upgraded.

With major projects both completed and in process, Sacramento Suburban Water is working on its commitment to giving customers unparalleled water quality and service.



**Help Us
Save 10%!**



*See
page 3 for
conservation
tips*

**Visit
our new
website
at [www.
sswd.org](http://www.sswd.org)**

A Message from the General Manager

We continue to be pleased with the smooth transition of the Arcade and Northridge districts into the Sacramento Suburban Water



Dewight Kramer, Sr.

District. The consolidation has proven to produce many cost-saving measures and benefits for our customers. For example, we have combined our administrative offices, which are now located at the former Arcade Water District office on Marconi Avenue. We have significantly reduced services provided by outside vendors, such as billing and payment processing functions, which are presently performed in-house by SSWD staff. All SSWD customers now have the opportunity to pay bills electronically. Finally, the joining of the former Arcade and Northridge Board of Directors has reduced governance costs, and additional savings will occur later this year when our Board is reduced from ten to seven members.

As you read in our front page story, phase one of the Master Plan Construction is complete and we are gearing up for phase two. We will continue to keep you informed on our developments and progress as we begin the next phase of updating and improving our water delivery system.

Another matter I want to draw your attention to is our campaign to reduce water usage by 10%. By saving water now, we reduce the need to build more wells and lower our energy costs for pumping water. Ultimately, SSWD customers will save money because we will minimize the cost of delivering water.

Please join us in our efforts. Look closely at our conservation section and see how you can reduce your water usage at home and work. We also offer water saving tips on our web site at www.sswd.org.

We look forward to serving your water needs now and into the future.

Q&A with our Customer Service Representatives

Our customer service representative team is here to help you. Here are some helpful answers to some of the most common questions fielded by our representatives:

Q. If I mailed my payment on the due date, will the payment be posted on my next bill?

A. SSWD has to receive your payment by the due date for the payment to be credited to your account. If your payment is not received by the 19th of the month, it may not be reflected on the current statement.

Q. Can I pay my water bill at the SSWD web site?

A. Unfortunately, we are unable to take water payments on the SSWD web site at this time. However, we do provide Direct Payment Service, which electronically transfers your monthly water bill payment directly from a specified bank account. To sign up, call SSWD at 916-972-7171.

Q. I'm a landlord who wants to transfer the water account to the tenants at my property. How do I do that?

A. The owner of the house, not the tenant, is responsible for water service. Sorry, but we can't put the bill in the tenant's name.

Q. Why do I sometimes get a busy signal when I call customer service?

A. Since the consolidation, our office has been swamped with calls for both the Arcade Service Area and the Northridge Service Area, so our staff of four customer service reps has been handling a double call volume. We're happy to report that we will be implementing a new phone system soon, with more phone lines and voice mail capabilities. We expect it to be up and running by the end of September. We're working hard to better serve you and apologize for any frustrations!

Q. What are your office hours?

A. Our hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Q. I'm planning on selling my house. When should I notify SSWD about changes to the account?

A. You have to wait until escrow closes on the house. The home owner is responsible for the water bill until the new ownership is official.

Leaks and Water Waste — Give us a Call

If you spot a leaking pipe, we ask that you call SSWD first—before contacting a plumber. A crew member will come out to inspect the leak, free of charge, and assess whether the damaged pipe is ours or yours. Too often, we hear of customers who call the plumber first—and rack up a hefty bill—only to learn that the leak is not their responsibility.



Also give us a call if you notice large amounts of water running alongside the curb or pooling near the street. We need your help to minimize water waste.

Landscape Workshops

The Regional Water Authority is offering landscape workshops at the South Natomas

Community Center. The classes are designed to provide gardeners, homeowners, and landscape architects with information on improving their existing landscape, making changes to specific areas of their yard, and addressing issues of long-term landscape management.

To sign up for any of the workshops below, call the Regional Water Authority at 916-967-7692. The cost of each workshop is \$10.00 and includes the one-day workshop, handouts and lunch.

November 2, 2002

8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

- Fertilizers and Pesticides
- Minimizing Solid Waste in the Landscape

November 23, 2002

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

- Selecting and Installing Plants
- Drip & Micro-Irrigation Design and Installation

December 7, 2002

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

- Residential Irrigation Design, Installation and Renovation
- Irrigation Controllers

Make Conservation Work For You

As an SSWD customer, you can help us meet our goal of 10% water use reduction. Try to make conservation a part of your routine...and remember, awareness is the first step in conservation!



Outdoor Tips

Did you know? Up to 90% of water used to sprinkle lawns on a hot sunny day can be lost to the atmosphere through evaporation. This is water that is not returned to the hydrologic cycle. Soaker hoses or trickle systems reduce water usage by 20 to 50%.

- Reduce your outdoor watering timer at each station by 2 minutes.
- Consider installing a drip irrigation system.
- Use native or drought-tolerant plants when landscaping
- Use a layer of mulch around plants to reduce evaporation and encourage plant growth
- Avoid over-fertilizing your lawn, fertilizers increase the need for water.
- Raise the lawn mower blade to at least three inches, short cuts encourage evaporation.
- Consider using a commercial car wash that recycles water. If washing your own car, use a bucket and hose with a shut-off nozzle.

Indoor Tips

Did you know? About two-thirds of indoor residential water use is for toilet flushing and bathing.

- Never put water down the drain when there may be another use for it such as watering a plant or garden, or cleaning.
- Avoid flushing the toilet unnecessarily. Dispose of tissues and other trash in a wastebasket.
- If the toilet flush handle frequently sticks in the flush position letting water run constantly, replace or adjust it.
- Replace your showerhead with an ultra low flow version.
- Store drinking water in the refrigerator rather than letting the tap run each time you want a cool glass of water.

Water Conservation is a smart investment not only for now but for the future. Help us save 10% and you'll save money too. Want to measure your savings? Give us a call and we'll tell you how!

WATER METERS

As a member of the Water Forum—a regional effort to protect the American River water supply and its aesthetic and biological resources—SSWD has pledged to save water through a series of conservation measures. One of these measures is to install water meters. While water metering is new to some areas of Sacramento, it is a common and long-standing practice in almost every city and region of California.

SSWD is now implementing a multi-phase water metering program that will eventually include all of our customers. It is important for our customers to know that when paying on a metered rate, you will only pay for the water you use. And, the meters we are installing are electronic which ultimately saves our valued customers money. Over the next several years, the district will be retrofitting homes built before 1992 with water meters and changing over all flat-rate billed customers to a metered billing system (homes built

after 1992 are already metered).

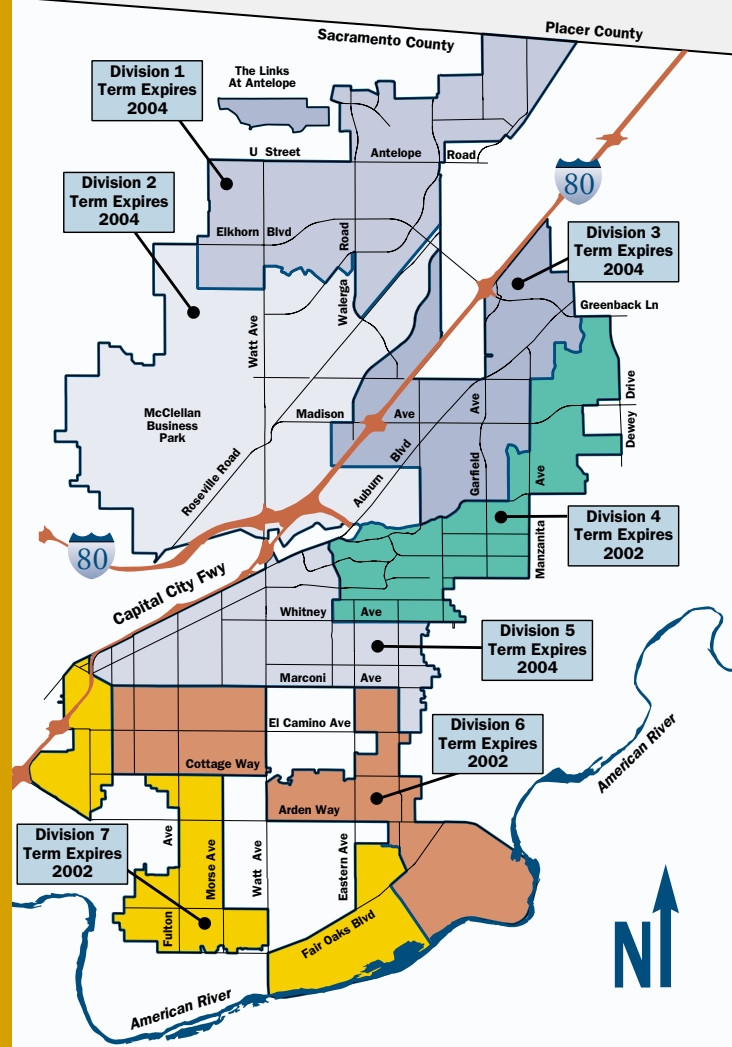
The next phase of the metering program will begin in November 2002, with the transition of 500 additional customers from flat to metered rates. Customers will receive a letter in the mail if they are one of the 500 included in this phase.

We will be notifying you by mail as to when retrofitting will begin in your neighborhood. If you have any questions, please contact our Engineering Department at 916-972-7171, and we will be happy to assist you.

Elections for SSWD Divisions 4 and 6

On November 5, 2002 Sacramento Suburban Water District customers will go to the polls to elect new board members for divisions 4 and 6 (since only one candidate filed in division 7, the candidate, Steve Eggert, is automatically appointed to the board). The new divisions were created as a result of the consolidation and will reduce the number of representatives from ten to seven.

Remember to vote on November 5, 2002



In This Issue:

- General Manager Update
- Landscape Workshops
- Leaks and Waste – What To Do
- SSWD Elections



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