



WATER & POWER

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P.O. Box 949
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Important Dates

- October 18 -
Last Day to Order Water

- October 20 -
End of Irrigation Season

- November Mailing -
2010 Water Use Statements

- December 20 -
Deadline to Transfer Water Allotment
Second Installment of Water
Charge Payment Due

- December 31 -
Excess Water Payments Due

Water Statistics

As of July 25

Don Pedro Reservoir

Elevation this week: 822.5 ft.

Elevation last year: 798.8 ft.

Average inflow: 471 cfs

Average outflow: 3,349 cfs

Average to TID canal: 2,036 cfs



The Grower

A Publication for Turlock Irrigation District Water Users

Water supply levels show much promise

A series of storms starting at the end of February changed the water supply outlook for 2010 from dry to average. By April, TID and other dam operators had moved from drought operations to flood control mode for the first time in three years.

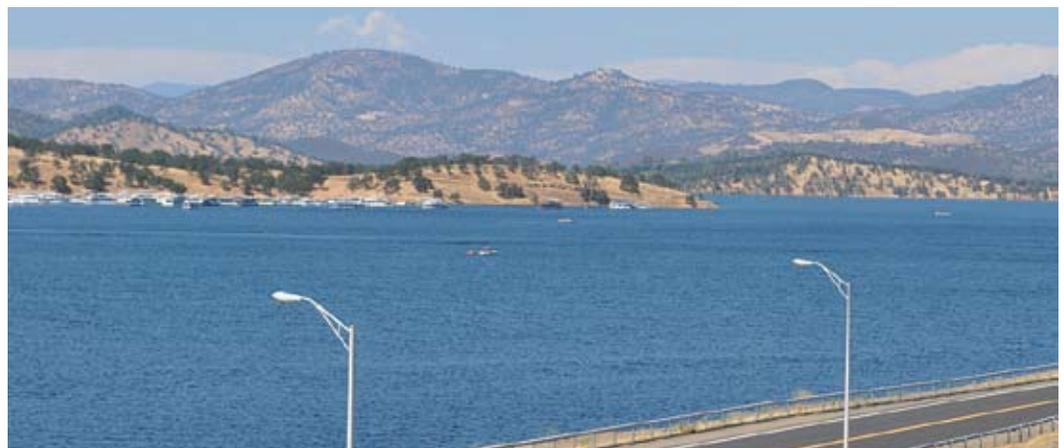
The Department of Water Resources (DWR) forecast was bleak in early February, with a dry water year projected even with average precipitation from that point forward. Mother nature proved these early projections wrong by opening up the spigot and producing a series of storms that lasted into May.

Although 2009 wasn't nearly as dry as 2007 and 2008, it didn't provide enough water to fill reservoirs, leaving much of the state with drought conditions. This year's extremely wet spring quickly moved reservoir operations from drought mode to flood control mode.

With its dam and reservoir operation responsibilities, TID is required by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to maintain a minimum amount of flood control space within the reservoir through the winter and early spring, when flood control requirements begin to ease and more water is able to be stored for summer use. Flood control operations require additional releases when reservoir levels encroach into the flood control space. The amount and timing of these releases are carefully coordinated, when possible, to maximize its use for irrigation, power generation and fishery benefits. This year's cooler than normal spring conditions assisted with this process. Flood control releases from Don Pedro Reservoir, or flows above the minimum required, began in April, and are anticipated to continue through the summer, when the reservoir level must be back down, below flood control level, at the beginning of October.

The water supply outlook is good news, not only for this year's irrigation supplies, but also the fishery, power generation, and reservoir recreation uses as well. Overall, reservoir levels will remain much higher than in the past three years, making it a great place to visit this summer. Reservoir levels peaked earlier in July, and will decline gradually through the summer, as water supplies are used for irrigation. As required by the Corps of Engineers, Don Pedro levels will be lowered to slightly below flood control levels by October, in preparation for the 2010-2011 winter season.

A view of Don Pedro Reservoir from the Visitor Center.



If you are interested in receiving The Grower newsletter via email, rather than a printed copy, please contact us via email at info@tid.org or by calling 209-883-8665.



Prevention is crucial in protecting your copper from theft

Several years ago, copper prices fell to \$1.29 per pound and copper theft dropped significantly from prior years. Recently, copper topped \$3.50 per pound and thefts are up. A significant increase in copper theft has affected area residences, businesses, farms and any location where copper is exposed or easily assessable. The City of Davis lost more than \$100,000 in copper from city parks earlier this year.

Turlock Irrigation District and its customers have experienced increased theft in copper from pumps and other equipment. The total loss includes material loss (cost of replacement wire, pipe and other items) plus the cost of down time and labor/repair costs, making the actual loss hundreds of times more than the initial cost of the stolen material.

TID Security along with the Stanislaus County and Merced County Sheriff's Departments are tackling the issue of copper theft in many ways; home owners and farmers affected by these thefts are a valuable and indispensable part of the security team. The increase in communication allows timely and necessary information to be given to patrolling deputy sheriffs and investigators assigned to this growing problem.

Metal theft laws¹ have done little to combat actual theft – there appears to be a number of unscrupulous metal dealers still in business. Recently, metal dealers and scrap yards have been victims of copper theft.

Reporting any loss and vandalism remains a necessary and vital step to the long-term solution. While patrols, surveillance, cameras and other enforcement tactics are important and yield a level of success, the crime reports, locations, methods of removal or theft, and other seemingly unimportant details can be important when suspects are arrested and interviewed. The result of reporting will not be immediate and may cause some frustration, but it is the only way to make a case of multiple vandalism or thefts when a suspect is arrested. In addition to reporting each incident,



Secured, enclosed pumps like this one are more likely to deter would-be thieves.

watching your farm and your neighbor's farm can yield arrests and information necessary to continue the fight against theft and vandalism.

Recently, a Merced County farmer noticed a significant loss of brass fixtures in his fields (brass is currently at \$1.50/pound – it is possible the suspects mistook them for copper; they are not the brightest...). The farmer remembered a suspicious person in the area prior to the theft and this information allowed deputies to search for that specific person to question about the incident. These kind of leads are important to keep the case from going cold.

PREVENTION remains the key to eliminating potential loss. If a thief is faced with a secured, enclosed pump and control box on one farm, and an unsecured pump and control box on the other, he or she will almost always target the unsecured location.

Motion sensor lights and alarms may work in some areas, but any tactic that keeps suspects from easily pulling copper wire or may frustrate thieves, forcing them to proceed to an easier target.

Crimes in progress should be immediately reported to 911 dispatchers, and confrontation with suspects should be avoided. Suspects are often drug users or have significant criminal histories. The reaction of a confronted suspect cannot be anticipated – some will run, others will try to bargain, and some may react violently. Dialing 911 and observing from a distance while providing information to law enforcement dispatchers is the best course of action for safely managing crimes in progress.

New Admin will focus on customer needs

In April, Turlock Irrigation District created a new administration known as Water Operations, Construction & Maintenance. This was done to better serve the District's irrigation customers.

This administration consists of the Water Distribution Department, Construction & Maintenance Department and the Fleet Services Department. The Assistant General Manager for this administration is Keith Cargill. Keith has been with the District for more than 36 years and brings an abundance of knowledge and experience to the position. Previously, Keith held the position of Construction & Maintenance Department Manager. Keith's goal over the next few months is to focus on the needs of the customer and how the District can manage and deliver their water resource more efficiently and effectively.

Also, Mike Kavarian has been named Water Distribution Department Manager. Mike brings almost 29 years of experience from his previous duties in the Civil Engineering and Water Distribution Departments. Mike's area of responsibility will include water operations and administration of improvement districts.

¹ Such as AB844 (later becoming Business & Professions Code §21600 et seq.)

Tanks and banks don't mix

Agricultural chemical companies operating within the Turlock Irrigation District have been notified that the District does not allow tanks of anhydrous ammonia or other fertilizers to be placed on canal banks.

Vandalism, accidental leakage and potential terrorist acts associated with these fertilizers pose too much liability for the practice to continue.

In addition, tanks parked on canal banks make it difficult for District maintenance workers to maneuver equipment used to remove moss and other aquatic weed growth from canals. On more than one occasion, crews have been forced to back up as much as a half-mile when they have encountered tanks and other obstacles blocking their path.

The Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department is advised to begin issuing trespass citations to owners of equipment parked on District canals without authorization. Notices are posted on all canals.

In most cases, there is enough space on adjacent fields to position fertilizer tanks for use by growers. If it is not possible to find another location to park the tank, ag service companies and growers are directed to contact Keith Cargill at 883-8312 to determine what alternatives may be available.



Don Pedro re-licensing continues to move forward

Don Pedro Reservoir is central to both TID's water and energy operations, and is licensed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The FERC license will expire and will need to be renewed in 2016.

Because the re-licensing process can be a long, arduous and expensive process, in its role as majority owner and project operator of the reservoir and generation facilities, TID began working with other project partners to outline the work needed to ensure a smooth methodology for the multi-year re-licensing efforts. Informational meetings for the public are listed below.

Tuesday, Sept. 14

7-9 p.m.

TID Board Room
333 E. Canal Dr., Turlock

Wednesday, Sept. 15

10 a.m.-noon

MID Multipurpose Room
1231 11th St., Modesto

Wednesday, Sept. 15

7-9 p.m.

MID Multipurpose Room
1231 11th St., Modesto

Salt concerns may bring about state regulations

Salt is a naturally occurring substance, and a by-product of many human activities including agricultural fertilization and irrigation, as well as manufacturing and wastewater disposal, to name a few. It's found in the soil and water. In small doses it's fine, but in larger amounts salt can impact crop production and fresh water fish, or require treatment for human consumption. Salts are accumulating in the San Joaquin Valley. If left unchecked, salt could buildup in the groundwater and the soil. To address this, the Regional Water Quality Control Board and its mother agency the State Water Resources Control Board are developing salinity regulations, which could impact agricultural operations in the future.

Salt management is usually accomplished by exporting salts through drainage and other discharges to waterways which eventually flow to the sea. In this case, the San Joaquin River would naturally carry discharges from the

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valley to the ocean, through the Delta. California's complex plumbing system makes management of salts more difficult. Water is pumped from the Delta for use by agriculture on the western side of the valley. If the San Joaquin River water is salty, then that salty water is pumped back into the valley.

Many are advocating a process that would maximize the export of salt from the valley, while not creating a problem for those that use the San Joaquin River water, including areas downstream in the Delta. A group consisting of regulators, ag and urban agencies, and others that use water or discharge to waterways are involved in Central Valley-SALTS, the process established to address this issue. CV-SALTS will evaluate where the salts are coming from and examine what measures and best management practices are available to help address the issue. Both the TID and the East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition (the Coalition formed to represent agricultural dischargers in this area) are a part of the process.

With input from the ag community, a reasonable plan can be developed minimizing salt build-up and maximizing salt export, while giving agriculture and the other dischargers the tools needed to comply with new regulations. A solution won't be clear for some time. However, growers need to be aware of the salts within their operations, and begin to plan for the possibility that flows from irrigated lands to groundwater or surface waters containing salts, may not be allowed, or severely limited, in the future.