

the Grower

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TID updating Ag Water Management Plan

Turlock Irrigation District is in the process of updating its Agricultural Water Management Plan (AWMP), which evaluates water use within the District and applicable management practices to make the best use of available resources.

TID's existing plan was developed under a voluntary process established in the 1990s. Legislation, passed in 2009, commonly referred to as SBx7-7 made the once voluntary program mandatory. Under the new requirements, TID must adopt a revised plan by the end of this year, update it in 2015, and then every five years thereafter.

The AWMP will describe TID's water supplies and irrigation demand, local conditions, facilities and operations, rules and policies, and a variety of water management activities, including a series of efficient water management practices (EWMPs) designed to improve water use efficiency. The AWMP documents how TID is complying with the new law, and proposes improvements, if needed, to meet new requirements.

Volumetric pricing and water measurement are two examples of EWMPs. TID adopted a new volumetric pricing structure, effective in 2013, to comply with SBx7-7 on June 12. The AWMP will describe the new pricing structure, as well as the District's plans for complying with increased water measurement accuracy and reporting, required by SBx7-7.

Another goal of SBx7-7 is to make water management data and information more readily available. AWMPs are now required to be posted on the Internet, and submitted to various local and state agencies, including the Department of Water Resources (DWR), and local urban water suppliers. DWR will report to the legislature in 2013 regarding the status of ag water management practice implementation statewide, and make recommendations on suggested improvements.

The current schedule has a draft plan for the TID Board's consideration at the end of November. Although time consuming and costly to implement, completing these planning processes, implementing efficient water management practices, and documenting their effectiveness are important steps for protecting the District's water supplies.

More information on the AWMP and EWMPs, including water measurement and pricing, will be provided in the coming months and years through *The Grower* newsletter articles like this one, and online at www.tid.com/AWMP.

For questions about the TID plan, or EWMPs, contact Debbie Liebersbach at (209) 883-8428.



October 10
Final day of
irrigation season

**Throughout
November**
Water Use
Statements mailed

December 20
Water transfers
must be completed

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
209.883.8448.

INSIDE

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First full year of relicensing Don Pedro in the books

The year 2011 marked the Modesto and Turlock irrigation districts' first year of the Don Pedro relicensing process. The first year of the Integrated Licensing Process (ILP) was devoted to working closely with Relicensing Participants and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to develop detailed studies to be conducted by the Districts to support the license application, which will be filed in April 2014. The year ended with FERC issuing its formal Study Plan Determination (SPD) on December 22.

The Districts will be conducting 35 different studies to investigate the project's potential to affect resources in the lower Tuolumne River and at and adjacent to the Don Pedro Reservoir. The Districts have retained the services of a number of experts in their respective fields to assist in the performance of these studies.

By the end of 2012, the Districts will have completed most of these studies, but some will continue into 2013.

Additional details regarding the Revised Study Plan (RSP), the SPD, upcoming meetings and more are available on the Don Pedro relicensing website. More information on Don Pedro, including a link to the relicensing site can be found at tid.com/don-pedro.

Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program update

By now, most growers are aware of the state's Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP), also known as the "Ag Wavier", which began in 2003 and was extended by the Regional Water Board in 2006.

The original program required growers who discharged or had the potential to discharge to surface water to sign up for the program and either perform monitoring or join a coalition that did. The 2003 program only included discharges to surface water so growers who kept irrigation or storm water on their farm did not need to act.

In 2009, the Regional Board began work on a Long-term Irrigated Lands Program which will include potential discharges to surface water and groundwater. Last October, the Regional Water Board began holding meetings with the East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition to try and develop workable requirements for the long-term program that affects this area. The requirements are expected to be adopted by the Regional Board in October of this year.

With the addition of groundwater to the existing surface water program, the Regional Board now considers any irrigated crop in the Central Valley to have a potential to discharge contaminants into groundwater aquifers, hence all growers will need coverage for their operations either through a coalition or

individual permit with the Regional Board.

Key provisions of the new program include a requirement to submit farm evaluation plans to the coalition outlining practices used to protect surface and groundwater. Growers in high vulnerability groundwater areas, more than 60 percent of the coalition region, will also need to submit nitrogen budget sheets signed by a Certified Crop Advisor (CCA). These annual budgets will

show if growers are applying nitrogen in balance with anticipated crop production needs determined through baseline information developed by

commodity groups and the University of California.

What does this mean to growers? For growers currently enrolled with the Coalition, then not much will change. Growers not in the coalition will have a "120-day membership holiday" where they can join without applying first to the state as is currently required. The membership holiday will start after the new regulations are passed in October 2012. Growers who have not enrolled should contact the East San Joaquin Coalition at www.esjcoalition.org for information on registering. The new program will also have an individual permit option for those who do not join the coalition.

The requirements are expected to be adopted by the Regional Board in October of this year.

Installing drip or micro systems? Give us a call

Growers who are considering installing a new type of irrigation system, such as drip or micro sprinklers that will have irrigation water supplied by TID, are asked to contact TID prior to installation.

Written authorization from the District is required for any new irrigation connections to ensure that the modifications comply with TID standards and water can be delivered to the location at the desired new flow rate. This

is especially important for growers who are considering connecting to an improvement district pipeline. In many cases, older and/or busy improvement district lines are not capable of handling the longer duration irrigations associated with drip and micro systems.

Each new system must be evaluated on a case by case basis. For additional information, please contact [TID's Water Distribution Department at \(209\) 883-8356](http://tid.com/water-distribution).



Irrigation water rate structure to change formats in 2013

The pricing structure by which Turlock Irrigation District charges its irrigation water customers will change formats in 2013.

The change comes following a TID Board of Directors' vote in June, when the Board acted to charge customers based upon a volumetric pricing structure. Also reflected in the rates of this new structure is an increase that aims to narrow an annual \$1 to \$2 million gap that exists between water revenues and the costs associated with delivering water to customers.

The change to volumetric pricing comes in response to current California water conservation legislation. As an agricultural water provider, TID is required to have pricing that, in part, charges by the quantity of water delivered, also known as volumetric pricing. Starting in 2013, irrigators will be charged based upon either a normal year rate schedule or a dry year rate schedule that will be selected by the Board each year. The dry year schedule is needed to offset the increase in groundwater pumping costs to TID that occurs in dry years.

Starting in 2013, water customers will only pay for the water they receive. Under TID's existing pricing structure – a set allotment for all customers with water typically available over the allotment in normal water years – many growers pay for water they can't use and don't need.

Seventy-three percent of the time the allotment has been set at greater than 36 inches, while 50 percent of acres irrigated by TID use less than or equal to 33 inches.

This change to TID's irrigation water pricing structure comes on the heels of five public workshops held throughout TID's service area in April and a series of public presentations made on the topic at Board meetings in March and April of this year.



In 2013, TID irrigation water customers will only pay for the water they receive. Under TID's existing pricing structure many growers pay for water they can't use.

2013 Irrigation Rate Changes

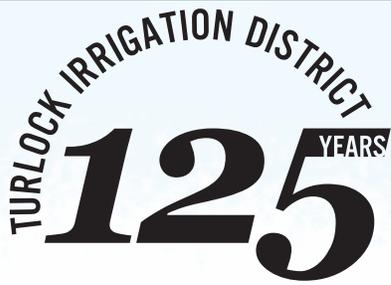
WHAT: In compliance with state law, the TID Board of Directors voted to adjust the 2013 irrigation water rate structure. The rate structure for 2012 remains unchanged.

INFORMATION ON THE 2013 RATES: Visit www.tid.com/water/water-rates for more information on the cost of irrigation water in 2013, including rates schedules for normal and dry years.

WHY TWO TYPES OF RATE SCHEDULES? Irrigators will be charged based upon a normal year rate schedule or a dry year rate schedule. The dry year schedule is needed to offset the increase in groundwater pumping costs to TID that occurs in dry years.

More on the web: tid.com/water/water-rates





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Water Statistics

Don Pedro Reservoir as of Aug. 3

Elevation this week: 776.12 feet

Elevation last year: 823.86 feet

Average inflow: 275 cfs

Average outflow: 2,740 cfs

Average to TID canal: 1,638 cfs

visit tid.com/water/hydrological-data for up-to-the-hour data
visit tid.com/weather for up-to-the-minute forecasts