



## ***News from EMWD***

Community Involvement Department  
951/928-3777, ext. 4219  
FAX 951/928-6171  
[odencransp@emwd.org](mailto:odencransp@emwd.org)  
P.O. Box 8300  
Perris, CA 92572-8300

### **For Immediate Release**

## **Water Supply Assessments given go-ahead, with conditions**

**Perris, CA (April 16, 2008)**—After a six-month deferral, Eastern Municipal Water District’s (EMWD) board of directors today resumed the approval process for large new developments based on a number of stricter water efficiency commitments.

The earlier policy of temporarily deferring water supply assessments (WSA) began in October 2007, following a number of natural and legal challenges to the water industry. Some of those included (1) continuing drought conditions, (2) more expensive arrangements to acquire extra water to offset shortages from last year, and (3) the discovery of invasive quagga mussels in the Colorado River system requiring millions of dollars in increased treatment costs.

Said David J. Slawson, EMWD’s board president, “What finally did the trick for me was a court order last summer that reduced State Water Project (SWP) deliveries by 30 percent to protect the Delta smelt and other species.”

EMWD depends on water from both the SWP and Colorado River for about 75-80 percent of what it supplies to its customers.

“I know we’re not out of the woods yet,” he said, “but I’m confident we can resume our policy of encouraging ‘smart growth’ that helps our region develop economically.”

WSAs are state-mandated reports that require water agencies to evaluate and confirm water supply availability for at least 20 years for large housing, commercial and industrial projects.

Since 2002, when WSAs became effective, EMWD has approved 85 assessments, probably the most of any water agency in California because of the fast-paced population growth of the Riverside County area. Since October 2007, EMWD received but deferred nine WSA requests. One of those, a warehouse project in Moreno Valley, was subsequently approved in March after the developer redesigned an earlier approved project, freeing up more water than was needed for the newer project.

Within the past five years, approved WSA projects have represented only five percent of the new water meters added to EMWD's system. That's because large projects take several years before new demands actually materialize.

In broad terms, EMWD's board felt confident in moving forward with the WSA approval process after directing staff to consider evaluation of new projects.

In addition, EMWD's board set down related conditions to help ensure a reliable future water supply. Among these conditions is the development of an allocation-based, tiered-rate structure later this year.

Also to be added to EMWD's most recent urban water management plan is the determination of additional supply sources from new groundwater, brine concentration and recycled water programs. And on an annual basis, EMWD staff will evaluate revised estimates of total supplies and projected demands. Since large projects often take several years, water supply assessments are to be revalidated every three years, or whenever EMWD's urban water

management plan is revised or updated. In addition, the board has committed to funding projects necessary to develop the additional supplies for future growth.

Slawson believes future long-term water demands will continue to be met. “With concerns about water supply brought to the forefront, we have worked closely with the County of Riverside and the Building Industry Association to accelerate efforts to ensure that new development will include water efficient landscapes.”

EMWD currently serves 110,000 acre-feet a year of fresh water to more than 130,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers.

“If we do all the right things, we’ll have enough water,” he said. “And the District is working on several fronts to do just that.”

###

*EMWD is the freshwater, wastewater service and recycled water provider to a 555-square mile area from Moreno Valley southward along the I-215 corridor to Temecula and eastward to Hemet and San Jacinto. Approximately 660,000 people live and work in this area. In addition to its own water customers, EMWD supplements water to eight local water agencies and municipalities that have their own water departments. EMWD operates four water reclamation facilities and treats some 45 million gallons of wastewater daily. More information can be found at EMWD’s web site [www.emwd.org](http://www.emwd.org).*