



Kennewick Irrigation District

***** NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KID REVISES WATER ENTITLEMENT TRANSFER PROCESS

The Kennewick Irrigation District (KID) Board of Directors has approved a newly updated Water Entitlement Policy.

The new policy allows ratepayers who do not have access to KID water from a riser to be allowed to "opt out" of their water entitlements and annual irrigation assessments. Written approval from the applicable City water utility is a required piece of the application package to ensure that the city's water systems are not adversely affected.

Planning Manager Scott Revell said, "This is a win-win solution for property owners who are landlocked and for the District. It gives relief to ratepayers who do not have access to KID water and helps the District manage its water right. It has been a longtime in the making". Until 2007, the Bureau of Reclamation did not have a way for the District to allow ratepayers to relegate (give back) their water entitlement.

Applications must be submitted by June 1, 2010 in order to be taken off the 2011 assessment roll. The lead time is necessary for the Bureau of Reclamation to process the requests.

The only cost to ratepayers who want to relegate their water entitlement is the cost to pay off their remaining Bureau of Reclamation construction loan payment, which is required by the 1982 federal Reclamation Reform Act. Construction of the KID's canal system was financed by the U.S. Government in the 1950s through a 66 year no interest loan that has 15 years remaining. A portion of each property owner's annual irrigation assessment goes toward loan repayment.

Most of the landlocked parcel situations were caused by developers who subdivided land along a canal or lateral pipeline but did not provide irrigation easements to each parcel. The state subdivision law was changed several years ago to prevent the creation of new lots in irrigation districts without easements for irrigation lines.

The policy does not apply to customers who have irrigation service and would like to “opt out” of their water entitlement because of water pressure, water quality problems associated with the District’s raw Yakima River water or drought related service interruptions, in part because Richland and Kennewick require a separate source of irrigation water because they do not have the capacity in their municipal water systems to handle irrigation water demands.

Relegation applications must be signed by the holder of a mortgage, for properties that are subject to a mortgage or a deed of trust.

Property owners who choose to give up a water entitlement will retain their voting rights in irrigation district elections.

The new policy also affects property owners wishing to obtain a water entitlement to irrigate drylands and the use of temporary water transfers. June 1st is the application deadline for water relegation or additional water entitlement requests.

Applications are available on the KID web site at www.kid.org or can be picked up at the Administrative Offices at 12 W. Kennewick Avenue, in downtown Kennewick.