

2006 is a challenge, as the District continues to evolve from rural land to neighborhoods at an amazing rate.

Change costs money. In this case, changes were needed in everything from infrastructure to the equipment that distributes water to maintenance systems that keep the water moving and accounting systems that track the costs.

This year we will receive our full water allotment. Even so, the challenge to help system users develop more resource-friendly watering habits remains. The Tri-Cities keeps on growing; the amount of water available doesn't.

## 2006 Watering Season Underway!

The Kennewick Irrigation District's 2006 watering season got off to a smooth start in April. The snow pack was over 100% of normal this year, which should keep water flowing into mid-October.

Even with enough water, the KID reminds you to water on alternate days. The system wasn't designed to deliver water to everyone at full capacity at the same time. Doing so results in no one receiving adequate pressure.

Amid 2005's drought-induced rationing, the KID ran a campaign to remind water users to coordinate watering schedules with their neighbors. That met with some success, but water user demands that "something" be done about uncooperative neighbors and overwatering have resulted in a new program that will be introduced this year.

The Kennewick Irrigation District will hire a Water Coordinator to help neighborhoods share water. The District has several options to enforce sharing, but hopes that third-party coordination can resolve issues before enforcement is needed.

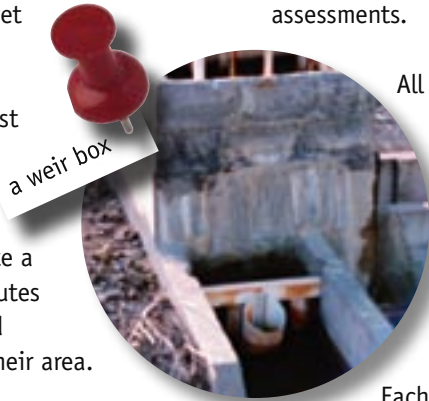
The 2006 KID budget is about 10% larger than last year. That increase is caused by a combination of cost of living adjustments, turnover and retirement in key management positions.



As part of the KID Canal safety program, the district has a large, vibrating roller that travels along the canals, tamping down the banks to fill in rodent holes. It works well to prevent canal failures, but it can cause vibrations in homes located nearby. If your home is close to a canal, please remember to place any valuable objects securely on walls or shelves, so they don't fall off when the roller comes by.

# Local Improvement Districts (LIDs)

The Kennewick Irrigation District was designed to get water from the Yakima River to the highest point in each 40-acre section within district boundaries. Landowners are responsible to get the water from the KID's system to their property. They can build their own lines to get the water to their property, they may let the water go past without taking delivery or they may work together to build and operate a system that distributes water to homes and properties within their area.



One way neighbors can organize is to petition the Kennewick Irrigation District to form a separate legal entity called a Local Improvement District (LID). Residents are responsible for the cost of establishing and operating the LID. This includes building, operating and maintaining the equipment that delivers water from the "weir box" (the usual water delivery point) to each property. The KID does the engineering work, manages the construction, keeps the books and often provides for the financing.

Across the KID, there are big differences in the amount each LID's residents are assessed. That's because they are each self-sustaining, and there are several factors that determine the amount of an LID resident's bill. Among them are:

- The same Operations and Maintenance (O&M) costs that every KID resident pays.
- The KID's cost to operate and maintain the LID equipment serving the neighborhood.
- If applicable, an LID mortgage/construction loan payment.

LID expenses are not shared across the KID. LID residents must, by law, cover their own system's costs. That is why LID O&M charges are higher in an LID that has a large number of service calls. When a KID repair crew goes out to an LID, it adds to the O&M cost and future assessments.

All costs to keep the LID running—expenses such as power, periodic system inspections and other maintenance functions—are tracked and charged to the LID's O&M account.

Each LID is a separate account. The staff reviews each LID's expenses annually to make sure the assessment covers its costs, and makes adjustments as needed.

Five years of account history are used to determine the cost of operating and maintaining each LID. That keeps a single incident from driving rates higher than necessary. The KID also maintains a reserve of \$60 to \$100 per LID lot against unexpected costs to help reduce assessment fluctuation for LIDs.

When the KID Customer Service staff receives notice of a problem in an LID,

they contact the Maintenance and Operations department. If the problem is small and quickly fixable, the crew member who responds will deal with the problem immediately.

If a problem cannot be solved quickly and easily, a "work order" is created and passed to the Operations and Maintenance staff for scheduling priority. Flooding situations are always given the highest priority.

While KID ratepayers in "private lines" areas (rather than in an LID) don't pay the LID assessments listed above, they are responsible for repairs and maintenance to their privately owned pipes and equipment that delivers water from the KID weir box to their property. When problems occur, they either fix it themselves or hire someone to fix it. The KID crew doesn't operate or maintain private systems.

To learn more about Local Improvement Districts, look for the LID link on our world wide web homepage: [www.kid.org](http://www.kid.org). If you have more questions, you can call the Kennewick Irrigation District at 586-9111, and ask for Customer Service.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## How can I quit having to pay for water that I don't get from the District and don't want?

After a quarter-century of litigation, the KID can again reassign water allotments and classify new areas, which is what has to happen to make that change. The USBR and KID are discussing ways to affect the changes without causing problems for the rest of the system. There are as many applications to receive water allotments as there are to have allotments removed, but for the system to keep functioning, KID staff has to make sure that neither too much nor too little load is added to or removed from the system in any one area. The system is very carefully balanced and must be modified with great care.

## Who owns and runs the KID?

The ratepayers own the District. A century ago the legislature created self-existing, self-governing, self-funding "districts," with some of the qualities of a municipality, such as elected governing boards, taxing authority, and oversight by the state auditor.

## Why doesn't the KID get water from the Columbia?

There are two answers: we can't, and we're trying. By law, the KID's water right comes out of the Yakima River. We can't legally "toss a hose in the Columbia," because we don't have a water right there.

The Pump Exchange Project—a proposal to change from the Yakima to the Columbia—is in the Environmental Impact Statement process. A draft will go to the KID and the Yakama Indian Nation for comments in the next month. After that, it will be available for public review and comment.

A separate McNary water pool Columbia River permit request is being pursued under a Voluntary Regional Agreement passed in the last legislature. The earliest that could be granted is mid-2007 — and that's only if there are no appeals along the way. Even after permitting, infrastructure would need to be built to transport water.

## Why have a Water Coordinator?

As engineers design a system, they assume that there will never be 100% demand by 100% of users at exactly the same time. So they don't build them to deliver at that level. If they did, systems would be much larger and almost prohibitively expensive.

If everyone watered every lot in an LID at the same time, no one would have enough water pressure. That happened several times in 2005. Responding to water user demands that "something" be done to resolve problems, KID created this position of water coordinator. The position is not, as local news media styled it, "water cop."

*To find out more, look online: [www.kid.org](http://www.kid.org)*

## New Payment Policy

In the past, if a check for the first half of an assessment arrived after April 30th (and didn't include the interest to the bill added for being late), it was returned.

Now, if a payment comes in late (after the 30th), it's deposited. The payment first covers the interest owed, and what's left is applied to the account balance. The remainder will continue to accrue interest at 1% a month.



**DiFani**



**Case**

## Four Staff Members Retire in 2006

It isn't just the technology that's changing at the Kennewick Irrigation District. Four staff members with 91 years of KID service among them are retiring in 2006.

The Field Department loses three veterans: department manager **Mike DiFani** (18 yrs), **Mike Mercer** (28 yrs) and **Jim Boles** (20 yrs).

**Stan Case**, who heads up the KID's Finance department, retires this year after 25 years of service.

Both Mercer and Boles retired on January 31st. DiFani and Case will work through the year to ease transition in their departments.

Other staff members with over twenty years of service include:

DeWayne Miller (27 yrs)  
Terry Clark (25 yrs)  
John Blanco (25 yrs)  
Jose Vasquez (25 yrs)  
Dale Cram (22 yrs)

*Thank You!*



Kennewick Irrigation District  
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# WATER REPORT

June 2006

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Kennewick Irrigation District created a program to make it easy for you to help others. To donate to Helping Hands, simply write the amount you wish to donate on the line of your statement labeled, "Helping Hands Donation."

Donations may also be made at the KID office during business hours, or mailed to "Helping Hands" at the KID, P.O. Box 6900, Kennewick, WA 99336.

Money raised will be distributed by the Community Action Committee to KID water users who are in need.



**Sooner or later, we all need a helping hand...**