

Message From The President



Kirk Rathbun
Board President

As temperatures begin rising, cool water calls to most of us. For this reason, I would like to take a moment and discuss the appeal of KID canals to kids.

Among the beauty of a lush spring landscape it is often an afterthought that we live in a desert and here, the green and growth we see each spring is nurtured and maintained through diverted river water for irrigation and because of this, open canals crisscross the landscape of our community.

Raising children to adulthood can be challenging, but the goal of every parent is to get them there. While attending a conference last year, we heard from irrigation districts describing the terrible tragedy of children drowning in canals. I have three children of my own, and cannot imagine the thought of losing one of them. I do not believe in wrapping a child in bubble wrap, children need to run, explore, get outside and play... bumps and bruises are part of growing up. Yet, as parents, we are responsible for teaching our children about safety.

Canals, while vital to our community and our economy, can be dangerous. They appeal to children, because they appear harmless as on the surface they look calm and serene. However, these facilities are constructed to allow for efficient movement of thousands of gallons of irrigation water on a continuous basis, throughout the irrigation season. Made of either concrete or steel and designed with slanted sides, the water rushing through them creates an undercurrent making canals nearly impossible to escape from. KID inspects canals daily. However, it is impossible to be everywhere at once. Canals can be very inviting to children on a hot summer day and so, we all need to make it our responsibility to educate them on the truth of canals: they are not for play. Please, do not encourage or allow your kids to play in canals.

Together we all make a difference in the lives of our children.

Do you pay an irrigation assessment to KID, but are not able to access the irrigation water?

You may qualify to relegate your water allotment and be removed from the KID assessment roll.

You do not qualify if you have access to KID irrigation service - including private line areas.

**THE APPLICATION PERIOD IS OPEN
MARCH 1 - MAY 31, 2015
FOR THE 2016 ASSESSMENT YEAR**

Instructions and application forms are available to download at www.kid.org: A checklist is provided to assist you in completing the relegation application and requires an intake appointment.

For questions or to schedule a relegation appointment, call Lynda at (509) 586-9111 ext. 120.

KID Consolidating Locations

KID has been working very hard to improve service delivery and become more responsive to the needs of our community. We have heard and are responding to suggestions for improved service and communication. New highly skilled staff members, improved service through increased hours of scheduled coverage, and a substantial sustained investment in a strategic capital improvement program are but a few of the changes implemented over the last five years.

Having separate locations for our Operations and Administrative Office groups has been another challenge for the KID. Consolidating locations will directly increase internal communication and facilitate providing more timely information to customers. It will also improve management accessibility and oversight, improve staff development, and increase daily operational efficiency.

KID's Administrative Office has been in downtown Kennewick for decades, and in 2002 KID renovated a key downtown building to help anchor the City of Kennewick's revitalization efforts there. Although it has worked well for some aspects of business, it is out of the district and remote from half of the district's employees. It is not large enough or in the right location to fit both halves of the business. We believe that it makes better sense to create one unified space to be shared by all of KID's 57 employees at the KID-owned Ely Street property. A new building located there will provide a more central location from which to serve our customers. Beyond the functional benefits of consolidation, we believe this move will be the most effective use of our operating budget in the long term.

The Board of Directors and senior management believe, based on evaluation of the potential return on investment, that consolidating the business on our current operating site is the best way to utilize our resources to improve our service delivery and improve organizational efficiencies. This decision will provide improvements now and anticipates future needs of our growing customer base. The Ely Street location will be within the KID boundaries, in the heart of our customer base and the center of our district.



Red Mountain Project Complete

A vision nearly 60 years in the making which would bring water to the dry scrublands of Red Mountain, was realized on January 8, 2015 when the Kennewick Irrigation District celebrated the successful completion of the Red Mountain Project. The project, which brought Yakima River water to the mountain, took five years and \$19.2 million dollars, or a cost of \$10,764 per acre over 25 years for LID members, to complete. These numbers are overshadowed by the immense benefits that will be gained for the winegrowers of Red Mountain, the surrounding economies, and the customers of KID.

In the early 1940's the KID acquired 670 acres of land on Red Mountain as the result of unpaid irrigation assessments. For the past seventy years KID had been caretakers of the land, but the discussion always remained as to what to do with the property. Red Mountain land was primarily dry scrubland and thus, the ability to deliver water for agricultural production was critical to its transformation.

In 2009, over 100 Red Mountain landowners approached KID to form a Local Improvement District (LID). As the owner of 670 acres, KID joined the LID and with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the Washington Department of Ecology, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife and the Yakima Nation, an agreement was formed, which led to a new Yakima River point of diversion, to deliver water to the mountain's future water users.

Red Mountain has a growing reputation as one of the world's most desirable wine regions. Transformation of the scrubland to vineyards will result in the production of fine wine grapes. As the wine industry grows, it is likely that supporting goods and services will move into the area, further boosting the state and local economies. Washington State estimates that over 100 jobs and millions of dollars in new tax revenues will be generated through the project. The project also provides environmental benefits, specifically the preservation of 1,200 acres of shrub steppe habitat, and improved conditions for Salmon, Steelhead, and other aquatic species by improving in stream flow conditions.

KID customers will also benefit from the project during low water years. Wine grapes need just 1.5 acre feet per year, whereas, a typical water customer consumes 3.5 acre feet per year. New Red Mountain customers will have this lower water duty and the difference will be placed in trust with the state for use in low water years.

Original estimates to complete the project came in at just over \$12 million. Through the competitive bidding process RH2 Engineering was selected to perform the work. As the project progressed plans were refined and the total cost to install 90,000 feet of pipe and construct new reservoirs came in at approximately \$20.5 million. LID participants believe the land's potential justifies the expense and in the end, the cost to LID members came out to be 5 percent less than a previous estimate.

Funding was provided by the Washington Department of Ecology Office of Columbia River and KID customers. Sale of KID Red Mountain property provided resources to finance \$9.274 million of the \$19.2 million dollar project. KID customers were earning just 0.18% on these funds and now will earn 6.10% interest and generating approximately \$560 thousand in new revenue to the District coffers, which the Board will later allocate.

**A public ribbon cutting ceremony is planned for 11 a.m., Wednesday, May 6th
at the Red Mountain Intake Station at Kiona.**

Customer Service FAQ's

Q: I don't use the water, why do I have to pay for it?

A: The US Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) built the Yakima River irrigation system in the 1950's and KID was assigned a portion of the water at that time. Lands deemed "irrigable" were identified by the USBR with KID being required to assess them a percentage of the costs associated with operating and maintaining the system. KID has limited ability to change which lands are included in this assessment process. If you do not have access to KID water, call to find out if you qualify to relegate your water allocation.

Q: Why can't I just pay for what I use?

A: Per KID's agreement with the USBR assessments are a percentage of operating and maintenance costs associated with the size of your property and not based on consumption. KID delivers untreated and unfiltered Yakima River water at a rate that makes reliably measuring individual consumption rates very cost prohibitive: to install and maintain and repair individual meters would greatly increase irrigation rates and so KID has elected at this time not go in that direction.

Q: Why can't I receive a refund for the days that I did not have water?

A: When breaks occur in the canal system "outages" or no-water days occur. The cost of moving water through over 80 miles of canal and 405 miles of pipe actually increases rather than decreases when this happens, because KID costs increase. Maintenance crews work overtime to make the necessary repairs as quickly as possible to lessen the burden on our customers. Most of KID's system is decades old and unforeseen events, such as destructive invasive rodents, mean that eventually breaks will happen and repairs will be necessary. However, KID uses your assessment dollars through the capital improvement program to, in part, replace the aging infrastructure, implement better technology, and improve the consistency of our water service.

Q: Why does KID bill my mortgage company, because I want to pay my KID bill directly?

A: KID does not hold individual customer mortgage or escrow company information; KID bills water customers directly. Additionally, mortgage companies are not authorized to request payment information on any account. Payments are initiated by mortgage companies and established at the time the mortgage contract was established. If your mortgage company is paying your irrigation assessment without your knowledge or consent, customers should contact their mortgage escrow department.

KID's Customer Service department is committed to improving communication with our customers. We want to hear your concerns and suggestions as they are valuable to improving our service to you. Our goal is to provide the highest level of customer service to meet your needs. We welcome feedback: call us at (509) 586.9111 or email us at customerservice@kid.org. We are available Monday – Friday.

Would you like more information? Visit our website at www.kid.org

Please Note: Customer Service Hours during the irrigation season: M-F 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

AVOID PAYING ASSESSMENT FEES & INTEREST:

1st half assessments are due by April 30th.

Note: For online payments, you will need to set up a simple profile with a current phone number and KID account number. If you have any problems logging on, give Customer Service a call at (509) 586-9111 ext. 2 to verify the phone number we have on file for your account. We must have a phone number to reference for online payments. Also, provide us with your email address; we will send you important notices regarding outages in your neighborhood. **Send your email information to dhernandez@kid.org**



Efficiency and Conservation: Preparation for a Low-Water Year

As we go to print, snowpack levels are well below 50% of average and this means it will very likely be a low-water year. KID water resources depend heavily on snowpack in the mountains: slow melt sustains water supplies throughout the summer, in the Yakima Basin. It has been unusually warm and wet down here in the desert this past winter and although these days are uplifting, the warmer and more wet conditions will impact KID water supplies for the upcoming irrigation season. Why? USBR has allotted KID a portion of the water that is returned from users up-stream and during a low-water year that amount is reduced to a percentage of what is returned.

In preparation for this likelihood, here are some things *you* can do on your end:

1. Avoid new plantings.
2. Water between 5 a.m. and 10 a.m. and split watering time into shorter periods with 15-minute breaks in between each session to allow water to soak in, while minimizing runoff.
3. Choose drought tolerant plants. The information card attached to the plant should provide you with the details you need on the amount of water each plant requires.
4. Locate plants that use similar amounts of water in the same areas to help avoid over and under watering.
5. Check your irrigation system to be sure it is working optimally: adjust sprinklers to water only what grows, clean your filters, fix broken fixtures and pipe, and consider switching to impact sprinklers, which are more efficient and tend to clog less.
6. Add mulch around plants, trees, and shrubs. Mulching reduces evaporation by up to 70% and inhibits water thirsty weeds from growing.
7. Talk to your HOA about developing a watering schedule with neighbors to help ensure adequate supply and water pressure.
8. If you do not need it, do not use it. Brown lawns can be brought back to life with aerating, dethatching and fertilizing.

And now, [here is what we are doing on our end](#). KID has a comprehensive policy for low-water years that includes education and outreach to our customers, seeking additional funding and water supplies for our customers where they are available, and capital improvement projects, such as canal lining and automated gates. We are also committed to keeping you informed. We will be connecting with our residential, agricultural and public facilities customers on what can be expected and what KID is doing to mitigate the impact, in greater detail.

Through sustained efficient water use and by employing conservation measures, each one of us makes a difference to someone else, because every drop of water that isn't wasted, is a drop that can be put to good use down the line and when we all work together the best outcomes are achieved.

Want to know more? Find our drought plan on the front page of our website: www.kid.org



the KID Newsletter is going paperless & will arrive right in your In-Box!

Make sure we have your current email address: [Email Customer Service](#).

Changes are coming! Fall of 2015

You can also find KID newsletters on our website @ www.kid.org/newscenter

THIS SPRING, KID WILL BE OUT IN THE COMMUNITY !

COME AND MEET YOUR KENNEWICK IRRIGATION DISTRICT STAFF IN TWO CONVENIENT LOCATIONS. LEARN ABOUT CANAL SAFETY, GAIN EFFICIENCY TIPS, AND HEAR ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT:



When?

May 2, 2015

From 9 a.m. to noon

Where?

**The Home Depot at 3910 W 27th Avenue in
Kennewick**

When?

May 2, 2015

From 9 a.m. to noon

Where?

**Lowe's at 1020 N Colorado in
Kennewick, Columbia Center Blvd.**



Improving Home Improvement™



Follow KID on Facebook and watch for your chance to participate in a series of customer surveys, in the months to come...

Vegetation Management: Helping to Keep the Water Moving

Did you know KID operates and maintains over 64 miles of canals and over 100 pump stations, and additionally maintains many more acres of land? Within this extensive system, KID staff is constantly working to control the vegetation in order to keep the water flowing freely.

Controlling weeds is a non-stop and year round job. To accomplish all that needs to be done, KID employs two full-time vegetation staff members and various part-time employees, as needed. Two spray trucks, an ATV with a sprayer, two tractor mowers, and a weed removal trailer are also needed.

KID crews concentrate on two distinct types of vegetation. Terrestrial weeds are weeds found on our roads, alongside the canals, around the pump stations, around ponds and also around other facilities and properties owned by KID. Aquatic weeds grow in our canals and ponds.

The KID vegetation program consists of two different seasons: pre-emergent and post-emergent.

The pre-emergent program is the key to a successful vegetation program. Pre-emergent work, addressing aquatic and terrestrial weeds, begins as soon as the water is out of the canal system and is complete in the spring.

The post-emergent program, ongoing effort throughout the summer, is necessary to control the weed growth. Most often, growth can be controlled through terrestrial weed applications, but for weeds too big for spraying mechanical methods (mowers and trimmers) are used. Aquatic post-emergent weed control is constantly monitored during the water season and necessary applications are made in the canal system to reduce the amount of growth.

Throughout the water season, wind storms and aquatic weed growth interfere with canal operations, and KID employees must check and clean the canal screens continually. However, during periods of high growth and after treating the canals, our customers may notice an increase in the amount of vegetation buildup in their screens and filters. Therefore, KID recommends that customers clean their screens and filters often during the irrigation season to help prevent clogging.



Controlled burns are one tool used to eliminate unwanted vegetation in canals.



Spring 2015

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