



Camrosa Water District Leisure Village Recycled Water-Use Project Receives Award

Frank Royer, General Manager, Camrosa Water District
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A comprehensive recycled water project at Leisure Village in Camarillo is one of six winners of the WaterReuse Association's 2009 Award of Merit. The \$2.3 million project, spearheaded by Leisure Village residents and Camrosa Water District, a leader in supplying recycled water for outdoor irrigation in Ventura County, began in 2006 and was completed in May. A record 57 entries vying for the honor were received by the national nonprofit organization, which recognizes projects that advance the acceptance of water reuse.

With its 215 acres of greenbelt, residential planter beds and an 18-hole golf course, a large part of Leisure Village's attraction to retirees is its lush landscaping. "About 20 years ago, a few of the community's 'engineer-types' and other future-conscious retirees met informally to consider the likely scenarios that could play out over the coming decades that could dramatically effect life in what they considered to be a paradise. One of the issues was water," says Robert Scheaffer, general manager of the Leisure Village Homeowners Association. "In 2003, the thinking and talking about water conservation was transformed into serious planning."

Leisure Village partnered with Camrosa and Calleguas Municipal Water District to replace about 70 percent of the annual potable (drinking) water with cheaper, more plentiful re-cycled water. This water would be used to irrigate outdoor landscaping and the golf course. The multi-year project, which began in 2006, entailed laying 12,000 feet of new water pipeline, retrofitting more than 100,000 sprinkler heads and installing 2,300 backflow devices. The project was completed in May and will result in a 60 percent reduction in the community's water bill and an annual savings of 180 million gallons of drinking water.

Leisure Village's conversion from potable to non-potable landscape water is just one part of Camrosa Water District's long-term master plan to become less reliant on increasingly expensive and scarce imported water. "In early 2010, the Metropolitan Water District, which sells drinking water to Camrosa and all other area water districts, is raising fees and has already mandated a 15 percent reduction in imported drinking water consumption," says Al Fox, president of Camrosa Board of Directors. "This means the task of switching to recycled water whenever possible becomes even more urgent and is why Camrosa will continue to work towards increasing our community's water self-reliance. This is a problem that is not going away."

Other planned recycled water projects from Camrosa include laying the infrastructure necessary to bring non-portable water for irrigation purposes to areas of Santa Rosa Valley. "Recycled water use by any part of Camrosa's district will help reduce the amount of imported water needed for the entire district," says Fox. "That will help offset imported water price increases down the road."



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