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Desert Recreation District Water Conservation Efforts Returns Results

Conservation Program Reduces Consumption

Indio, CA (May 6, 2015) – When the [Desert Recreation District \(DRD\)](#) rolled out their water conservation plan in 2012, they were trying to proactively approach concerns about excessive and unnecessary water use. Today, the plan is working. Over the last two years, DRD’s water consumption has been reduced by 21%. That is no small feat given that DRD maintains and oversees ten Community Centers, three Community Swimming Pools, over twenty parks and a 9-hole municipal golf course in the Coachella Valley.

“We looked at everything we were doing, identified key areas where we could conserve water and developed a plan” commented Kevin Kalman, General Manager for the Desert Recreation District. That meant collaborating with landscape and maintenance providers to look at the big picture, as well as the small details that can be overlooked and costly. “We met with our landscape and maintenance providers so that we could leverage all of our resources. This was especially important when refurbishing and updating our green spaces” he continued.

The conservation plan includes:

- Increasing mandated irrigation inspections to detect and remediate inefficient water use and leaks
- Using non-potable water sources, where available, especially in large turf areas
- Installing remote controlled “smart controllers” to respond to real-time water usage data
- Initiating a “wet agent” program to maximize water applied to large turf areas
- Planting drought tolerant landscape in all new landscape and refurbishing projects
- Reducing the use of pressure washers, water brooms and other such equipment
- Regular communication with water agency partners to solicit additional conservation input
- Ongoing turf replacement program in non-active areas of parks, medians, streetscapes and retention basins

Given the results to date, conserving an additional 25% will be a challenge. “We are all about recreation. When people think of outdoor recreation, they think of green spaces. We are working on a fine balance between being responsible stewards of some precious resources while conserving others. It will be challenging, but we will get there. We are committed” Kalman concluded.

The Desert Recreation District

The Desert Recreation District (DRD) provides quality recreation experiences to residents throughout the Greater Coachella Valley. DRD manages, maintains and assists in maintaining over 30 parks and recreation facilities; creates and delivers quality programs, services and classes; and, facilitates leisure opportunities through partnerships that support and encourage residents to engage in healthy lifestyles and wellness activities. DRD hosts special programs such as Adaptive Sports for those with disabilities, events such as the Senior Games and partners with health care organizations such as Kaiser Permanente who has provided grant monies for swimming lesson scholarships and junior lifeguard classes. DRD is funded through tax dollars, special assessments, grants and nominal charges assigned to select classes and events. Over the last year, DRD hosted over 2,400 classes and programs and more than 100 special events.

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