



201 Vallecitos de Oro • San Marcos, California • 92069 • (760) 744-0460



Press Release

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Vallecitos Water District earns Recycled Water Agency of the Year Award

San Marcos, CA – Vallecitos Water District, operator of the Meadowlark Water Reclamation Facility that recently underwent a \$23.5 million upgrade to improve operations efficiency and increase recycled water output capacity, was named “2008 Recycled Water Agency of the Year” (for medium sized agency) at the WaterReuse Association’s 2009 California Section Annual Conference on March 23rd. The WaterReuse Association is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to advance the beneficial and efficient use of water resources.

To earn this unique distinction, Vallecitos was pitted against many worthy entries for the WaterReuse awards committee to consider. But in the end, Vallecitos and its facility were found to be more in line with WaterReuse’s goal of promoting water reuse through projects that most accurately reflect advanced, beneficial and efficient use of resources that benefit the public and the environment.

This recognition can be attributed in part to the upgrades that took place at Meadowlark between 2005 and 2008 that more than doubled output capacity from 2.25 million gallons per day (mgd) to 5 mgd. The complete

overhaul included changes to processing, odor control, reliability, cost effectiveness and visual impacts.

With the ultimate goal of lowering overall demand for imported water into the region and reusing local resources, this conservation-driven project will generate enough revenue to cover the additional costs required to treat the wastewater to tertiary level, by selling the recycled water it produces to other nearby water agencies – Carlsbad Municipal Water District (3 mgd) and Olivenhain Municipal Water District (1.5 mgd). By upgrading the plant, Vallecitos now has the ability to recycle up to 72% of the wastewater generated in their service area.

But overall efficiency doesn't stop there. When the demand for recycled water slows, such as during rainy weather, the water can be stored in a 55-million gallon open reservoir for later use. Once the water is transported from the reservoir, it is delivered by gravity flow, which saves energy as pumps are not required.

Meadowlark was originally built in 1958 as a wastewater treatment plant, and was rebuilt in 1981 as a water reclamation plant. It has received many accolades, including the San Diego Plant of the Year award in 1994 from the California Water Environment Association.

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Vallecitos Water District is an independent, special district dedicated to providing water, wastewater and reclamation services to approximately 85,600 people in a 45-square-mile area that includes San Marcos; the community of Lake San Marcos; portions of Carlsbad, Escondido and Vista; and other surrounding unincorporated areas. The public is invited to Board meetings, taking place at 4 p.m. the first and third Wednesday of each month at Vallecitos' Administration, Maintenance, and Operations Facility - 201 Vallecitos de Oro, San Marcos.