Western Recognized for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
Facility receives LEED silver certification from U.S. Green Building Council

RIVERSIDE, CA – June 24, 2011 – Affirming its commitment to sustainable practices and environmental stewardship, Western Municipal Water District has been awarded silver certification by the U.S. Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program for its John E. Shipley Administration Building at the Operations facility. LEED, the nationally-recognized benchmark for sustainable building, encourages efficient building design, construction and operation with a rating system that evaluates performance from health and environmental perspectives. In seeking LEED certification for its Operations facility, Western was awarded 35 of the 38 points for which it applied. The facility allows the District to manage operations more efficiently and respond more effectively to the needs of its customers, in an environmentally friendly and cost-effective way.

“Employing green building practices makes sense not only from an environmental standpoint; it can also make sense financially,” said Jeff Sims, assistant general manager and chief operating officer of Western. “The modest increase in investment that comes with building to LEED standards can be offset many times over by the reduction in operating expenses over the life cycle of the building.” Western’s history of conservative fiscal practices has made the funding of the new facility possible; the project’s cost was covered by a combination of funds set aside by the District and Water Revenue Bonds Series 2009B.

LEED certification recognizes Western’s new Operations facility – which includes both a 19,000-square-foot administration building and a 12,000-square-foot maintenance building – for a number of sustainable techniques: design innovation, use of reclaimed water for irrigation, utilization of renewable building materials and optimization of energy performance, among others. The Operations Center is located at El Sobrante Road adjacent to the new Cajalco Fire Station, on the site of the small, outdated operations facility that it replaced. Developing the site in partnership with the Riverside County Fire Department enabled cost-sharing and combined savings. Because construction costs are down, the District was able to realize an additional 20 percent savings on construction expenses. The project also brought 38 construction jobs to the local economy.

As energy costs continue to rise, the Operations facility will be positioned for significant savings in the years ahead. “Controlling costs for our customers is one of our most important responsibilities. We are always on the lookout for ways to improve the efficiency of our operations,” said Brenda Dennstedt, president of Western’s Board of Directors. “Investing now in making our facilities as efficient as possible is a case where we can be simultaneously responsible both to our customers and our environment.”

Western Municipal Water District provides water supply, wastewater disposal and water resource management to the public in a safe, reliable, environmentally sensitive and financially responsible manner.

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