Western’s BudgetEarns SecondAccolade

RIVERSIDE, CA – August 8, 2011 – Western received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for our Fiscal Year (FY) 2010-11 budget. Budgets earning this prestigious honor are of the highest quality that reflects both guidelines established by the National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting and the GFOA’s best practices on budgeting. Formed in 1906, GFOA is a professional association of approximately 17,500 state, provincial and local government finance officers in the U.S. and Canada.

“Western is pleased to be recognized by a leading national finance association,” said Rod LeMond, Western’s CFO, who added, “I applaud our staff; a ton of work goes into preparing the budget for an agency like Western.”

Western’s FY 2010-11 budget also received the Meritorious Budget Award from the California Municipal Finance Officers Association earlier this year. In addition to the two awards garnered by Western’s budget, the District has also trimmed $33 million over two years of progressive savings; the recently approved budget was $14 million lower than the previous year.

Western is finding ways to cut back on costs while maintaining high levels of service to customers. Customer opinion of the District remains high as evidenced by a survey taken last year where customer service satisfaction levels were in the 90 to 95 percent range. A recently approved new water rate structure will provide even more opportunity for savings. “It stems from a culture of efficiency,” said LeMond. “It’s not a coincidence; I think the people who work for Western are making the difference. Employees are always finding more cost-effective ways to improve how we do things.”

Last year employees brought forward ideas that led to more than $300,000 in District savings. This is encouraged by Western’s BEST program, which stands for Betterment, Efficiency, Savings and Teamwork, designed to reward employees for ideas that save money, labor or resources, thus contributing to greater efficiency throughout the District.

“The Finance Department takes pride in providing customer-oriented innovations,” said Janell Gilbert, who works in the Accounting department. A key team member in garnering the awards, Gilbert received a GFOA Certificate of Recognition for Budget Preparation.

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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