Western Earns Honors for Commitment to Innovative Approach for Drought-proofing Region

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – “We’re committed to providing our region with a local, secure source of water that will help us reduce our reliance on more costly imported water,” said Western Municipal Water District’s General Manager John Rossi, after he recently accepted the Technical Innovation and Achievement Award from the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) for the Western Water Recycling Facility expansion, conversion and outreach.

The $50 million Western Water Recycling Facility expansion, completed in 2011, is the largest, single capital improvement project Western has undertaken in its nearly 60-year history. The expansion tripled the already existing facility’s capacity to 3 million gallons of wastewater treated per day and upgraded it to tertiary treatment for recycling the resource, the highest level of treatment available. Prior to the expansion, the facility treated 1 million gallons of water daily at a secondary level.

The recycled water produced at the plant is used for irrigation at schools, on landscapes and groves and nurseries in addition to watering the Riverside National Cemetery and General Archie Old Golf Course. The additional recycled water also reduces the need to purchase costly imported water, which travels hundreds of miles and consumes a great deal of energy to transport.

“This reliability project was a huge undertaking to benefit our community, and we’re pleased that it successfully provides up to three times more water to our customers,” said Jeff Sims, project manager and Western deputy general manager.

Sims added that the District was especially honored to receive the award since it was judged by peers throughout the state. The award is the highest honor CASA bestows on a California agency committed to innovative application of existing technology or the development of new cutting-edge technology. The award was reviewed by the CASA Awards Committee. CASA provides leadership, advocacy and information to members, legislators and the public and promotes partnerships on clean water and beneficial reuse issues that protect public health and the 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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