

Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District

Background

In March of 1919, the Beaumont Irrigation District was formed under the Wright Act of 1897. In the early 1970's, for political reasons, the district changed its name to the Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District (BCVWD). However, the district today is still the original irrigation district. The district is governed by a 5-member Board of Directors. The 1999/2000 budget is \$1,902,000. The BCVWD is debt free.

Findings

1. Following the December 6, 1999, board meeting, five senior employees resigned. Additionally, three senior supervisory employees were laid off in February 2000, due to a reorganization.
2. In February 1998, an inspection of the Upper Edgar Reservoir revealed that the 500,000-gallon water tank had not been inspected, properly maintained, or cleaned in many years. There were dead rodents, leaves, pine needles, and other debris detected. Also, there was an oily film floating on the surface of the water. Following cleaning, the inspection/cleaning team suggested that the reservoir be inspected again in 2001.
3. The Board of Directors passed a budget measure in the summer of 1999 allowing for the construction of a new 1.2 million-gallon reservoir. In December 1999, or early January 2000, the board rescinded the previous approval of the 1.2 million-gallon tank and approved a smaller 750 thousand gallon tank. A larger tank is necessary in order to allow for both growth and fire fighting within the Edgar Canyon.
4. At the present time, there are both an 8-inch and a 3-inch water line running directly under two homes within the district which is in violation of State Codes and County Ordinances. There have been breaks in the water lines in the yards of both homes. This is a potentially dangerous situation, since the water lines are over twenty years old and could break at anytime.
5. Funds have been used indiscriminately to cover obligations. There are no reserves or operating budget on the books, meaning that there is basically only a General Fund.
6. On January 15, 2000, a proposed operating budget for the year 2000, with projected income of \$2,408,000 and operating expenses of \$1,902,000, was approved.

Recommendations to:

The Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District Board of Directors

1. Conduct an independent study to ensure that the staffing level meets the district's needs.

2. Re-inspect the Upper Edgar Reservoir in February 2001.
3. Inspect all reservoirs on a five-year rotational basis, and clean if necessary, in accordance with the California Water Code.
4. Reconsider the construction of the 1.2 million-gallon reservoir in the Upper Edgar Canyon.
5. Immediately reroute the 8-inch and 3-inch water lines to comply with State Codes and County Ordinances.
6. Conduct an independent audit to establish and correct reserves applicable to different funds.