

## ***EPA's Remediation Database Web Site Streamlined***

In August 2004, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's improved Remediation and Characterization Innovative Technology (REACHIT) database was released on the Internet. It contains major upgrades to the earlier version, including new search options that streamline the process of finding characterization or remediation technologies for a particular remediation problem set. Information associated with the more than 450 technology vendors and 700 technologies in REACHIT has been thoroughly updated. New features also include: one-click searches on topics of interest to the remediation community (the "Spotlight" section), the most commonly searched technologies and contaminants, and user-created queries; faster searches for specific vendors, technology trade names, and sites with alphabetical indexes; one-click downloading of search results in a spreadsheet format; and a summary of REACHIT data in the "Information Snapshots" section.

Visit [www.epareachit.org](http://www.epareachit.org).

## ***EPA Report Backs Submetering for Conservation***

Article originally appeared in *Water Tech Online*, Sept. 8, 2004

Municipalities and policy makers seeking incentives to improve water conservation should embrace direct water billing by the apartment industry, according to a new study produced in cooperation with the EPA, 10 municipal water utilities, and two national apartment associations.

The National Multiple Family Submetering and Allocation Billing Program Study results were released recently by the National Multi Housing Council/National Apartment Association Joint Legislative Program. The study was a three-year effort to determine the potential water savings in the apartment sector if residents were required to pay for

their water consumption separately from rent. It found that billing residents for their water usage by direct metering could reduce annual water consumption by an average of 15 percent.

The research, conducted by Aquacraft of Boulder, Colorado under the direction of Dick Bennett of the East Bay (California) Municipal Utility District, found that 85 percent of apartment properties still include water in the rent, the release said. This suggests that a huge conservation potential exists if utilities use their avoided costs to provide incentives to property owners to upgrade plumbing fixtures and implement direct billing programs.

The report states that "direct metering and billing of water for apartment residents encourages water efficiency and promotes a water billing system as transparent as other utilities like gas, electricity, phone, and cable, whereby residents pay for what they use."

*The full report can be found at [www.nmhc.org/Content/ServeContent.cfm?ContentItemID=3242](http://www.nmhc.org/Content/ServeContent.cfm?ContentItemID=3242). See also [www.watertechnonline.com](http://www.watertechnonline.com).*

## ***Town Hall Studies Arizona's Water Future***

Arizona's 85th Town Hall convened in early November to discuss the state's water future. The Town Hall is an independent, nonprofit membership organization that twice yearly identifies a critical issue facing Arizona and brings together a diverse field of experts to discuss it. Outcomes of the meetings are not binding, but they do provide focus on the most critical aspects of a given issue and recommend actions. This year's meeting was attended by 177 invitees representing business and industry; municipalities; local, state, and federal agencies; academia; law firms; and non-governmental organizations.

Governor Janet Napolitano addressed the group on the first day, emphasizing the need for greater water conservation in Arizona, which she initiated by mandating

a five percent reduction in water use by all state agencies. She also outlined the creation of a "virtual water university" to consolidate and coordinate water expertise and water-related research and technology development at Arizona's three primary state universities.

The strongest recommendation in the final report of the town hall was to secure funding for the state's Department of Water Resources, which has been hamstrung by severe budget cuts in recent legislative sessions. The report also urged help for rural areas juggling growth and limited water supplies. Conservation was encouraged through a variety of means, including a recommendation to price water so as to reflect its true long-term cost.

Additional recommendations included operating the never-used Yuma Desalting Plant, protecting natural resources, resolving outstanding Indian water claims, improving seniority levels of Colorado River claims, exploring water exchanges within the state and with tribes, improved flood management, and preserving a quantity of the agricultural water supply to act as a water resource buffer during extreme droughts.

Visit [www.aztownhall.org](http://www.aztownhall.org).

## ***CALFED Legislation Passed***

From the U.S. Department of the Interior

On October 25, President Bush signed legislation authorizing \$389 million for the Water Supply Reliability and Environmental Improvement Act, popularly known as CALFED. The legislation provides federal authorization for a long-term collaborative plan for environmental restoration and enhancement of the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta estuary, and for needed improvements in California water supplies, flood control, and water quality.

The largest and most comprehensive water-management plan in the nation, CALFED is a partnership of 24 California

and federal agencies and representatives of California's environmental, urban, and agricultural communities. CALFED agencies have spent \$1 billion over the last decade to improve the ecological health of the Bay-Delta watershed by restoring and protecting habitat and enhancing the environment for fisheries and wetlands. The CALFED program includes efforts to recover species listed under the state and federal endangered species acts.

The legislation also will drive forward state and federal efforts to modernize California's water-management infrastructure. CALFED is pursuing the construction of new water storage reservoirs, groundwater storage programs, water recycling, and conservation programs. In addition, the CALFED program contains many elements to assist Southern California in reducing use of Colorado River water.

Visit [www.doi.gov](http://www.doi.gov).

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## ***Friant Dam Ruled Illegal***

*Article originally appeared in Water Tech Online, Aug. 30, 2004*

A federal judge has ruled that the U.S. government violated California law when it built the Friant Dam to divert San Joaquin River water 60 years ago, *The San Diego Union-Tribune* reported.

The decision of U.S. District Court Judge Lawrence K. Karlton could settle a 16-year-old water dispute, the paper reported. Karlton ruled in favor of environmentalists who sued the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Friant Water Users Authority in 1988 over the dam.

In the lawsuit, the Natural Resources Defense Council and other environmental groups charged that the defendants violated state law by failing to release enough water to sustain the surrounding environment and wildlife, the article said.

The San Joaquin River had supported spawning Chinook salmon and other fish

before the Bureau of Reclamation built the Friant Dam in the 1940s. The water now collects in Millerton Lake and supplies about 15,000 farmers and other water-users. As a result, this ruling will have a direct impact on those water customers, according to the report.

The Bureau of Reclamation declined to comment until its attorneys had a chance to review the judge's decision, spokesman Jeff McCracken said in the article.

The Friant Water Users Authority, which provides Friant Dam water to Fresno, Kern, Madera, Merced and Tulare counties, was "very disappointed" in the ruling, general manager Ron Jacobsma told the paper, and added that its attorneys were considering various legal options.

Visit [www.watertechonline.com](http://www.watertechonline.com).

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## ***CA Water Issues to be Handled by Environmentalist***

California state senator Sheila Kuehl of Santa Monica, "one of California's most outspoken environmentalists," according to *The Bakersfield Californian*, will chair the committee that will handle water legislation in the California Senate.

Kuehl heads the Natural Resources and Wildlife Committee, under which state water legislation will now fall, according to a November announcement by president-elect of the Senate, Don Perata, as reported in the paper. Water legislation had previously been handled by the Agriculture and Water Committee.

Environmentalists were reportedly pleased with the move, while many farmers and water officials were dismayed. The decision was viewed a slap in the face to the California Farm Bureau Federation.

Visit [www.bakersfield.com](http://www.bakersfield.com).

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## ***Nevada to Bank Water in SoCal***

In October, the boards of directors of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern

California and the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) approved an agreement that will allow Southern Nevada to store a portion of its annual Colorado River water in Southern California until it is needed. The agreement "offers a model for the type of interstate cooperation and goodwill needed to help the West cope with the sting of historic droughts along the Colorado River," said Metropolitan Chairman Philip J. Pece.

Patricia Mulroy, general manager of SNWA, said the agreement would allow the Las Vegas-area water agency to maximize the success of the extraordinary conservation effort taking place in its region by providing another option to store its river supplies until needed.

Under the agreement among Metropolitan, SNWA, the Colorado River Commission of Nevada, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), SNWA can store a portion of its Colorado River apportionment in Metropolitan's Southern California aquifer storage facilities.

In future years, SNWA can recall up to 30,000 acre-feet of water annually from the storage account. With six months' prior notice from SNWA, Metropolitan would reduce its Colorado River order to create the unused apportionment for USBR to deliver to Southern Nevada.

"This agreement will provide Southern California with additional Colorado River water in years when there is space available in our aqueduct system to take it," said Metropolitan then-Chief Executive Officer Ronald R. Gastelum. "It will also help us manage the quality of our imported water by giving us more Colorado River water supplies to blend with our water from Northern California."

*The Las Vegas Review-Journal* pointed out an additional benefit of the agreement: lower cost compared to storing water in its own groundwater replenishment system, the Southern Nevada Groundwater Bank. SNWA currently spends about \$280 per acre foot to extract water from Lake

# GOVERNMENT (continued)

Mead, treat it to drinking water standards, transfer it to the injection wells, and then inject it into the aquifer. In contrast, “there will be no costs incurred or paid to Metropolitan for banking this water for us,” Mulroy said.

Visit [www.mwdh2o.com](http://www.mwdh2o.com) and [www.snwa.com](http://www.snwa.com).

## Santa Fe County, City Reach Water Agreement

U.S. Water News Online reported in October that a “historic” agreement had been reached on a water-sharing project between Santa Fe County and the city of Santa Fe, New Mexico. Each entity will share 50 percent in the ownership of a Rio Grande water diversion project, including splitting the initial \$60 million for design and construction, and dividing the rest of the expected total \$120 million cost not covered by state or federal sources, said the report.

For the city of Santa Fe, which was forced to implement water restrictions during the drought in recent years, this project is an important move toward a regional water system.

The project calls for diverting water directly from the Rio Grande by 2008, according to U.S. Water News. Santa Fe County will be allowed to take 1,700 acre-feet per year in addition to the 500 acre-feet per year it now buys from the city. In addition, the county, in consultation with the city, will be

able to permit and drill wells within the Santa Fe basin.

Visit [www.uswaternews.com](http://www.uswaternews.com).

## NM Water Company Valued at \$11 Million

How much does a water company cost? In the community of Eldorado, near Santa Fe, New Mexico, an eight-day trial was necessary to determine the fair market value of the privately owned Eldorado Utilities Inc., reported *The [Santa Fe] New Mexican*. The publicly elected Eldorado Area Water and Sanitation District is considering taking the water company by condemnation, but cost is an issue. The company serves 2,800 customers over 30 square miles.

At the crux of the cost deliberation was whether the utility should be valued according to the cost of its separate parts – pipes, wells, reservoirs, land, water rights – or according to what the whole system would sell for in an open market, said the paper. In 2003, Eldorado Utilities was willing to sell the system to Utilities Inc., a utility conglomerate, for \$6.3 million. However, *The New Mexican* reported that when the water district offered to purchase the system for \$6.2 million early in 2004, AMREP, who built and owns the system, declined. AMREP instead argued that, according to the value of its parts, the cost should be more than \$13 million.

According to the paper, a business valuation expert testified the water system cannot be taken apart and thus must be valued as a whole system and based on market value. When compared with the sale price of other water companies in New Mexico, he said, the market value of the system is \$6.8 million.

Jurors were influenced, however, by AMREP’s argument that the utility has greater value than the \$6.8 million because it is a going concern, reported *The New Mexican*, and their final verdict of \$11 million reflected that intangible value.

In September, when this decision was made, the water district was uncertain whether it would try to proceed with the condemnation or appeal the decision, said the paper.

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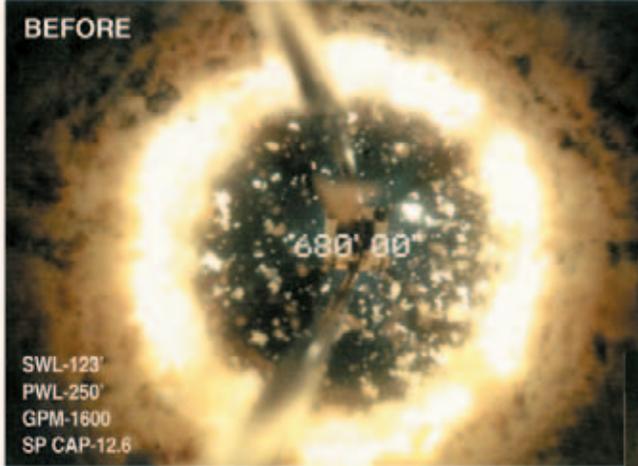
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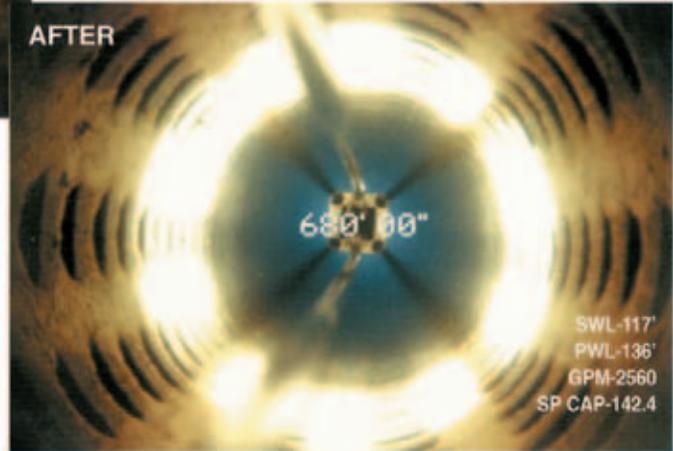


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