



Media Alert

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Reward offered in response to theft of fire hydrants, other metal equipment

RIVERSIDE, CA – June 30, 2011 – More than 60 fire hydrants, some which are super hydrants each costing more than \$1,000, as well as manhole covers and backflow devices, have been stolen just within the past several months in Western and Eastern municipal water districts' service areas. To help stop this crime, Western and Eastern have agreed to a \$500 reward (within each district) to anyone for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of individuals for vandalism or theft of fire hydrants and other metal facilities. The reward would be funded by the water agency in which the crime occurred. Water agency staff regularly provides information to scrap metal dealers, including recyclers and the Law Enforcement Joint Task Force, about water agency equipment and facility thefts.

The districts advise anyone who sees suspicious activity around a fire hydrant or other related facilities to call their local law enforcement, or 911.

Theft of fire hydrants and manhole covers, criminally punishable actions, not only endangers communities, it hampers firefighters in not being able to respond quickly to emergencies. It also presents risks to drivers.

Western and Eastern are working closely to increase scrutiny of their water systems, while cooperating with local law enforcement and other neighboring water agencies, many of which are experiencing similar thefts.

The districts are asking its customers and residents to join with us in keeping an eye on our neighborhoods to help prevent this type of costly and destructive behavior. Please report any suspicious activity to local law enforcement by calling 911. If vandalism has already occurred to facilities, please contact the water agencies directly.

To reach Western, call 951.789.5100; for Eastern, call 951.928.3777, ext. 6265.

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EMWD is the freshwater, wastewater service and recycled water provider to a 542-square mile area from Moreno Valley southward along the I-215 corridor to Temecula and eastward to Hemet and San Jacinto. Approximately 755,000 people live and work in this area. In addition to its own water customers, EMWD supplements water to six local water agencies and municipalities that have their own water departments. EMWD operates four water reclamation facilities and treats some 46 million gallons of wastewater daily. More information can be found at EMWD's website www.emwd.org.

Western provides water supply, wastewater disposal and water resource management to the public in a safe, reliable, environmentally sensitive and financially responsible manner. Securing your water supply, the District serves eight wholesale agencies and approximately 23,000 retail customers with water from the State Water Project and the Colorado River, as well as groundwater, within its 527-square mile service area that has a population of more than 850,000.