

Compiled by WWD Associate Editor Elizabeth Lisican



Amy Harroun

# storm water matters

Water management district promotes water conservation

**T**he Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) works hard to back storm water projects and always prioritizes conservation efforts. Here Senior Communications Coordinator Amy Harroun discusses the district's various efforts with WWD Associate Editor Elizabeth Lisican.

**Elizabeth Lisican:** How does SWFWMD help local governments with their storm water projects?

**Amy Harroun:** Flood protection and storm water management infrastructure projects funded by the district represent a wide variety of issues in water resource management. The district's cooperative funding program seeks to provide a 50% cost-share with local governments on projects that address flood protection issues on a watershed basis. These projects will result in the development of more than 223 million gallons per day (mgd) of reclaimed water supplies and 151 mgd of new water resources. All conservation and reclaimed water projects include education programs, which stress the value and benefits of efficient and effective water use regardless of the source.

The district also regulates new development through the Environmental Resource Permitting (ERP) program. Permitting criteria includes both water quantity and water quality elements of storm water management. The ERP Basis of Review addresses overdrainage and water conservation and states that, where practicable, systems shall be designed to maintain water tables at the highest possible level, preserve site environmental values, not waste freshwater through overdrainage, preserve site groundwater recharge characteristics and retain water on site for future use.

**Lisican:** Conservation seems to be a major priority at SWFWMD. How does the agency work to promote reuse and sustainability?

**Harroun:** Maximizing reclaimed water use is critical to meeting our mission of managing water and related natural resources. The district provides financial, educational and technical assistance as well as regulatory encouragement to develop reclaimed water systems. This includes funding the planning, design and construction of reclaimed water projects. Since 1987, the district has budgeted more than

\$327 million in matching grants for more than 300 reclaimed water projects.

The district continues to promote water conservation through its cooperative funding program by providing technical, regulatory and educational assistance to utilities. Since 1991, the district has provided a total of \$24 million in funding for 108 conservation projects. Together these projects have conserved 14.4 mgd.

**Lisican:** How does the district mitigate the detrimental impacts of wet-weather events in its communities?

**Harroun:** Emergency management, preparedness and response to a major weather-based event like a hurricane are primary concerns for the district. The district operates and maintains 81 water control structures ranging in size from major, high-hazard flood control structures capable of discharging 26,700 cu ft per second to small water conservation structures. To date, 35 of the district's structures have been instrumented to allow remote control operation to improve response time in the event of a pending hurricane or other emergency situation. All of the district's major flood control structures and the majority of the gated water control structures are remotely controllable.

**Lisican:** What sorts of challenges has SWFWMD encountered in recent years when attempting to meet its goals?

**Harroun:** As a result of declining home values and state budget cuts, the district's budget has been reduced by 60% over the past several years. This has required staff to further prioritize funding for projects and programs. Although the district will have fewer dollars available for cooperative funding and grant programs over the next several years, the district remains committed to funding projects that meet our core mission of ensuring adequate water supplies, protecting and improving water quality, preserving flood protection and restoring natural systems. **WWD**

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## American Water Receives National Awards



American Water Works Co. Inc. received 15 Directors Awards of Recognition from the

Partnership for Safe Water at this year's American Water Works Assn. Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. Company executives were acknowledged for maintaining 14 Phase III-certified plants for 10 years, as well as one first-time Phase III-certified plant.

The Partnership for Safe Water is a voluntary initiative developed by the U.S. EPA and other organizations to recognize exemplary water suppliers in the industry.

## Water Research Foundation Reviews Post-Earthquake Infrastructures

The Water Research Foundation announced that it is conducting a comprehensive review of how water infrastructures



in Japan and New Zealand performed during and after the natural disasters that recently affected both countries. Research topics include: quality of earthquake planning, reliability of water distribution following the disaster, water pipeline durability and location, and recovery time for restored water services.

The project—conducted by G&E Eng. Systems Chairman John Eidinger—is part of the foundation's Emerging Opportunities initiative, which enables workers to respond quickly to new research and challenges. Officials will issue a case study report in January 2012.

## World Demand for Membranes to Reach \$19.3 Billion in 2015



According to a study from the Cleveland-based market research firm Freedonia

Group Inc., global demand for membranes is expected to increase 9% each year, eventually reaching \$19.3 billion in 2015. The U.S. and China are projected to account for 46% of market gains during that growth period. Countries with large developing industrial bases and stressed water resources will see the fastest growth.

## Seattle Officials Commit to Cleanup of Duwamish Waterway Terminal

Under an agreement with the U.S. EPA, city and port officials in Seattle will clean up a polluted area of the Lower



Duwamish Waterway. The \$33-million settlement requires

officials to remove marine sediment and 10 acres of soil from the Terminal 117 early action area of the waterway's Superfund site. Years of industrial activity in the area have left high levels of contaminated sediment that pose a threat to public and environmental health.

Under the agreement, Seattle officials will submit plans for sediment and upland soil removal and cleanup of residential areas to be approved by the EPA. Temporary storm water systems will be replaced with permanent collection and treatment systems. The project is scheduled for completion at the end of 2012.

## Aquatech Awarded Major Desalination Project

Aquatech and the United Arab Emirates' (UAE) Federal Electricity



and Water Authority will create a 15-million-gpd seawater reverse osmosis desalination facility in Ghailiah, UAE. The plant will provide drinking water to the people of nearby Ras Al Khaima and supply seawater intake, dissolved-air flotation, ultrafiltration and post-treatment packages. The project is scheduled for completion in late 2013.

## New Report Examines Future of Biosolids Management



The Water Environment Federation (WEF) and National

Biosolids Partnership (NBP) released a 100-page report—"Charting the Future of Biosolids Management"—at a special forum organized by both parties. Content includes a recommended action plan to support sustainable solids management for public and environmental benefits.

CDM prepared the report and examined several current and future trends in regulation and policy, technology, operations and maintenance, and training for professionals in the biosolids sector. An action plan outlines tasks that WEF and NBP officials will take on to support sustainable solids management.

## Networking News

NSF Intl. Strategic Registrations Ltd. acquired AQA Intl. LLC.

Black & Veatch and Singapore International Water Week will host an event at this year's Water Leaders Summit.

TemcorConservatek of CST Industries Inc. appointed Joseph Kerner as president. **WWD**

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