



# IWA PIPELINE



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## R.I.P. E.D.

With the R.O. Plant running at full potential and with 16,000,000 gallons in storage IWA will finally be able to consider taking the Electrodialysis (E.D.) Plant out of service. The E.D. Plant costs so much more to operate than the R.O. Plant that its replacement with R.O. would actually save money. Also, R.O. will work much better than E.D. if our wells get saltier.



So it makes good sense to shut down the E.D. Plant and rely on R.O. water. But to maintain the current productive safety factor, some further R.O. capacity will be needed. Up to now we haven't had a good source of capital for such major projects.

A new source of capital funding has been suggested by recently created Lee County Regional Water Supply Authority. The Authority can issue municipal bonds, with tax-free interest, and pass the proceeds to IWA for replacement of the E.D. Plant with a new R.O. Plant. The interest is super-low, low enough to allow the establishment of a "sinking fund" which will be self-liquidating until it's spent. Such a fund will allow an orderly replacement program over the next several years.

Looking at the future it also appears that there may be a need for expansion of the R.O. facility as the Islands' population

continues to grow. There are now some 11,000 IWA units in service. Expected build-out calls for 13,000 units. But if any plant expansion is caused by growth it will be financed by charging ample connection fees and not by borrowed money.

## President's Commentary

Thomas A. Sharp



The By-Laws of IWA were modified in 1985 to define and limit the terms of office for board members. Briefly stated, a director may hold office for three consecutive, two-year terms. The Board of Directors consists of five members, the terms of three expiring in odd years and two in even years.

Mr. James Hermes completes his sixth year in April. His tenure has been unprecedented in that he served as IWA's treasurer for all six years.

Since 1985 only two others have served on the board for three consecutive, two-year terms. They were Mr. William Angst and Col. Cloyce Brooks. Incidentally, Mr. Angst was the first person in the 27 year history of IWA to serve as Chairman of the Board for four years.

The Board of Directors and the staff hereby acknowledge the loyalty and dedication of Jim Hermes who has contributed much to the growth and stability of IWA.



### Going up!

IWA has not changed its water rates since 1981 except for one small reduction. But, inflation has caused them to drift downward some 35% in constant dollars during these eleven years.

During these years we have seen the quality and quantity of our raw water sources diminish. We have also seen more legislative interest in water conservation. In fact we must submit a plan for a rate system that will encourage water conservation to the South Florida Water Management District by May of this year.

These two facts — the need to cover increasing costs of water treatment and the requirements of regulatory bodies for water saving policies — have created the need for a new rate schedule.

Our franchise agreement requires IWA to obtain approval of its rates from the Lee County Board of Commissioners. Based on months of study by a committee of IWA members IWA will ask the Commissioners for new rates averaging about 29% more than our current rates.

### New Proposed Rate Schedule

A. "Unit" charge per month — \$10.50 (now \$9.00)

B. Meter reading charge per month — \$1.50 (now \$1.00)

C. Usage charge per 1,000 gallons — \$3.00 plus an additional 60¢ per 1,000 gallons over 5,000 gallons and an additional 60¢ for each 5,000 gallon increment thereafter, up to 30,000 gallons per month. (Now \$2.50 for all.)

As you can see, if the prepared plan is okayed IWA will start charging at six different rates for different consumption levels. Users of 5,000 gallons per month will pay \$3 per 1,000 gallons; those using over 30,000 gallons will pay \$6 (see chart).

### EXAMPLES OF RATE CHANGE EFFECT

Gallons Per Month	Current Bill	Proposed Bill	Percent Increase
3,000	\$17.50	\$21.00	20
6,000	25.00	30.60	22
9,000	32.50	41.40	27
15,000	47.50	56.00	40
25,000	72.50	117.00	61
35,000	97.50	177.00	82
53,000	142.50	285.00	100

### Island Water... how much is it worth.

There is plenty of water beneath our islands. Most of it, however, is just about as salty as the open sea.

The ground under our islands is sort of like a "layer cake." It is made up of many alternating levels more or less open to the passage of water. For the past 19 years IWA has been drawing water from two thin layers of this cake.

These bountiful aquifers lie atop each other about 1/8th of a mile underground and they average about 50 feet thick. They have provided us with several billions of gallons of water which was relatively easy to treat because it contains only about a tenth the salt content of the surrounding sea. Above and below the "good" layers that we use are many aquifers containing plain old salty sea water.

Using reverse osmosis we take out about 90% of the salt from the "good" water to make it potable. We can do this, and distribute it too, for the rates at the lower end of our new proposed scales as long as we can find and use this kind of water.

But if we draw unlimited quantities from our aquifers faster than recharge is possible, we will find high salt levels entering our wells from above or below. The cost of converting this salt water to drinking water will be near \$6 per 1,000 gallons, the top end of the new rates.

So if we want unlimited water, no problem, we can have it — FOR A PRICE.

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## Unwell well!

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Well S-8 has a digestive upset. The well, which is under construction on property located near San Cap Road just east of Gulf Ridge, has been suffering from sand intrusion during drilling. Well S-8 was designed without a deep surface casing — a calculated risk.

The decision as to whether or not to use a deep surface casing is based on soil samples and other technical data balanced against additional costs of the casing. In this case it didn't work out...and you probably thought this job was easy.

The drillers have attempted to stabilize the sand with cement but without success. The only remedy is to fill the hole and move the well location. Drilling on the new well should be completed this spring. Fortunately, construction of this well was started early enough to allow for such setbacks.

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## Catch of the day

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On his days off Distribution Supervisor Bob Benner likes to go fishing...and the Shell Harbor canals are a likely spot.

So there was Bob off of Beach Road casting over some gigantic snook when he noticed a pipe on the other side of the canal with water running out of it.

Immediately Bob's fisherman side gave in to his water distributor side and he abandoned those hungry snook to investigate that gushing pipe.

It turned out to be a pool overflow and it turned out that the pool was overflowing thanks to some careless pool maintenance people. The homeowners weren't in residence so it's a lucky thing Bob was around.

So, was Bob rewarded by hooking into those gigantic snook? Nope. That gushing pipe was his only catch of the day. I call that Distributor's Luck.

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## Meet David Johnson

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David Johnson is a genuine native Floridian who has spent most of his 41 years right here in the Fort Myers area. He graduated from Fort Myers High and has had a varied career before coming to IWA.

He saw a good part of the country from the cab of a semi, operated heavy equipment, worked for the city of Fort Myers, even spent a year in the Bahamas where he first learned about sea water distillation.

David came to IWA in 1986 starting as a plant operator trainee, but it wasn't long before he skyrocketed to the top. In 1988 he became chief operator of the Reverse Osmosis Plant. He likes the challenge of the job and the people he works with.

David lives in Lehigh Acres with his wife, Mary Ann, and their three children — Jeremy, 15, Micah, 13 and finally Ashley who is just 8 months.

When he's not working you can probably find David somewhere outdoors, fishing, gardening, target shooting or just walking in the woods.

Although David hasn't put any distance between himself and the place where he grew up, he feels he's come a long way...for, as he's fond of saying, "a country boy will survive."

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## Howdy!

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We'd like to welcome Omar Alvarez to the IWA family. Omar is presently a distributor trainee. Glad to have you aboard.

## Help with bills

IWA has offered to help the City of Sanibel with some of the paperwork for its newly acquired sewer system.

It would appear that IWA's computer could handle billing for the sewer as a part of our water bills at a lower cost to the City than any other method.

IWA and City staffs are studying the possibilities.

## All aboard the last train

The final component of the Reverse Osmosis (R.O.) Plant, Train F, was put into service in January. This completes the R.O. Plant as originally designed and brings the total capacity of the plant up to nearly 4 million gallons per day. (The record usage for a single day was set last March when 4 million gallons was produced.)

Ozzie is proud of the fact that this sixth segment of the Plant was installed entirely by IWA's own personnel, instead of outside contractors. This was the first such unit built this way and it was done faster, a lot cheaper and it works fine. Attaboy guys and gals!

## More help with the bills

Are you using Automatic Bill Payment to pay your IWA bills? Lots of folks are.

It's easy — your bank pays the bills for you saving you postage and the time to make out a check and lick the envelope.

If you'd like a cleaner tongue you can stop by the office and fill out an application (bring a blank check marked "VOID") or call us and we'll send you an application.

## Stick It To Us

We've enclosed with this newsletter a new supply of self-stick address labels. Ozzie told us he has received many favorable comments from our members about these time-savers. The post office likes them too — they say it speeds up the mail service to use a printed label instead of handwriting an envelope. We're glad to be able to make so many people happy.

