



# IWA PIPELINE



SUMMER 1995

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VOLUME 18 ISSUE 2

## DO YOU WONDER WHERE THE WATER WENT?



We get quite a few questions from our members at IWA ... by far the most common of which is, "How could I possibly have used as much water as you say I have?"

The first thing that sometimes comes to mind is that maybe we made a mistake reading your meter. We're very careful reading meters, but with over 4,200 of them to read every month, mistakes do happen. But this happens infrequently and it is easy to verify and correct.

It's more difficult to explain actual high usage, which far exceeds the member's normal usage. Sometimes the cause is an undetected leak. The most elusive leak is often one in the lawn irrigation system, since it is only apparent when the system is on ... usually at night when no one sees it. To find this kind of leak, which is frequently caused by sprinkler heads broken during mowing, each zone of the system should be turned on and checked for leaks.

Sometimes, the cause of high usage is an apparently small, insignificant leak. However, a small leak for a long time becomes a large leak. A leak of just one gallon per minute amounts to over 10,000 gallons a week. A hose left running can waste 10,000 to 20,000 gallons per day. Therefore, it's important to fix leaks as quickly as possible once they are located!

Another cause of high water bills is just plain old higher water use. Sometimes we forget that Aunt Harriet, Uncle Joe and the kids visited for a couple of weeks. Extra people use extra water. Did you know that:

- The average five minute shower uses between 25 and 50 gallons of water.
- The average dishwasher uses 9-12 gallons of water, while hand washing dishes can take up to 20 gallons.
- Brushing your teeth with the faucet running can use 2-3 gallons of water per day.
- Every time you flush a toilet, it takes between 1.6 and 6 gallons of water. Newer toilets use the lower number.

So what should you do if you get a very high water bill? First give us a call and we'll check to make sure the bill is correct. If we can find no problem with the bill, we'll refer you to Dee Scrage of Project Water Works if you think the problem may be in your irrigation system. Dee can often spot the problem and she can help you get it repaired. If you suspect a problem somewhere other than your irrigation system, you'll probably need to call a plumber.

We're here to help ... give us a call!

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## ANNUAL MEETING

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Over 100 IWA members and guests attended the 1995 Annual Meeting on April 10. This year's meeting featured not only the usual business session, but also the grand opening of our new office complex and repair facility at 3651 Sanibel-Captiva Road. Everyone in attendance seemed to enjoy the first Annual Meeting ever to be held in our own facilities.

The Board bid a fond farewell to President Warren E. Deuber and Vice President Ernst W.B. Hoen, who were not eligible for re-election. Both had been members of the Board since 1989. Timothy A. Gardner was re-elected to the Board for a second two-year term, and Paul E. Garvey of Captiva and Paul R. Storves of Sanibel were elected as new members. Officers for the coming year are Robert J. Wigley, President; Mr. Storves and Mr. Garvey, Vice Presidents; Mr. Gardner, Secretary; and Harley R. Derleth, Treasurer.

In their presentations, President Deuber and General Manager Roger Blind reported on operations and administrative matters for the past year. They said that the 7.5% rate reduction last September was the year's most notable accomplishment, and it was made possible primarily through improved operating efficiency. Other 1994 accomplishments included: completion of the fire flow piping program, repair of the sub-aqueous interconnect line to Pine Island and completion of the new office and repair facility at a total cost of \$950,000, with much of the work done by IWA employees.

Total expenditures for operations and maintenance in 1994 were \$3.14 million, up by only \$120,000 over 1993. Water production was up 6.5% in 1994 over 1993, but has fallen 1.2% in 1995.

After the business meeting, refreshments were enjoyed by all, in celebration of the

opening of the new facilities. Tours of both the new facilities and the RO Plant were provided.

If you missed this year's meeting, mark your calendars for the next one, on April 8, 1996. We hope to see you there.

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## RING RING...

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If you've called us in the past few weeks, you may have noticed some changes to our telephone system. We modernized it when we moved into our new offices!

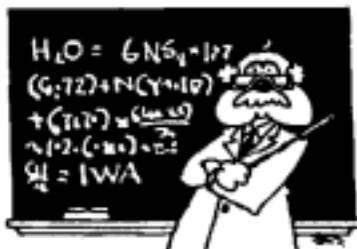
Our customer phone number is still 472-1502. If you call us at that number during working hours, your call will still be answered by our friendly employees, who will assist you. If you call this number after hours, you will get our answering service, and you can report emergencies or leave a message for us.

We also have a new phone number, 472-2113. This number is answered with a recording that will help you to direct your call. Everyone at Island Water has a personal extension. When you call 472-2113, you will then be able to dial the extension number and get transferred directly to the person you are calling. If there is no answer, you will be given the opportunity to leave a recorded message. This new number is a real time-saver for our employees, who have many other responsibilities in addition to answering the phones. People who call us seem to like this option as well. On average, over 700 people per week are already using it! This has been a great productivity booster for us. Aren't the 90's great?!

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## QUIZ

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1. How many gallons per minute of water does IWA pump to its customers, on average?  
A. 500 B. 1,000 C. 1,500 D. 2,000.
2. How many wells does IWA have?  
A. 5 B. 9 C. 14 D. 27.
3. The taste of our water is affected *least* by:  
A. Salt B. Temperature C. Hardness  
D. Chlorine
4. IWA's Backflow Prevention Program is:  
A. A good idea B. A bad idea C. Required

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## GOOD-BYES AND HELLOS

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We recently said good-bye to four long-time employees.

Plant Operators Claude "TC" Tyus and Brett Green and Lead Distribution Technician Dan McLeod left us to pursue other career paths.

Distribution Supervisor Dale Smith retired on March 31 after working for IWA since 1978. Dale was Chief Plant Operator of the former Electrodialysis Plant for many years, then served as Construction Coordinator before moving on to Distribution Department. We surprised "Cap'n Dale" with a retirement party at the Cape Coral VFW on March 25 and "roasted" him until he was "well-done." Dale and his wife, Jewell, are planning a great adventure for this summer -- a driving trip to

Alaska. Dale said he would ask us all to go along, but his van just isn't big enough, and besides, someone has to stay on Sanibel to make the water! We'll miss you Dale!!

Robert Woods of Cape Coral and Ted Brown of Lehigh joined IWA in mid-May as Plant Operator trainees. We're glad to welcome them to the IWA family.

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## IT'S SAFE TO DRINK ... BUT ...

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It seems every time you pick up a newspaper these days you read a report about "unsafe" drinking water. We believe many of these reports are misleading and lead to unnecessary concern on the part of water consumers.

The water we produce at IWA meets or exceeds all federal and state standards for drinking water. So we and all the people involved in regulating water supplies believe our water is safe to drink. We are constantly testing the water and having it tested by outside labs to be sure it remains safe.

**BUT ...** even though our water is safe as we send it to you, you can make it less safe if you're not careful. You should:

- **Never** drink from your garden hose. A vinyl hose may release harmful chemicals into the water.
- **Never** use hot tap water for cooking. Hot water may contain metal contaminants, which were dissolved from ~~your~~ plumbing system.
- **Never** connect any other water supply, such as an irrigation well, to our water line serving your house. You may contaminate your water and that of other IWA members.



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## IN YEARS PAST ...

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### **30 Years Ago (1965)**

"Securing sites (for pumping stations and tanks) is of the utmost importance," according to the minutes of the May 13, 1965 Board of Directors meeting. It seems that suitable locations were hard to find. However, on June 23, checks were issued to cover options on five parcels of land on Sanibel and one on Captiva. The Association also agreed to acquire property at 3525 Sanibel-Captiva Road (the former location of IWA's offices).

### **20 Years Ago (1975)**

At the Annual Meeting on April 14, General Manager Walter F. Emmons reported that water use in 1974 had increased 33% over 1973 to a new high of 239 million gallons. Also, new rates of \$2 per 1,000 gallons went into effect on

February 1, 1975. Twenty years later, in 1995, the first 5,000 gallons still costs only \$2.80 per 1,000 gallons, equal to an average annual increase of only 1.7%!

### **15 Years Ago (1980)**

IWA's state-of-the-art reverse osmosis plant was dedicated on Friday, May 16. Speakers included Board President Arthur Wycoff and John Maloy, Executive Director of the South Florida Water Management District. The \$3.5 million plant was capable of producing 1.2 million gallons of water per day and could be expanded to a maximum of 3.6 million gallons per day. New technology has enabled us to squeeze 4.7 million gallons per day from the plant in 1995.

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## ANSWERS TO QUIZ

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1. D. We pump an average of 2,000 gallons every minute of the year.
2. C. We have 14 wells we use regularly. We have 4 others that we could rehabilitate, if needed.
3. A. The salt content of our water is so low that it has little, if any, effect on taste.
4. A. and C. The Program is required by law and it is a good idea to ensure a safe water supply.

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