



# IWA PIPELINE



SUMMER 1994

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VOLUME 17 ISSUE 3

## Y'ALL CAME

We think our Annual Meeting on April 11 was a great success.

The meeting lasted over an hour and a half and there were more members present than in recent memory. A lot of good questions were asked from the audience and we hope we gave good answers.



Board President Warren Deuber, Treasurer Harley Derleth and General Manager Roger Blind reviewed last year's performance. 1993 was a very good year. Our 1994 operations and maintenance budget is 4% below that of 1993. Overall, our financial position remains strong and reserves are being built for anticipated future expenses.

On construction projects, we saved over \$2 million last year by doing more work with IWA forces and doing it smarter.

Looking to the future, IWA's greatest challenges will result from the ever-growing burden imposed upon us by changing environmental regulations.

Robert Wigley and Mr. Derleth were re-elected to two-year terms on the Board. Later, in a special meeting, all Board officers were re-elected to the positions they held in 1993.

If you missed this year's meeting, mark your 1995 calendar for April 10 now.

## THE END IS NEAR!!

After what seems like forever both to us and to some of our members, we are finally nearing the end of our pipe laying program. Work is almost done on East Gulf Drive and the Lighthouse end of Periwinkle. Our last project, on Causeway Road, will begin shortly.

We will have spent over \$700,000 in the last two years on this program. Over 150 members who previously did not have hydrants in their neighborhoods now have fire protection. Also, another 2,000 members will have much improved fire protection, due to increased water flows.

There are a couple of other benefits of these new pipes. We should see higher water pressure, particularly during peak use periods. Also, some commercial members on Sanibel may see lower fire insurance rates. In the case of Captiva, rates have fallen by 40 to 50% over the last 10 years, largely as a result of our bigger pipes and pumps.

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## YOU JUST KEEP YOUR WATER

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Cross connections between IWA's water system and that from members' private wells can be a very serious matter, leading to contamination of our distribution system. Other potentially dangerous cross connection situations include sewer pumping stations and even lawn sprinkling systems. Last year we had a potentially serious incident of well cross connection at a large Island resort.

Because incidents like this are a threat to the public health, we are required by law to have a Cross Connection & Backflow Prevention Program. We have just completed development of our program and have obtained approval of the regulatory agencies.

We will be implementing this program over the next 13 years. The first step, this year, is to better define where hazards exist. Over the next couple of years, we will require the installation of backflow prevention devices on new construction and existing commercial and multi-family connections. It will be several more years before we begin working on private home connections.

We'll keep you informed as we move on with this program. It will cost us all a little money, but the safety of our water supply is worth it.

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## YOU SURE ARE THIRSTY!

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The amount of water we have been making in our R.O. Plant has gone up this year, after declining for the last couple of years. We think this is probably due to the very dry weather this spring and an increase in the number of tourists.

Through the end of April we made 388 million gallons of water, 9% more than last year. On April 9 we made almost 4.5 million gallons, an all-time record.

For ideas on conserving irrigation water, see the next article written by SCCF's Dee Searge.

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## THAT DEMANDING SOD

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The dry season is about over this year, but it's still important to keep that water-demanding sod from increasing your water bill unnecessarily. What should you do?

◆ *Make it beg for water.*

DON'T water when leaf blades are open, flat, green and happy.

DO water when the blades are closed, blue/gray and thirsty.

◆ *Teach it to need less water.*

DON'T water shallowly or frequently. This teaches the roots to grow shallow.

DO apply water 3/4" at a time to make the roots grow deep.

DO install a rain switch or use a rain gauge to keep track of your "free" water.

◆ *Give it some help.*

DON'T fertilize more than 1 or 2 times a year. Potassium increases root growth while nitrogen increases top growth (more watering and mowing!).

DO apply "Retain" to increase the soil's water-holding capacity.

◆ *GET RID OF IT! Replace it with mulched beds of native plants!*

DO call Dee of Project Water Works at 472-1932 if you have any questions or need further information.

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## WE DON'T PUMP LEAD

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There has been recent news of a potentially serious problem with lead getting into water supplies from wells that use brass or bronze pumps. But there's no worry here on Sanibel and Captiva.

The bronze pumps IWA uses are manufactured by Crown Pump Corporation. Crown pumps are not mentioned as a problem in the news reports. While our pumps do have minute amounts of lead in the bronze alloy, they are considered to be "lead free," according to the national Safe Drinking Water Act.

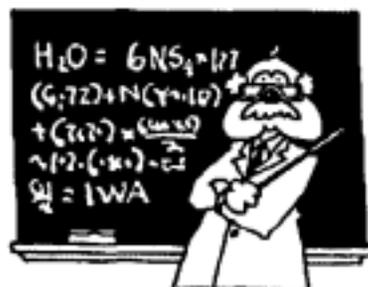
And even if a small amount of lead did enter our water at the well, the Reverse Osmosis Plant would remove it before it reaches our distribution system.

To further ease your mind, IWA submits water samples for testing every month. The Environmental Protection Agency's "danger level" for lead is 15 parts per billion. Lead in IWA water is undetectable -- less than one part per billion.

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## QUIZ

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1. IWA owns the water line up to the member's shut-off valve at the house.  
A. True B. False
2. A reverse osmosis membrane costs about \$1,400. How many of them does IWA have in our RO Plant?  
A. 50 B. 120 C. 545 D. 720

3. The water from IWA's wells would be good enough for lawn watering without treatment.  
A. True B. False

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## MEET TOM CALI

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Tom Cali is a Lead Distribution Technician in charge of the people who read your meters, replace them when they wear out and locate your water line so contractors don't break it. Tom joined IWA back in the dark ages in 1979. He won't tell us how old he is, but you can judge for yourself. Tom has a son, Ralph and a daughter, Lisa, and 2 *grandchildren* Ray, 6, and Melissa, 3.

Tom says he likes working at IWA because he enjoys working with the public and his fellow employees. Outside IWA, Tom's interests include fishing, football and bowling. Tom claims to have bowled a few 300 games. We're not sure about that. But we *are* sure he doesn't get into too much trouble ... otherwise his wife Janet, a Sanibel Police Department Detective, will correct the problem real quick.

Tom says his success at IWA is due in part to his motto of, "Treat others as you would like to be treated." We think his ability to recall where he installed and buried a valve 15 years ago probably helps also.

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## IT'S REVIEW TIME AGAIN

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Every year the IWA Board of Directors reviews the rates we charge for our water ... to make sure they're high enough but not too high. This year the review began in April and should be completed by the end of the summer.

Since we raised our rates in 1992, we've been able to save some money in unexpected ways. We've reduced the number of employees by about 8% through attrition. We've postponed a planned expansion of the R.O. Plant through the use of new membrane technology. We've used our own employees to do a lot of work we previously paid others to do.

With the savings we've made and with the extra income from the new rates, we've been able to complete important construction projects that had been delayed due to a lack of money.

Of course some costs are beyond our control. For example, the costs of some of the chemicals we use at the R.O. Plant are rising rapidly. If the currently stable cost of electricity were to rise, it would significantly increase the cost of treating our water. We are also concerned about the future costs of ever-changing environmental regulations.

We're looking closely to see if the overall effect of all these factors will allow us to adjust our rates. We'll keep you informed as we continue our review.

The Island Water Association, Inc.  
P.O. Box 509  
Sanibel FL 33957

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## ANSWERS TO QUIZ

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1. B. IWA only owns up to and including the meter, usually located at the street.
2. D. We have 6 RO Trains, each with 20 vessels containing 6 membranes each, for a total of 720.
3. B. Our water would kill grass without treatment, as is unfortunately true for many Island wells.

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## HERE COME THE STORMS!

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Well actually ... we all hope we have a totally "storm-free" hurricane season this year. But we want to assure you that your water company is prepared in the event a storm does threaten.

We are updating our emergency plans and reviewing them with the appropriate authorities to be sure we've included all the latest ideas.

In the design of our new office building, our architect, Joe St. Cyr, is making sure we can ride out a storm with 130 mph winds, as required by building codes. We're also installing a generator to make sure we can continue our essential jobs after a storm.

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