



# IWA PIPELINE



SPRING 1995

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## SAFE WATER FOR ALL

As your water utility, IWA has the responsibility to provide all our members with a safe and reliable water supply, and we have several governmental agencies looking over our shoulder to make sure we do so. One area receiving increased attention these days is cross connection control and backflow prevention. We have developed a program, which has been approved by the regulatory agencies, to protect our water distribution system from this potential source of contamination.

Contamination from cross connections is easy to understand. For example, many members have private wells for irrigation. The piping from these wells can sometimes mistakenly get connected into IWA's potable water system, resulting in contamination of not only the involved member's own water, but also that of other members.

Backflow is a little more complicated. It means just what the word says ... flow backwards into our system. Cross connections can lead to backflow if the cross-connected source is at a higher pressure than our system. This is most likely when our system is shut down for repairs, but backflow can also occur from siphonage. For example, a hose left with the nozzle laying in a puddle could result in the puddle being siphoned into our system.

There are many other potential sources of contamination. Many of them result from activities we normally do with little thought of water contamination, like applying chemicals to the lawn with a spray attachment on the hose or by placing the chemicals in a feeder on automatic sprinkler systems.

Regardless of the source of the contamination, the solution to the problem is the same ... installation of a backflow prevention device. These devices come in many sizes and types. They all work on the same principle of allowing water flow in the one correct direction only. These devices are becoming very common all over the country. Just go into any new housing development on the mainland and look for the U-shaped pipe about a foot above the front lawn with a strange looking device on it. The devices, while not a thing of beauty, can be concealed with landscaping while still allowing access for servicing.

IWA's program already requires installation of these devices on all new construction. In April this year, we will be notifying owners of single family residences with known hazards (such as wells), all multi-family residences (condominiums) and all commercial establishments of the need to install devices on their water supply lines. All commercial establishments will have until the end of 1996 to comply. Single family residences with hazards and all multi-family residences will have until the end of 1997. All other existing single family residences will not be retrofitted until sometime after the year 2000.

Installation of the devices will be the members' responsibility. Backflow prevention devices can cost from \$200 to as much as \$2,000, depending on the size required. Once the devices are installed, IWA will handle the required annual testing at no cost. Although this program will cost many of us some money, the increased safety of our potable water supply should be well worth the cost. If you want more details, call our program coordinator, Ron Leavitt, at 472-1502.

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## IN YEARS PAST ...

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### 30 Years Ago (1965)

At its meeting on April 13, Director Paul Stahlin said he believed that the Association should establish a suitable office to carry on its business. He offered the use of an office without charge to the Association for one year or until new offices are constructed.

### 26 Years Ago (1968)

The result of the 1967 audit is that IWA is in poor financial position, not because of faulty management, but due to the fact that there are too few consumers. Director Francis P. Bailey objected to the audit on the grounds that the auditor had not signed it in person, but used a mechanical signature.

### 10 Years Ago (1985)

At the 1985 Annual Meeting, the IWA Bylaws were changed to impose term limits on members of the Board of Directors. Board members will now be eligible to serve only three two-year terms.

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## 1995 ANNUAL MEETING GALA

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As announced in the previous issue of the *Pipeline*, we are planning to hold the 1995 Annual Meeting on April 10 in our new offices at 3651 Sanibel-Captiva Road. We are working hard to complete all the last minute construction details in time for the meeting. The meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. At the conclusion of the meeting, there will be light refreshments (including water) to celebrate the completion of the new offices and the 30th anniversary of our service to the Islands. Tours of the new offices will be offered. In addition, we will conduct tours of the R.O. Plant for anyone who's interested in seeing how we make your water. We hope you are able to join us for all these activities.

The Nominating Committee met on January 31 to select candidates for the three vacancies on the Board. Mr. Timothy A. Gardner, currently Board Vice President, was re-nominated for a second term. Mr. Paul Storves and Mr. Paul E. Garvey were nominated to fill vacancies which will be created when Warren Deuber and Ernst Hoen complete their last terms this year. Elections will take place at the meeting. A brief resume of the selected candidates is enclosed on a separate sheet.

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## CONGRATULATIONS!!

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Deborah Rodriguez, IWA's Membership Administrator, has been selected as Southwest Florida's Woman of the Year by the American Business Women's Association. Selection was based on career achievements, educational advancement and community involvement. Deborah will be traveling to Portland, Oregon later this year to compete for national honors. Congratulations Deborah!

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## MEET RON LEAVITT

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Ron Leavitt is a Distribution Technician and holds the highest possible State Distribution Certification license, at the "A" level. He has been with IWA for nearly nine years.

You may recognize Ron from seeing him when he makes his rounds reading meters. When he's not reading meters, he can frequently be found installing new underground pipes or repairing breaks in old ones.

Ron is also IWA's Cross Connection Control and Backflow Prevention Coordinator. He's the person you need to call if you have any questions concerning the lead article in this issue of the *Pipeline*. He is also certified in the testing of backflow prevention devices, so you might meet him testing your installation sometime in the future.

Ron lives in Leligh Acres, where he enjoys his hobbies of music, working on his cars and playing the guitar. He graduated from Fort Myers High and has called Florida home for the last 16 years. Prior to that time, he traveled to many different parts of the world with his family.

Ron says that one of the more "interesting" aspects of his work is providing directions for lost tourists. He says he sometimes doesn't even charge for the service, particularly if he hasn't a clue how to get to the requested destination.

Ron says his success at IWA results from his belief that everyone should pitch in and help whenever possible, and he certainly does his part!

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## WE'RE HERE WHEN YOU NEED US

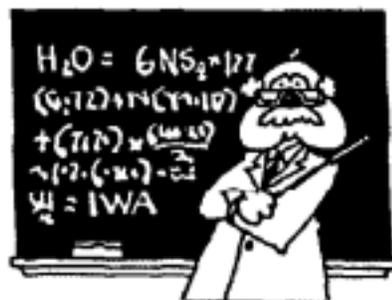
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If you need to talk with us between the hours of 8 AM and 4:30 PM on weekdays, you can always reach us on our normal business number of 472-1502. But did you know that same number will reach us 24 hours per day, 365 days per year in case of an emergency? After hours, you will be automatically connected to our answering service, which will immediately contact the appropriate employees to respond to the emergency. It will take a little longer, but "we're here when you need us!"

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## QUIZ

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1. How many years has the average employee worked for IWA?  
A. 2 B. 4 C. 6 D. 10
2. What is the average pressure of IWA's water system, in pounds per square inch?  
A. 20 B. 40 C. 60 D. 100
3. How often does IWA check the amount of chlorine in our water?  
A. Continuously B. Once a day C. Once a week
4. How much did IWA pay to renew our brine discharge permit?  
A. \$400 B. \$1,000 C. \$2,500 D. \$6,000

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## WELCOME NEW EMPLOYEES!!

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On January 9, Don DuBrasky joined IWA as our Electrical Technician. We put him right to work on our new offices, where he was last seen trying to figure-out the wiring for ceiling fans. Don is a Journeyman Electrician and resides in Fort Myers. He replaces Rick Courson, who left IWA after 12 years to go into business for himself.

On February 1, Jacque Owens, who resides on Captiva, joined us as our Purchasing Coordinator. Jacque will be replacing Elizabeth Redden, who has been with IWA for 10 years and is retiring to Ohio. Jacque will be working with Rusty Isler to make sure that all our purchases are handled efficiently and that we pay our bills on time.



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## ANSWERS TO QUIZ

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1. D. 10 Years. Our employees are about twice as experienced as those with other utilities.
2. C. Normally our water reaches our customers at around 60 psi.
3. A. The chlorine level is continuously monitored and automatically adjusted.
4. D. The permit, good for five years, was renewed in January for \$6,000. New rules propose making the same fee due every year.

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## WE'RE PROUD

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As mentioned earlier, we plan to hold our 1995 Annual Meeting in our new offices. Construction of this facility began with earthwork last April. This project is one of which all IWA employees are very proud. We believe we will have a very nice and very efficient facility when it is completed, but that isn't the real reason we're proud. We're proud because we've been able to do so much of the work ourselves.

Our Staff Engineer, Shelly Storves, used her General Contractor's license and acted as our contractor. We dealt directly with a myriad of subcontractors, thereby saving all the overhead and profits of hiring a General Contractor. We handled all the earthwork and underground piping. We've painted the entire complex, inside and out. We've done all the electrical wiring and fixtures installation. We've done a lot of miscellaneous carpentry.

Through efforts such as these, we've been able to construct the building at a price of around \$70 per square foot, compared to around \$130 for Sanibel residential construction and \$85-\$90 for office buildings nationwide. The total project price is now estimated to be around \$940,000. This price includes everything, even \$27,000 for the required removal of Brazilian Pepper trees from our entire 53 acre property ... which is already underway!