



PALMDALE WATER DISTRICT

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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DOZEN AGENCIES DISCUSS AREA'S PREPAREDNESS AT GREAT AV WATER EMERGENCY EVENT

Lancaster, CA – Representatives from numerous water agencies and vital partnering organizations gathered Wednesday at the Greater Antelope Valley Water Emergency Coalition event to discuss the area's available resources and preparedness for water disruptions due to emergencies.

The event, the first of its kind in the Greater Antelope Valley, initiated discussions about how water agencies are prepared to assist each other in emergencies; how government agencies are planning for disasters; effective emergency communication; and the role of private utilities during water interruptions.

The highlight was the keynote speech by Don Zdeba, general manager of Indian Wells Valley Water District (IWVWD), who shared his agency's experience following the 6.4 and 7.1 magnitude earthquakes in Ridgecrest in July.

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Zdeba, whose presentation was titled “Shaken, not Stirred,” told the 80-plus attendees that his district suffered between \$5 million and \$6 million damage, with subsurface leaks and discharge from a booster pump and damage to a building housing a booster. Some of the takeaways he shared include having a healthy reserve, invest in system redundancy and utilize social media with caution to communicate with residents.

“You can’t plan for everything, but you can be prepared for anything,” Zdeba said.

In staying with the emergency theme, California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services Public Information Office Bryan May served as the master of ceremonies and shared his experience responding to emergencies such as the Orville Dam crisis in 2017 and the numerous California wildfires.

The idea for the event to bring together water agencies and other critical partners in the Greater Antelope Valley to discuss how agencies can be of assistance to each other occurred after the Ridgecrest earthquakes. Being isolated from Los Angeles, the agencies will have to rely on each other and work cooperatively during disasters.

“I am so pleased that PWD was an integral part of this event,” said Palmdale Water District (PWD) Board Director Kathy Mac Laren. “Preparing for emergencies is such an important topic right now. It is great to see agencies communicating and focusing on the need to prepare.”

California Senator Scott Wilk, Assemblyman Tom Lackey and Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger attended the event and commended the agencies for the joint effort.

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They encouraged continued collaboration.

The Water Emergency Coalition was cohosted by PWD, Antelope Valley-East Kern Water District, Los Angeles County Public Works and the cities of Lancaster and Palmdale. Agencies participating in the event included IWWWD, Edwards Air Force Base, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, Littlerock Creek Irrigation District, Los Angeles County Public Works, Quartz Hill Water District, Public Water Agencies Group and Los Angeles County Office of Emergency Management. Southern California Edison and Southern California Gas Co. also were represented.

Since 1918, the Palmdale Water District has provided high-quality water at a reasonable cost. We pride ourselves on providing great customer care; advocating for local water issues that help our residents; educating the community on water-use efficiency; and leading our region in researching and implementing emerging technologies that increase operational efficiency. For more information about PWD, visit www.palmdalewater.org.

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