



# Purple Pipe

Volume XVIII Winter 2019/2020



## VVWRA Welcomes New GM

The VVWRA Board of Commissioners is pleased to announce Darron Poulsen as the agency's new General Manager. Poulsen brings 33 years of experience in the water and wastewater industry to VVWRA. His work experience has been exclusively in the Inland Empire. Most recently, he held the position of Water Resources Director for the City of Pomona. Poulsen is a licensed Grade V Water Distribution Operator and a licensed Grade II Water Treatment Operator. He completed both his Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Business Administration from the University of Redlands.



*Darron Poulsen*

"After commuting up and down the Cajon Pass for the last 33 years, working for communities on the other side of the hill, I am excited to join the VVWRA team to put my work ethic and passion for the water and wastewater industry to use in my home town communities", said Poulsen. "I look forward to working with the VVWRA Board Members, our member agencies and the VVWRA staff to collaboratively achieve the goals of the Authority and the communities we serve."

Poulsen is a long time High Desert resident who has lived in Apple Valley since 1967. He is a graduate of Apple Valley High School and Victor Valley College. He and his wife Donna have raised their three daughters in Apple Valley and recently welcomed their first grandchild. Darron is also an avid USC football fan.

## DAMS Honors VVWRA Staff at Annual Awards Banquet



*Daniel Enriquez*

VVWRA and it's staff took home five awards at the CWEA/DAMS Annual Awards Banquet in Victorville. The Desert and Mountain Section of the California Water Environment Association annually recognizes excellence in a variety of areas related to the wastewater industry. VVWRA won the Engineering Achievement Award for the Desert Knolls Wash realignment project. The project was necessary after runoff from a storm exposed a 15" sewer line in the wash in west Apple Valley. Concerned that future storms could further damage the pipe, 2600" of the sewer line was moved out of the wash. Four members of VVWRA's staff also took home awards. Asset Management Technician Daniel Enriquez was honored as Administrative/Technical Support Person of the Year. Enriquez assures that the VVWRA facilities have the parts and equipment needed to operate properly. Business Applications Manager Latif Laari won the Research Achievement Award...

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# Massive Dome Lifted Off Digester 2



The massive domed steel and concrete lid on Digester 2 was recently lifted and removed as part of a digester rehabilitation project. The lid weighs an astonishing 32,000 lbs or more than 16 tons. Digester 2 is one of the three original digesters built in the late 1970's. It has not been operation for about 10 years, but all three digesters are being refurbished with plans to run them again in 2020. A private firm will lease them to produce biogas and electricity. After examining the lid on Digester 2, it was determined that it will have to be replaced. A new steel dome will be installed in the coming months and the old lid will be demolished.



Lead mechanic Marcos Avila helps move the dome in place for inspection.

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Larry Bird / Hesperia  
 Jim Cox / Victorville  
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 Robert Lovingood/ SB CSA 42 & 46

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# Around the Plant

## Adams Named Plant Superintendent



Just over 9 years after starting at VVWRA as an unpaid intern, Brad Adams has been hired as the new Plant Superintendent. As Superintendent, he oversees day to day operations of VVWRA's three treatment plants. Brad started at VVWRA as an unpaid intern in September of 2010 and was hired on as an Operator-in-Training three months later. Over the years, he has held positions of operator, senior operator and lead operator. Brad holds a Grade V wastewater certificate, which is the highest certificate in the industry. Brad credits hard work for his success. "Don't feel entitled... you've got to work for it", said Adams.

Brad is a long time High Desert resident and graduate of Sultana High School in Hesperia. He lives in Spring Valley Lake with his wife Danielle and their 4 year old daughter Kaley. He enjoys boating and barbecuing when he's not at the plant.

## DAMS Honors VVWRA Staff cont.

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for his work in researching and providing data for the Mojave Desert AQMD on air quality issues. Electrical Instrumentation Technician Craig Taylor won the award as E & I Person of the Year. Taylor is tasked with installing and repairing electrical equipment at our facilities. Also honored at the event was E & I Intern Derek Evans.



Derek Evans

Evans took the award for Outstanding Young Professional of the Year. Evans is a U.S. Marine veteran who has been working at VVWRA for the last year learning the intricacies of electrical work at a wastewater plant. The awards winners at the DAMS banquet are now eligible for the statewide award from CWEA. Those will be presented in March of 2020.

## Henriquez New Lead



Sr. Operator Andrew Henriquez has been promoted to Lead Operator. Andrew has a Grade III wastewater certificate. He joined VVWRA two years ago after stints in Atwater, CA and Riverside. He is a Sultana High School graduate and lives in Hesperia with his wife Chelsey.



# The Back Side

## DAMS Collections Day Draws Record Crowd



A record crowd of wastewater and public works professionals turned out for the annual CWEA/DAMS Collections Day event in Hesperia. This years event touched on topics that included trenchless pipe repair, working in confined spaces and active shooter in the workplace.

### Ain't No Mountain High Enough



VVWRA Safety & Communication Officer David Wylie took time to read the latest edition of the Purple Pipe newsletter after hiking to the top of Mt. Whitney in September. Located outside of Lone Pine, CA, Mt. Whitney is the tallest mountain in the continental US at 14,505'.

### Dingle's Corner

MAN HAVE I GOT A PRESENT FOR YOU!



IT'S IN MY DIAPER!

