

Purple Pipe

Volume XXXIV Summer/Fall 2024



Staff Honored with Core Value Awards



Chuck Trammel receives the Collaboration Award from GM Darron Poulsen.



Daniel Enriquez receives the Integrity Award from GM Darron Poulsen.



Alfredo Garibay receives the Dedication Award from GM Darron Poulsen.

Three VVWRA employees were recently honored with our Core Value Awards. The awards are based on VVWRA's core values of dedication, collaboration, and integrity which are found on the bottom ring of our logo. Utility worker Chuck Trammel was given the collaboration award. Chuck is one of VVWRA's longest-serving employees having worked here for 19 years. Operator Alfredo Garibay was given the dedication award. Alfredo is one of our youngest employees joining our team shortly after graduating from Apple Valley High School. He has shown enthusiasm to learn the in's and out's of wastewater treatment and makes the effort to go the extra mile when needed. The integrity award was given to Environmental Compliance Inspector Daniel Enriquez. Daniel joined VVWRA after serving in the US Marines. He has shown incredible dedication and attention to detail which makes him a valuable employee.

VVWRA Welcomes New Director of O & M



VVWRA welcomes Kody Tompkins as our new Director of Operations and Maintenance. He will be in charge of the overall day-to-day operations of our facilities. Tompkins was previously the Assistant City Manager at the City of Barstow and brings vast experience in the wastewater field. Tompkins holds certificates as a Grade V Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator, a Grade II Water Treatment, Grade II Water Distributions, and Grade IV Collections System Maintenance from the California Water Environmental Association. He also completed the Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Specialist certificate from California State University, Sacramento. Tompkins holds a bachelor's degree in environmental management and a master's degree in organizational leadership. Tompkins was also a sergeant in the Army National Guard and served two tours in Iraq. Tompkins was raised in Barstow and lives in Victorville with his wife and son.



VWRA spreads the word about resource reuse and career opportunities

The staff at VWRA loves to share our story. It's a tale of environmental stewardship and community care. VWRA started treating wastewater in 1981, and as the Victor Valley has expanded, we've grown to meet the region's needs. Today, VWRA safely treats at least 12 million gallons of wastewater per day, along with thousands of gallons of septic tank waste and liquefied food waste. Every day, millions of gallons of clean, disinfected recycled water are returned to the Mojave River to replenish our local underground



VWRA GM Darron Poulsen speaks to community members at a Spring Valley Lake event.



Students and teachers from Mojave High School take part in a recent tour of our main treatment plant.

aquifer. In addition, methane gas from the waste treated at VWRA is converted into renewable natural gas that is injected into a major Southwest Gas pipeline. The treated solids are used as fertilizer. VWRA does all this at a cost for the average residential customer of just over a dollar per day. But as the region grows, VWRA will have to expand to meet the increasing need. That's why it's important, through tours, events, and talks, to tell our story to the community.



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VWRA Board of Commissioners

Scott Nassif - Town of Apple Valley
Larry Bird - City of Hesperia
Paul Cook - SB CSA 64 & 42
Debra Jones - City of Victorville



Around the plant

Congratulations!



Lucas Wilkens has passed his Grade III Wastewater Cert exam.



Derek Evans earned his Control Systems Technicians Associate cert



Daniel Enriquez earned his MS4 compliance inspectors cert.



Brad Doneff earned his MS4 compliance inspectors cert.

Making Moves!



Juan Alvarez has been promoted from Mechanic-in-Training to a Maintenance Mechanic



Utility Worker Sebastian Goforth is now an Operator-in-Training.



Intern Jordan Rodriguez has been hired as an Electrical Instrumentation Technician-in-Training

Welcome to VWRA



Seth Webster
Operator-in Training



Tristan Smith
Utility Worker



Shawn Coonce
Operator



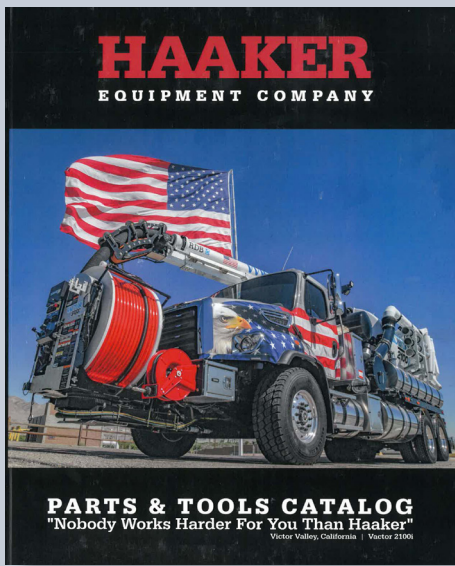
Saluting the Military Veterans on our Staff



From l-r, Kyle Regis, Marines; Andrei Davis, Marines; Earl Faust, Army; Daniel Enriquez, Marines; Eric Schweizer, Army; Derek Evans, Marines; Kody Tompkins, Army Reserve; Eugene Davis, Navy.

VVWRA salutes the military veterans on our staff and all who have served our country to preserve our freedoms. This Veterans Day (November 11th), we urge you to recognize and thank the veterans in your life.

A brief history of **Veterans Day**: It began in 1919, following World War I, and was originally proclaimed by President Woodrow Wilson as Armistice Day. On June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor American Veterans and later that year President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued the first Veterans Day Proclamation. It was made a Federal Holiday in 1968 but was celebrated on October 25th. President Gerald R. Ford signed a law in 1975 moving Veterans Day back to its original November 11th.



VVWRA's patriotic vactor truck and our giant American flag are featured on the cover of the most recent Haaker Equipment catalog. The vactor truck is used to clean pipes and equipment.



Operator-in-Training Sebastian Goforth was part of the team cleaning and replacing air diffusers in our aeration basins.



Nation-leading Regulations for Converting Wastewater to Drinking Water Go Into Effect

**The following is a press release from the California State Water Board*

Through an innovative effort that advances Gov. Gavin Newsom’s Water Supply Strategy for adapting to a hotter, drier future, California’s regulations for converting wastewater to high-quality drinking water became official on Oct. 1 – coinciding with the first day of the new water year. The regulations clear the way for water systems to invest in innovative treatment plants and processes that will recycle – and reuse – millions of gallons of wastewater daily.

The State Water Resources Control Board unanimously approved the regulations in December 2023, giving California the most advanced standards in the nation for treating wastewater to such an extent that the finished product meets or exceeds current drinking water standards. The regulations became effective Oct. 1.

Through “direct potable reuse,” water systems will be able to generate a climate-resilient water source, reduce the amount of wastewater discharged to rivers and the ocean, and add millions of gallons of recycled drinking water over time while avoiding costlier, more energy-intensive water supplies.



“The official launch of these regulations affirms California is a global leader in finding innovative solutions to build a more water-resilient future,” said E. Joaquin Esquivel, chair of the State Water Board. “Not only will direct potable reuse provide millions of Californians with greater water security; our collaboration with industry partners will have a resounding ripple effect throughout the United States and beyond.”

A panel of experts carefully examined the trove of research data on the multi-barrier treatment process that recycles wastewater into drinking water in mere hours, and it affirmed the meticulous public health protections. In the past 13 years, California has invested \$24 million to fund 34 research projects to identify knowledge gaps and confirm the feasibility of creating DPR regulations. An additional \$2 million was invested in the final phase of regulatory development to ensure that this new frontier of water resiliency is protective of public health and environmental safety.



Sampling purified recycled water at Pure Water Oceanside.

The DPR regulations build on the state’s long-standing and widespread use of indirect potable reuse technology for more than 60 years – a protocol that involves thoroughly treating wastewater and discharging it into a stream or reservoir or recharging groundwater used as a source for drinking water. Through this process, the treated wastewater is blended with the natural water source, which then goes through the standard treatment process to become drinking water.

The DPR regulations create new opportunities for the future of water management and resiliency. While no formal direct potable reuse projects could be initiated until the regulations were adopted, water agencies in Santa Clara, San Diego and the city of Los Angeles have launched pilot projects in recent years. The newly adopted regulations comply with California’s Safe Drinking Water Act, which ensures that the water delivered by public water systems in California shall, at all times, be pure, wholesome and safe to drink.

*** Note: VWRA does not have any current plans to treat recycled water to drinking water standards. But it could be considered in the future.**



Southern Safety Day



VWRA staff at Southern Safety Day; from l-r, Hillary Chavez, Jack Luiten, David Wylie, Kristi Casteel, Daniel Enriquez and Jordan Rodriguez.

VWRA staff recently attended the California Water Environment Association’s Southern Safety Day in Garden Grove. The annual event focuses specifically on safety issues common to the wastewater industry. Classes touched on topics like confined space safety, workplace violence prevention, trench safety, and how to safely and legally deal with the homeless.

Tri-state Seminar



David Wylie, Kristi Casteel, Earl Faust and Kalin Westover enjoying the Tri-state Seminar vendor fair in Las Vegas which featured hundreds of displays.

DROP IT LIKE IT'S HOT!



Annual fire extinguisher training for our staff. EC Inspector Daniel Enriquez knocks down the flames.

Looking perc-eee!



The upper pond PLC has a new look with a desert toned fence. The PLC operates valves used to feed recycled water to the upper percolation ponds.



DAMS good time in Crestline!



A large contingent of VVWRA staff attended the DAMS Ron Scriven Training and Vendor Fair in Crestline. DAMS is the Desert and Mountain Section of the California Water Environment Association (CWEA). CWEA is a statewide organization of wastewater agencies that provides training and certifications for those involved in the industry. Several VVWRA employees sit on the DAMS Board.



Training was held in the historic San Moritz Lodge adjacent to Lake Gregory.



CWEA President Gilbert Barela, CWEA COO Phil Miller, CWEA Executive Director Jenn Jones and event speaker Eric Van Cleave from Smart Cover were in attendance.



This year's event set a record with more than 140 in attendance and 26 vendor booths. This event is considered one of the best of its kind in the state.

The Back Side...

Too hot to care!



Operator Alfredo Garibay took this amazing photo of a coyote and a bobcat sharing a shady spot on a hot day at our Hesperia Subregional.

On the Road with the **Purple Pipe**



Operations Supervisor Kalin Westover takes some time to read the Purple Pipe while on a recent camping vacation. His son Aiden is intently listening while he cleans a freshly caught trout!

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CWEA

upcoming **EVENTS**

- Dec. 6th Holiday Awards Banquet-Ugly Sweater Theme Silver Lakes
- March 12th, 2025 Collections Day Apple Valley Details TBA
- Installation Lunch June, 2025