



# NAMPA & MERIDIAN IRRIGATION DISTRICT

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CHECK OUT THE DISTRICT'S WEBSITE: [www.nmid.org](http://www.nmid.org)

## *“105 Years of Irrigation in the Treasure Valley”*

### **YOUR IRRIGATION DISTRICT: A VITAL PART OF THE HISTORY OF CANYON AND ADA COUNTIES**

Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District was formed in 1904 to bring water to Idaho farmers developing the lands of Canyon and Ada Counties by creating a system of canals and storage reservoirs. Some of our water rights from the Boise River date from the late 1800's. We also have storage rights that date from the early to mid 1900's in the Arrowrock and Anderson Reservoirs. For over a century now, Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District has played a crucial role in the economy of the Treasure Valley.

### **WHO MANAGES THE DISTRICT?**

The Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District is operated by a staff of water delivery professionals under the guidance and supervision of a three-member Board of Directors.

Board of Directors meetings are scheduled to be held the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month at the District Office, 1503 1<sup>st</sup> Street South, Nampa, ID.

Directors are elected to their positions by landowners in the District. The election is held on the Tuesday following the first Monday in November. For 2009, the Director Election for Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District will be held November 3.

Precinct No. 1 votes at Horizon Elementary School, 730 North Mitchell, Boise; Precinct No. 2 votes at Meridian Middle School, 1507 West 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Meridian; and Precinct No. 3 votes at Nampa City Hall, 411 Third Street South, Nampa.

### **WHY DOESN'T MY TAX NOTICE SHOW MY NAME AS DEEDED OWNER?**

Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District requires a copy of a recorded deed in order to change the deeded owner name. It is the owner's responsibility to see the District receives a copy of the recorded deed. Do not depend on someone else to take care of this.

### **WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO PAY THE EXACT TAX AMOUNT SHOWN ON THE NOTICE BY THE DUE DATE GIVEN?**

Interest is calculated daily on delinquent taxes. The District may not be able to receipt your payment if you have missed the due date, and/or your payment is not for the exact amount. Your notice may be mailed back to you for additional fees/costs that have accrued. **Partial payments cannot be accepted.**

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON'T PAY THE IRRIGATION TAX?**

The Irrigation District levies against all lands in the district in the fall of each year. Payment of the 1<sup>st</sup> half tax is due by 20 December of the year of assessment, and payment of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half is due by 20 June of the subsequent year.

It is very important for you to understand Idaho State Law requires you to pay irrigation taxes just as you are required to pay property taxes.

If you do not pay your assessment, Idaho State Law requires the District file a lien on your property. If the costs are not paid within three years after recording the delinquency at the county, Idaho State Law 43-716 requires the treasurer of the district to issue to the District a tax deed to the property. To avoid the potential loss of title to the property through Tax Deed Sale, the landowner must pay all unpaid liens or assessments.

The purchaser of a tax deed at a Tax Deed Sale holds all rights and title that the irrigation district acquired through assessment and delinquency proceedings. Once the sale is made and a deed of sale is delivered to the purchaser, any further action is between the landowner and the purchaser, not the landowner and the irrigation district.

### **ABOUT YOUR IRRIGATION DISTRICT ASSESSMENT**

Under Idaho law, the District assesses land inside its boundaries to help pay for the operation and maintenance of the District's water storage, drainage and distribution system. Assessments for each tract of land are based upon the land's water rights. Idaho law specifies that the assessment becomes a legal obligation of the land and, therefore, a responsibility of the landowner.

The District also receives income from the hydroelectric plant at Lucky Peak Reservoir. Those funds are used to reduce the annual costs to you.

For example, the 2009 Ridenbaugh Operation & Maintenance levy is about \$7.01 per acre less than it would have been thanks to the hydropower income. A similar levy reduction is planned for the spring 2010 Project Operation and Maintenance levy.

### **BE SURE TO LET US KNOW ABOUT CHANGES**

Please notify the District in writing of any change in ownership. Make certain when paying taxes that payment is for the correct land, and please return the payment stub with your payment.

### **WHY ARE THERE SO MANY CANALS AND DITCHES IN URBAN AND SUBURBAN AREAS?**

Southern Idaho has an arid climate. Early settlers discovered that water could be diverted from rivers and streams and applied to fields to grow crops that were impossible to grow in the Treasure Valley without water. Canals and ditches were constructed to convey the water from the Boise River to the fields.

Many of the towns and cities in the Treasure Valley are growing and expanding into the areas that originally were irrigated cropland. Homes are built next to the irrigation facilities as a result of this expansion. The canals and ditches must remain to convey water to the lands which are entitled to its use, many of which are located in and adjacent to or beyond the city.

### **ARE CANALS, DITCHES AND DRAINS TO BE USED FOR RECREATION?**

**No. Canals, ditches and drains are very unsafe and no one, especially children, should play in or near them!** Most canals, ditches and drains are constructed on privately owned land. Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District is the only authorized user of the canals, ditches or drains.

### **WHO OWNS THE CANALS AND DITCHES?**

The Ridenbaugh Canal, laterals, ditches and drains are owned by Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District. In addition, a strip of land along the sides of the canal is also a part of the right-of-way established for that canal or lateral. This strip of land is used by Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District to operate and maintain the canal or lateral.

Community or delivery ditches are normally owned by the individuals or water users associations using the ditch and were created as a result of farm units being divided into multiple ownership. Normally, it is the responsibility of the landowners using these community or delivery ditches to operate and maintain them.

### **WHO OWNS THE WATER IN THE CANALS AND DITCHES?**

The water in the canal has been appropriated from the state for private use, just like the drinking water supplied by a city. Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District can assist in determining which land has a valid water right and the designated point of delivery for the water. The water right held in trust by the irrigation district is for use on the lands for which the water is designated.

### **WHY DO SOME URBAN AREAS HAVE PRESSURE IRRIGATION TO EACH LOT?**

Idaho laws let our District enter into a contract with a developer to construct a pressure urban irrigation system in new subdivisions. The system then becomes the property of the Irrigation District. We operate and maintain the system and all the water lines that bring water to the delivery valve at each individual lot.

Irrigation water can be scheduled for intermittent use 24 hours a day, 7 days a week depending upon need and supply. **By spreading the usage across a 24 hour period, the pump station and use of irrigation water will be more efficient.**

We don't operate or maintain private sprinkler systems in lawns and gardens. Boise, Caldwell, Meridian, and Nampa have ordinances that require these systems in new subdivisions. **When you purchase a new home be certain to ask about the availability of irrigation water.**

### **MAY I USE THIS WATER AT ANY TIME I WISH?**

Water provided by Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District must be obtained through the District according to the rules and regulations we have adopted. These rules require that you request in advance that water be delivered to your lands at a designated delivery point, and you may be required to use the water on a rotation schedule with other water users. Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District can provide information on laws relating to Water User's Associations.

### **IS IT TRUE THAT SOME LANDOWNERS CANNOT GET WATER BUT HAVE TO PAY IRRIGATION TAXES ANYWAY?**

Yes. Lands in the boundaries of Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District are under obligation for the expense of maintenance of dams, canals and ditches. Thus the lands are held liable for the assessments. In some cases the developer of the property has failed to provide any way for water to be delivered to the individual lots.

If the developer has failed to provide a system for distribution of water to lots within the subdivision, it is the obligation of the owners of the land in the subdivision to provide a method by which water may be delivered to their individual lots from the diversion on the canal or lateral if they wish to use the water.

### **IF I CANNOT RECEIVE WATER, IS THERE ANY METHOD TO GET OUT OF PAYING THE IRRIGATION TAXES?**

Yes. This method is commonly known as an exclusion. Contact Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District to determine whether or not an exclusion is available for the lands you own or are purchasing and, if applicable, request an exclusion petition.

### **IS THERE A METHOD TO RESTORE DELIVERY TO INDIVIDUAL LOTS?**

Yes. Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District can assist in the creation of Local Improvement Districts which allow for a pressurized urban irrigation system that, once installed properly, can be operated and maintained by the District. The cost is paid for by the user only, not all taxpayers. Reinstatement of previously excluded water rights and annexation of new lands are also viable methods to assist in restoration of delivery of irrigation water. Contact the office for more information.

### **WHY DOES THE DISTRICT CUT DOWN SOME OF THE TREES AND BRUSH ALONG THE CANALS, DITCHES OR DRAINS?**

Although the trees and brush along a canal, ditch or drain may appear to some people as aesthetically pleasing, they can present a problem for Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District. The trees and brush reduce the efficiency of the canal and a larger percentage of the water conveyed in the canal is "lost" due to the vegetation.

By controlling, but not eliminating, vegetation along the canals or drains, more water is available to irrigate the land. When trees or brush fall into a canal, ditch or drain, the blockage can cause flooding or an increase in groundwater. Removing certain trees or brush in advance helps reduce cost and danger.

### **IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS**

**Please feel free to call us during business hours with your questions. Our office is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

**Our telephone number is: 208-466-7861**

**Or visit our website at [www.nmid.org](http://www.nmid.org)**