



News Release

Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District

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NAMPA & MERIDIAN TO BEGIN FILLING CANALS APRIL 7; **OFFICIALS MONITORING IRRIGATION WATER SUPPLIES**

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Water managers with the Treasure Valley’s largest irrigation district will begin diverting water from the Boise River into the historic Ridenbaugh Canal near Barber Park at 3 a.m. on April 7 to officially launch the start of the 2014 irrigation season, the Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District announced today.

It will take roughly two weeks to completely fill the 500 miles of main and lateral canals which means water deliveries to NMID users should begin approximately April 18. NMID crews also will begin filling the main lines of pressurized irrigation systems on March 31 to check for problems, according to Greg Curtis, District Water Superintendent. The District typically delivers water until the first week of October, although last year’s dismal water supply forced NMID to halt water deliveries on September 5th.



The Ridenbaugh Canal flows through a residential area in western Ada County.

This year’s water supply outlook initially was equally grim. However, heavy snowfalls over the past few weeks have substantially improved the water supply outlook by resulting in near normal snowpack levels. Still, Curtis said the District will closely monitor this year’s water supply situation.

“While the snow pack this year in our area is much better than last, with close to normal reports coming in, the wild card is just when and how fast it will melt and run off. Anderson Ranch Reservoir holds the largest amount of our storage water and it now appears likely it will not fill this year. A few good spring storms would help a lot, but I still have my fingers crossed for normal temperatures and a little more moisture from Mother Nature,” Curtis explained.

Each year the irrigation district initially meets its need for irrigation water from natural snowmelt flowing in the Boise River. But when the river drops to certain levels, the district must then supplement its supply with water it has stored in the reservoirs.

NMID maintenance crews have been very busy this winter completing several projects that will conserve water and make the system function better. In one project, the District used 745 cubic yards of concrete to line 1,150 feet of the Ridenbaugh Canal in the Meridian area. Concrete lining of the Ridenbaugh has been going on for the past several years with 8.4 miles of the 51.5 mile long canal now completed.

NMID delivers irrigation water to approximately 69,000 acres of Treasure Valley agricultural and residential lands in Ada and Canyon Counties including pressurized irrigation for more than 15,200 residential and commercial lots including 343 residential subdivisions. 2014 marks the 110th consecutive year of water deliveries to the Treasure Valley by the irrigation district.

The beginning of the irrigation season also marks the start of what historically means a sharply increased drowning risk for children, young people, even adults.

“Irrigation canals are attractive to young people because of the flowing water. But canals are inherently dangerous and especially for children because the water is deep, very cold and fast flowing. If a child falls in, it is almost impossible for them to get out, even if they can swim,” Curtis said. NMID canals are private property so playing in a canal or along their banks is considered trespassing under Idaho law.

The District conducts annually an intensive canal safety campaign on area radio and television stations to both educate and warn the public about the dangers of going near a full irrigation canal.

For more information about the District call 466-7861. Information is also available on its Internet website: www.nmid.org.

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