

JoMarie McKenzie, Candidate for Bighorn-Desert View Water Agency

What issues of water use and District responsibility in Morongo Basin's desert environment do you believe your Water District needs to focus on in the short- and long-term?

I believe a water agency has a long-term responsibility to ensure, as much as possible, that an alternative supply be available if needed. In this particular desert environment the water supply comes from an aquifer located directly below the area in which we live. This aquifer is supplied from rainwater and snow melt that comes from the local mountains as well as what falls from the sky directly on the soil. What comes out of the septic tanks in this area also reaches the aquifer. My information shows this is the only way the aquifer is replenished. In August of this year Bighorn-Desert View Water Agency pumped water, using 6 wells, from the aquifer into tanks and from there onto its customers. The agency can also purchase water from Mojave Water Agency up to a specified amount each year.

A water storage system can help ensure a water supply is available when needed. Bighorn-Desert View Water Agency is a partner in the Ames-Reche Recharge Facility. This recharge facility is located in Pipes Wash approximately where Winters Road and Warren Vista Avenue meet. This enables recharge of up to 1,500 acre-feet per year. One agency currently uses this as its only water supply. As water demands rise and depending on what changes in the weather patterns are expected a prudent move would be to locate other possible storage locations and look for opportunities to fund it with.

In the short-term I see an opportunity for the agency to inform the customer what is happening now at the agency. Every other month a customer is reached through their water bill. The bill includes a special message section. This space could give an account of how much water was pumped out of the aquifer, which well services which area, how far down do the wells go, at what level does the well currently reach water, how are the different wells, tanks and pipes doing or their life expectancy. Our water consumption is defined in cons, but what is a con?