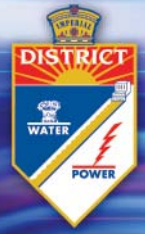


Currents

Imperial Irrigation District

Protecting the flow of progress.



News for district employees

August 14, 2009

Open communication: GM shares, learns from employees

IID General Manager Brian Brady is clearing his schedule to hear from, and share with, employees across the enterprise through a series of informal meetings. In doing so, he's said and learned a great deal.

"Help is coming," Brady told diverse employee groups attending his first few brown bag meetings. "Things may radically change within the next five years."

The GM's overall comments were buttressed by specific strategies, which he shared, intended to resolve major issues and drive the organization.

Since joining the IID in April 2008, Brady has played a major role in engineering the district's new strategic plan, a roadmap that shapes the district's future. He did, however, say he was concerned that more than half of those employees who participated in a recent survey (56 percent) indicated they knew little about the plan and its six key objectives.

A pleasant surprise was the revelation that 87 percent of employees said they were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their jobs and 84 percent indicated they are able to effectively use their abilities in those jobs.

"In 20 years of doing surveys, I've never seen anything like that," Brady said.

During the course of the meetings, the GM has done more listening than talking. In one instance, a group of water construction employees voiced concern over wage equity.

"We appreciate you taking your time," one water construction worker told Brady. "Not every boss does this. We understand you are doing the best you can in a situation that needs fixing."

During another meeting a longtime employee was thankful for *not* getting a recent raise, explaining that he felt compassion for friends and family impacted by the recession. The burden on the community to fund pay raises would just not be right, he said. This employee went on to tell the general manager: "In my 30 years here, you're making history. You are taking your time, and no one has more on his plate than you."

Water Issues

On the water side, "things can be a lot better," the GM said. The key to a brighter future here is the integrated water resource management plan that will help deal with water in times of scarcity and generate sources of income. Strategies being considered are

constructing reservoirs to store water, negotiating higher prices for transfer water and putting brackish groundwater into the Salton Sea.



The recently passed \$3-an-acre-foot water-rate increase over the next three years will help, but it's not nearly enough, Brady said. Management is working to fill a \$2 million hole in the 2009 budget by deferring and cutting what it can, "but this can't continue."

Water employees concerned about the potential for layoffs in the next budget year were told that, while he couldn't make any promises, the GM's goal is for no layoffs in 2010.

Energy Issues

Financially speaking, the Energy Department is doing well. Staff continues to save money through favorable energy purchases. At the start of the year the budget for fuel costs was \$310 million, but actual spending may fall to \$220 million.

In terms of personnel, Brady said there may be shifting in some Energy Department areas.

General Issues

Brady fielded a number of questions and concerns from employees about personnel issues, supervisory roles, employment and compensation and internal cultural issues.

The GM said he believes a flatter organization – where there are fewer middle managers – operates better. Too much management leads to micro-management, he said, calling for focused training of supervisors and managers.

He said one of his goals is to challenge supervisors. He also wants to see cooperation between sections, noting that teamwork often produces major cost savings.

Employment issues, including the screening and interview process, will be looked into, he said, and he agrees that the current performance appraisal format needs to be improved.

Next Steps

One of 11 children whose family benefitted from services provided by the United Way, Brady said he was pleased to learn that IID employees are top contributors to the Imperial and Coachella valleys' United Way drives. "I feel really good about that," he said, "and you can look for a much more robust United Way campaign this year."

See **COMMUNICATION**, back page

Employee-driven worksite wellness program continues

Developing a life of its own, the IID employee-driven worksite wellness program is taking it up a notch.

Employees are invited to attend the second presentation in the wellness series on **August 26 in the P5 training trailer at headquarters**. Presentations will be made at **11:30 a.m.** and **2:30 p.m.**

Employees are welcome to participate in a **potluck salad bar** at the 11:30 a.m. presentation. Persons desiring to contribute and take part in the potluck are asked to sign up by contacting nurse Josie Maeda at Ext. 7124 or communications specialist Bob Schettler at Ext. 7144.

In addition to the salad bar, registered dietitian Elizabeth Rothrock from the Imperial County Health Department will recap concepts of good health and explain the new food pyramid.

Throughout the wellness series employees are encouraged to voluntarily and confidentially track their weight, body fat and other health indicators, including cholesterol and blood glucose. The nurse provides cholesterol, body fat analysis, blood pressure and blood glucose testing free of charge. As standard practice, Maeda provides cholesterol testing the second Thursday of every month but she is also offering this test on the mornings the wellness work-



shops are held. Employees are encouraged to bring their results to the workshop.

As always, anyone starting a weight reduction or physical fitness program should consult their doctor.

Let's get a physical

Employees are reminded that an annual routine physical is provided through the IID benefits plan.

The following locations are available for employees and their dependents for the routine physical. These facilities have agreed to directly bill Principal for 100 percent of the claim. The maximum calendar year benefit for salaried employees is \$2,000 and \$1,000 for hourly employees.

- **Scripps Center for Executive Health**, 9850 Genessee, Suite 520, La Jolla, CA 92037; phone (858) 626-4460.
- **PHM Occupational Health Center**, 751 W. Legion Rd., Brawley, CA 92227; phone (760) 351-4800.
- **Eisenhower Occupational Health Services**, 67-780 Palm Canyon Drive, Cathedral City, CA 92234; phone (760) 928-5679.
- **Eisenhower Occupational Health Services**, 78-822 Highway 111, La Quinta, CA 92253; phone (760) 777-7703.
- **Novak Urgent Care & Family Practice**, 80-545 Highway 111, Indio, CA 92201; phone (760) 347-9221.

Did you know?

The Truepoint software the district has implemented features a blocking mechanism that prevents new water orders from past-due accounts. Recently, the district collected more than \$200,000 in past-due accounts and set up payment arrangements totaling just under \$800,000.

COMMUNICATION Continued from front page

Brady said he's often asked what he's going to do to improve employee morale and said a lot of people are "just waiting for things to happen." One's morale, he explained, is a decision, a choice. "It's your attitude. Each one of us needs to decide 'I'm improving my morale, my attitude.' And having a better attitude is going to help."

Brady said he welcomes employee suggestions. Suggestion boxes will be emptied monthly and he will review each suggestion confidentially.

REMAINING BROWN BAG MEETINGS

- Tuesday, Aug. 25 – 2:30-3:30 p.m. Valley Plaza Energy conference room A. (Note: this is a new time).
- Thursday, Aug. 27 – 12-1 p.m. Steam Plant lunch room.
- Friday, Aug. 28 – 12-1 p.m. and 1:30-2:30 p.m. La Quinta boardroom.
- Tuesday, Sept. 1 – 12-1 p.m. River Division small conference room.

Got your sticker?

All full time employees should soon be receiving a sticker that will need to be affixed to the back of their IID badge.

The sticker indicates that IID "is a state agency formed and existing for governmental purposes."

By affixing the sticker to the back of the badge,

employees will be able to show proof that the district is a governmental agency. This may help the district, when employees travel for business purposes, receive reduced rates (government rate) at hotels and training programs.

The Security, Claims and Investigations Section of the Human Resources Department is in the process of distributing the stickers to the administrative assistants in each department. The sticker is to be placed on the back of the actual badge, not the pouch. Its presence will not interfere with any access or operation of the badge.

SCI is working to distribute the stickers. For more information, contact Vanesa Torres-Flores at Ext. 7461.

"California Water Code §20570 identifies the Imperial Irrigation District as a state agency formed and existing for governmental purposes."

This card is to serve as identification of the employee, and is the property of the Imperial Irrigation District. If found, mail to Imperial Irrigation District, P. O. Box 937, Imperial, CA 92251.