



Community Water and Canal Safety Day Will Be Held At Lake Yosemite

***Prizes, information and demonstrations part of effort to promote
summer water safety***

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MERCED, CA – Merced Irrigation District is sponsoring the first ever Water and Canal Safety Day at Lake Yosemite on Sunday, May 15. The event will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. It will include a host of demonstrations and information about water and canal safety, as well as various prize giveaways. KUBB Country 96.3 will broadcast live from Lake Yosemite and provide prizes.

Among those participating are the Merced County McKee Fire Station, Merced County Sheriff's Department, the California Highway Patrol and the American Red Cross. The event is also receiving support from the Merced County Parks and Recreation Department and Costco.

“As part of our efforts to increase community awareness about the dangers of playing in or near canals, we are pleased to sponsor this event,” said MID General Manager John Sweigard. “The goal is educate and inform parents and children about the unseen dangers of what may seem like an inviting place to swim or play. We also want to help provide some basic education about safe water recreation.”

“With the warm weather upon us, we would like for park patrons to enjoy their experience at Lake Yosemite and other parks,” said Peggy Vehar, Deputy Director of Merced County Parks and Recreation. “To ensure that people are having fun in the water, we wanted to remind the public to swim in the designated areas, keep a close eye on small children and wear proper clothing in the water.”

MID maintains more than 800 miles of canals in Merced County delivering irrigation water to 2,200 growers. Irrigation canals are especially dangerous because of the fast moving, cold water combined

with steep and slippery banks. Hidden dangers are also present, such as garbage, broken glass, gates and pipes.

“These canals are a vital part of our way of life in the San Joaquin Valley” said MID’s Sweigard.

“However, it’s important to remember they were built for one reason – and one reason only: to deliver water to our community’s farmers. We are looking forward to a fun and safe day at Lake Yosemite and the opportunity to provide some basic water safety education and a reminder of the dangers posed by our Valley’s canals.”

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