



Community Water and Canal Safety Day Will Be Held At McNamara Park This Saturday

Prizes, information and more offered – first 100 kids swim free

For Immediate Release: July 30, 2012

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MERCED, CA – Merced Irrigation District will host the Second Annual Water and Canal Safety Day on Saturday afternoon at McNamara Park and swimming pool. The event will be held from 1 to 3 p.m. in conjunction with the City of Merced.

“MID has continued to urge children to remain safe and away from canals and other dangerous open waterways,” said John Sweigard, MID General Manager. “Saturday’s event will provide an excellent opportunity to spread the word about water safety and to show support for our community’s youth.”

During Water and Canal Safety Day, MID will hand out prizes and water safety information. The City of Merced will have representatives from the city Fire and Police Departments, as well as a police car and fire truck. Merced County Supervisor John Pedrozo, whose district includes McNamara Park and the pool, will be catering hotdogs.

“Summer and water-fun go hand in hand, but water safety is often overlooked,” said Merced Mayor Stan Thurston. “As one of our partners in re-opening the McNamara Pool, Merced Irrigation District is helping to keep our residents safe by hosting the event.”

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.

Earlier this summer, MID joined a community effort to re-open the McNamara pool after it was closed last year amid difficult financial times for the City of Merced. The District joined other donors and provided \$1,000 to help cover the costs of operating the pool. Additionally, MID managers donated \$600 to purchase 600 free vouchers to the pool. Those vouchers were donated to United Way of Merced County and distributed throughout the community.

On Saturday, MID will provide 100 of them to youth under age 18 wanting to swim. The pool opens at 2 p.m.

“In the San Joaquin Valley, canals and open waterways are a part of life,” said MID’s Sweigard.

“However, we must constantly remind our youth that these canals, no matter how inviting the water looks, are dangerous and never for swimming or playing.”

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