



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE MORONGO BASIN PIPELINE

Q.: What is the Morongo Basin Pipeline?

A.: The Morongo Basin Pipeline is a 69-mile underground pipeline built by the Mojave Water Agency. Construction of the pipeline started in 1991 and was completed in 1995. It brings water from the California Aqueduct in Hesperia to percolation ponds in the Hi-Desert Water District in Yucca Valley. From there the water seeps into the ground to supplement the area's natural water supply. Joining the MWA in the mid-1990s to make the pipeline a reality were the Hi-Desert Water District, the Joshua Basin Water District, the Bighorn-Desert View Water Agency, and San Bernardino County Service Area 70. Pipeline turnouts exist to serve JBWD, BDVWA, and CSA 70 as well as HDWD.

Q.: Why is it needed?

A.: The area served by the Morongo Basin Pipeline, which is part of the Mojave Desert, is experiencing overdraft. That is, more groundwater is used each year than is replaced by nature through rain and snowmelt. Local residents recognized this problem decades ago, and so they voted in 1965 to annex their area to the MWA.

Q.: Who benefits from it?

A.: Nearly 60,000 people living in the approximately 450 square miles of Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree, Landers, and Johnson Valley are benefiting from the pipeline. Before the pipeline started operating, water shortages had begun to occur, and it was estimated that the area's water supply would eventually dry up. This overdraft situation was a significant threat to quality of life, property values, and future development.

Q.: Who is paying for it?

A.: The area's residents essentially taxed themselves to build the pipeline. The bond measure was passed by nearly 80 percent in June 1990. About 75 percent of the pipeline's cost is covered by charges on the yearly property tax bill as payments to the IDM (Improvement District M) of the MWA. The other 25 percent is paid for by charges on participating retail water agencies. Only residents within the boundaries of the IDM pay the IDM property tax and the pipeline water rate charges. The IDM may purchase a portion of the total amount of water that the MWA can acquire under its state contract entitlement.

Q.: How do we know that it works?

A.: Water levels have been rising in the area served by the pipeline since the pipeline began delivering water in February 1995. Static water levels now are above 1986 levels in four of the six monitoring wells in one basin area.

Q.: How can I learn more about the Mojave Water Agency?

A.: You can visit the Mojave Water Agency Website at: www.mojavewater.org, on the Agency's Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/mojavewater>, or call (760) 946-7000 during business hours.

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