



[13846 Conference Center Drive ♦ Apple Valley, California 92307](#)

Phone (760) 946-7000 ♦ Fax (760) 240-2642 ♦ www.mojavewater.org

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Yvonne Hester at 760.946.7067 or 760.964.8982 (mobile)

MWA's President and Small Water Systems Program Wins Awards at SB Water Conference

Apple Valley, CA—The Mojave Water Agency's (MWA) Board President Beverly Lowry and its Small Water Systems Assistance Program received awards of excellence at the 10th annual San Bernardino County Water Conference on August 12th in Ontario.

Lowry, who has served with MWA for nearly 30 years, received the Elected Official H2O award for her service. During Lowry's tenure she helped lead the Agency through the adjudication of the Mojave River Basin that set water rights through the courts to ensure a sustainable water supply. During her service, the Agency constructed the 71-mile Morongo Basin Pipeline and the 76-mile Mojave River Pipeline, as well as the Regional Recharge and Recovery Project that uses water from the State Water Project to replenish groundwater supplies.

"It's really wonderful to be a part of something special that affects people's lives," said Lowry. "Without water our communities cannot survive. It hasn't always been easy pushing progress forward, but it has been rewarding."

The longtime MWA Board Member is a Barstow resident, and has served a total of 31 years with the water agency, and has been selected by her board peers to lead as President in 1993, from 1996 through 1999, and from 2014 to present.

She began public service in 1971 as a member of the Barstow Heights Community Services District, and has held a number of positions in public service including: District Representative for State Senator Walter Stiern, Field Representative for San Bernardino County Supervisors John Joyner, Kathy Davis, and James Ramos, as well as service on the San Bernardino County Flood Control Advisory Committee Zone 4, and the Caltrans Advisory Committee for the Improvement of Highway 58.

Additionally, MWA received the Water Innovator of the Year Award for its Small Water Systems Assistance Program that gives disadvantaged communities a helping hand. This is the third award for the local program. It has also received the Clair A. Hill Award of Excellence from the Association of California Water Agencies and the award of “Excellence in Support of Small Disadvantaged Communities” from the California Rural Water Association.

The program, funded by MWA and state grants is executed by California Rural Water Association. “This dynamic partnership between MWA and Cal Rural Water is helping our region optimize its water assets by strengthening our small water systems,” said Kirby Brill, MWA General Manager.

The program is led by MWA’s Matt Howard, Water Resources Manager. The team includes Dustin Hardwick and Richard Selby both with CRWA, Lance Eckhart, MWA Director of Basin Management and Resource Planning, as well as members of the regional Technical Advisory Committee, with exceptional work of the volunteers of Small Water Systems/Disadvantaged Community sub-committee that helped guide the project.

This program provides resources for disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged small water systems that lack staff, expertise, and funding to meet water quality standards, and ensure water reliability. Assistance includes performing leak detection audits, rate studies, conservation plans, grant assistance, and free workshops.

Among the program’s key achievements to date is the award of a \$468,000 State Water Resources Control Board grant to Gordon Acres Mutual Water Company in Lucerne Valley that serves 44 connections. The grant will fund planning for a small water system that will address insufficient delivery, water outages, and water quality issues.

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The MWA service area spans 4,900 square miles and includes 40 small systems of which 65 percent meet the criteria of disadvantaged communities. More than half of the small systems qualify as disadvantaged communities with a median household income (MHI) of \$49,191, and more than a quarter of the total small water systems are considered severely disadvantaged with a median household income of less than \$36,893.