OAKDALE IRRIGATION DISTRICT
NEWSLETTER

FALL/WINTER 2026 ISSUE

OID IS NOW ACCEPTING SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS!

The Oakdale Irrigation District (OID) is now accepting scholarship applications from high school seniors for the 2026-2027 school year. To be eligible, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Reside within OID's service boundaries;
- Plan to pursue a degree in an agriculture-related field;
- Be accepted as a full-time student at an accredited college, university, or vocational trade school for the Fall 2027 semester; and
- Have a minimum 3.0 GPA.

Established in 2004, the OID Scholarship Program supports high school seniors in pursuing higher education and future careers in agriculture. Since its inception, the program has awarded 57 scholarships to students pursuing agriculture-related fields of study.

Agriculture offers career opportunities far beyond farming and ranching. An agriculture-related degree can open doors to a wide range of professions, including animal science, agricultural law and policy, agricultural finance, education, engineering, consulting, horticulture, and environmental sciences. Skilled trades, such as welding, mechanics, and equipment maintenance, are also essential to the agricultural industry, helping keep farm equipment, irrigation systems, and other operations running efficiently.

Whether pursuing a college degree or specialized technical training, students can find many ways to build a rewarding career while supporting agriculture and the communities that depend on it.

Applications will be accepted through January 28, 2027, at 5:00 p.m.

Scan the QR code below to learn more about the scholarship program and application requirements!

SCAN HERE



SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT ACT (SGMA) UPDATES

Eastern San Joaquin Basin:
The Eastern San Joaquin Ground Water Authority (ESJGWA) submitted (January 2025) their five-year update to the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) for consideration of approval. DWR had two years to review the GSP update, and recently responded with several questions that need to be addressed before their approval of the plan update. Two of the biggest ongoing efforts are creating and implementing a dry well mitigation plan as well as a demand management plan. The mitigation plan is complete, and work continues at a furious pace to meet the ESJGWA's commitment to DWR to have the demand management plan in place by January 2027.

Stanislaus & Tuolumne Rivers Groundwater Basin Association:
The Stanislaus & Tuolumne Rivers Groundwater Basin Association Groundwater Sustainability Agency (STRGBA GSA) has also been busy working on their five-year Periodic Evaluation and GSP amendment submittals for DWR approval in January 2027. Much like the ESJGWA, the STRGBA GSA has also been working on the dry well mitigation plan and the Ground Water Use Management Plan (GWUMP). The well mitigation plan is complete and is being implemented. Stanislaus County is working with their consultants to create an action plan for demand reduction in the Non-District East (NDE) management area as required by GWUMP. The draft action plan is anticipated to be submitted to STRGBA GSA in November of this year. Initial implementation of the action plan, in the NDE management area, will begin in January 2027. The GWUMP is anticipated to be revisited and possibly revised every five years as information becomes available.

All of these efforts are required to maintain local control of our groundwater resources in both the Eastern San Joaquin and Modesto groundwater subbasins.

OFFICE HOLIDAY CLOSURES:

VETERANS DAY:
NOVEMBER 11TH

THANKSGIVING:
NOVEMBER 25TH - 27TH

CHRISTMAS:
DECEMBER 23RD - 25TH

NEW YEAR'S:
JANUARY 1ST

PREPARING FOR THE 2027 IRRIGATION SEASON

With the 2026 irrigation season behind us, it is an ideal time for landowners to inspect their properties, complete routine maintenance, and prepare for winter weather and the upcoming 2027 irrigation season. Taking care of drainage, private irrigation systems, and property berms now can help improve irrigation efficiency, reduce the risk of flooding, and prevent avoidable issues when water deliveries resume.

Before the Rain Comes:
Before winter storms arrive, landowners should inspect drainage features throughout their properties to help ensure water can flow freely. This includes clearing obstructions from drains, checking pipe culverts for blockages or restrictions, and ensuring open drainage ditches are in good condition and free of excessive vegetation.

Although Oakdale Irrigation District (OID) works to manage water within its system, its facilities are designed for irrigation water delivery, not stormwater management. Heavy rainfall can overwhelm drainage capacity, particularly when nearby rivers and creeks are running high, increasing the risk of water backing up and localized flooding. Landowners can help reduce drainage issues by keeping private drains, culverts, and ditches clear of obstructions.

It is important to remember that landowners must not trench through an OID ditch bank to drain water off their property. Cutting into a ditch bank can compromise the integrity of the facility, cause damage, and create unintended water releases. Landowners with drainage concerns should contact OID to discuss appropriate solutions rather than altering District facilities.

Preparing Your Irrigation System for 2027:
The non-irrigation season is also a good time to make repairs and improvements before water deliveries resume.

Landowners should inspect and maintain their private irrigation systems, including the following:

- Repair and maintain berms and levees – Burrowing animals and livestock can damage berms over time. Rework them as needed to contain water on your property, be a good neighbor, and improve irrigation efficiency.

- Landowners experiencing ground squirrel problems may consider utilizing the services of a squirrel abatement company. The following are just a few local vendors that provide such services:

  - Caddyshack Rodent Service: (209) 564-8207 | caddyshackrodent.com
  - Smokin' Burrow: (209) 303-5102 (Northern Territory) | smokinburrow.com

- Repair or replace broken valves – Addressing damaged or malfunctioning valves now can help prevent operational issues during the irrigation season.

- Repair leaking pipelines and ditches – Inspect private pipelines and open ditches for leaks or damage and make necessary repairs before irrigation begins.

Landowners planning major changes to their private irrigation systems should submit an irrigation design plan to OID for review before beginning work. If proposed changes will require a different flow rate or a change in irrigation hours, contact the District in advance to discuss the request.

Depending on the property's location and system capacity, OID may have limitations on its ability to accommodate changes. Early communication allows the District and landowner to discuss available options before significant work or expenses are incurred.

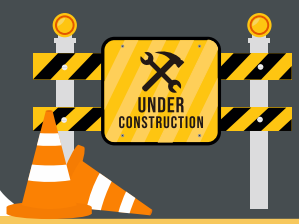
Maintain Access to OID Facilities:
For properties with OID facilities running through them, landowners should be familiar with any District easements and ensure these areas remain clear of unpermitted encroachments. Maintaining access to OID facilities is essential year-round for water delivery, routine maintenance, replacement and emergency repairs.

This includes trimming trees and vegetation that overhang District easements and keeping items such as bee boxes and other obstructions out of these areas. Keeping easements accessible helps District staff safely and efficiently maintain the system when needed.
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Landowners are also encouraged to report any known problems with OID facilities to the District as soon as possible. Early notification helps staff evaluate issues and schedule necessary maintenance or repairs

A Little Maintenance Goes a Long Way:
Taking time during the non-irrigation season to inspect your property, address drainage concerns, and maintain private irrigation infrastructure can help prevent problems and support a more efficient irrigation season in 2027.

Working together to maintain private systems and protect access to District facilities benefits individual landowners and the broader irrigation community.

CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE: KEEPING OID RUNNING YEAR-ROUND



Ever wonder what happens behind the scenes to keep OID's water delivery system operating smoothly? While irrigation season may end, the Construction & Maintenance (C&M) Department stays busy year-round completing projects, repairing and maintaining infrastructure and facilities, and addressing work orders. When irrigation season ends, Distribution System Operators (DSOs) join the C&M team to support these ongoing efforts.

Here's a look at some of the team's accomplishments:

- 2,078 Work orders completed from September 2023 through September 2026
- 120 Capital projects completed in the past 24 months
- 43 Headgates replaced with 17 more scheduled in the 2026-2027 fiscal year
- 197 Work orders completed for tree maintenance and pest control
- 146 Canal repairs completed
- 114 Canal and drain cleanings completed

These accomplishments reflect the dedication of OID staff working year-round to maintain District infrastructure, prepare for future irrigation seasons, and keep water flowing to the landowners we serve!