

MEDIA ALERT



LITTLEROCK RECREATION AREA TO REOPEN WITH RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF OUTSIDE WATERCRAFT TO PROTECT WATERS FROM QUAGGA MUSSELS

The Quagga Mussel is a Destructive Aquatic Species that Infests and Destroys Water Systems

PALMDALE, CA, October 8, 2009 – Palmdale Water District announced that it will work with the US Forest Service and the California Department of Fish and Game to protect the waters of the Littlerock Reservoir recreation area, which is scheduled to reopen this Friday, October 9th, after closure due to the “station fire”. In an effort to protect water quality for Palmdale Water District customers and to reduce future operating costs, a temporary ban on the use of **ALL** outside watercraft will be in effect until further notice. The District has been working with the United States Forest service to protect the waters of Littlerock Reservoir, a local water source for the District, against Quagga / Zebra Mussel infestation. Under the direction of the California Department of Fish and Game, the District is regularly performing tests at both Palmdale Lake and Littlerock Dam to look for the destructive and invasive Quagga and Zebra mussels. To date, none have been detected. The District’s water quality staff also placed artificial substrate (Quagga Condo) at the floating dock at Littlerock Reservoir. The substrate is checked each month for indications of any sign of these mussels. Although the District does not control recreation at Littlerock Reservoir, PWD has been working closely with the U.S. Forest Service staff to control contact with boats that could contaminate the lake. This ban will be in effect until such time as an inspection program can be developed and implemented at Littlerock Reservoir. This is not a ban on fishing at Littlerock reservoir and rental boats are still available at the recreation area. For more information about Quagga / Zebra mussels, please visit the California Department of Fish and Game website at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/invasives/quaggamusssel/>. Informational pamphlets are also available at the Littlerock Dam Grill located within the recreation area.

More Information Related to the Quagga Mussel

Quagga and zebra mussels are native to Eastern Europe and are prolific in the Black and Caspian seas. Zebra mussels were first discovered in the Great Lakes in 1988 and the Quagga mussels were discovered in 1989, since that time they have caused millions of dollars of damage to water infrastructure. It is suspected that the mussels arrived in the United States by way of ship ballast water. January 6 of 2007 the mussels were found in Lake Mead and have since spread to over 20 lakes in Nevada and Southern California. In January of 2008 zebra mussels were discovered in San Justo Reservoir in San Benito County and that recreation area and lake have been closed to public use since that time and is still closed today. A single female can produce up to 1,000,000 larvae in a single breeding season. The mussels filter out nutrients and deplete oxygen from the water thereby destroying the natural ecology of water bodies. The mussels also filter out and ingest botulinum bacteria without any harm to the mussels themselves but any fish or birds that ingest the mussels die of botulism poisoning, this also presents a risk to human exposure.

About Palmdale Water District

The Palmdale Water District has grown from an agency providing irrigation water for 60 customers, to an agency providing domestic water to the thriving community we know today. Founded as an Irrigation District supplying water mainly to farms for agricultural use, the District's boundaries have expanded with Palmdale's rapid population growth and the District has shifted to providing predominantly municipal and industrial water. The Palmdale Water District is currently divided into five divisions covering areas in East and South Palmdale. The Palmdale Water District remains dedicated to providing clean, pure water; state of the art facilities to meet current and future needs; attentive staff committed to customer satisfaction; treatment and testing to ensure high quality water; education on water conservation and safety; and reliable supply and resourceful planning insuring customer satisfaction and continued reasonable rates. The Palmdale Water District can be reached by calling (661) 947-4111. The Palmdale Water District is located at 2029 E Avenue Q in Palmdale, California.

Palmdale Water District Board Members:

Division 1 Jeff Storm - President

Division 2 Dick Wells - Treasurer

Division 3 Linda Godin - Secretary

Division 4 Raul Figueroa - Director

Division 5 David Gomez - Vice President

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