



# PALMDALE WATER DISTRICT

2029 East Avenue Q • Palmdale, California 93550 • Telephone (661) 947-4111  
Fax (661) 947-8604  
[www.palmdalewater.org](http://www.palmdalewater.org)

## Board of Directors

ROBERT E. ALVARADO  
Division 1

GORDON G. DEXTER  
Division 2

GLORIA DIZMANG  
Division 3

KATHY MAC LAREN  
Division 4

STEVE R. CORDOVA  
Division 5

LAGERLOF, SENEAL, GOSNEY & KRUSE LLP  
Attorneys



April 5, 2012

*Agenda for a Meeting  
of the Outreach Committee of the Palmdale Water District  
Committee Members: Gloria Dizmang-Chair, Robert Alvarado  
to be held at the District's office at 2029 East Avenue Q, Palmdale  
Monday, April 9, 2012  
3:00 p.m.*

NOTE: To comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, to participate in any Board meeting please contact Dawn Deans at 661-947-4111 x103 at least 48 hours prior to a Board meeting to inform us of your needs and to determine if accommodation is feasible.

Agenda item materials, as well as materials related to agenda items submitted after distribution of the agenda packets, are available for public review at the District's office located at 2029 East Avenue Q, Palmdale. Please call Dawn Deans at 661-947-4111 x103 for public review of materials.

PUBLIC COMMENT GUIDELINES: The prescribed time limit per speaker is three-minutes. Please refrain from public displays or outbursts such as unsolicited applause, comments, or cheering. Any disruptive activities that substantially interfere with the ability of the District to carry out its meeting will not be permitted and offenders will be requested to leave the meeting.

Each item on the agenda shall be deemed to include any appropriate motion, resolution, or ordinance to take action on any item.

- 1) Roll Call.
- 2) Adoption of Agenda.
- 3) Public Comments.
- 4) Action Items: (The public shall have an opportunity to comment on any action item as each item is considered by the Committee prior to action being taken.)
  - 4.1) Consideration and possible action on approval of minutes of meeting held March 5, 2012.

*Providing high quality water to our current and future customers at a reasonable cost.*



- 4.2) Discussion and possible action on plan to enhance the District's web site and social media presence. (Information Technology Manager Stanton)
- 4.3) Discussion of distribution of press releases. (General Manager LaMoreaux)
- 4.4) Discussion of community presentations. (General Manager LaMoreaux)
- 4.5) Discussion of content for May issue of Water News. (Water Conservation Supervisor Roberts)
- 4.6) Discussion of the Palmdale Water District hosting a Water Awareness Fair. (General Manager LaMoreaux/Water Conservation Supervisor Roberts)
- 4.7) Discussion of a policy for requesting District speakers and presentations. (General Manager LaMoreaux)
- 4.8) Discussion of a policy for Board submittal of content and articles for the District's social media sites and publications. (General Manager LaMoreaux)
- 5) Information Items.
  - 5.1) Update on landscape workshops. (Water Conservation Supervisor Roberts)
- 6) Board members' requests for future agenda items.
- 7) Adjournment.



DENNIS D. LaMOREAUX,  
General Manager

DDL/dd



# PALMDALE WATER DISTRICT

## BOARD MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** April 4, 2012 April 9, 2012  
**TO:** OUTREACH COMMITTEE Outreach Committee Meeting  
**FROM:** Mr. Jim Stanton, Information Technology Manager  
**VIA:** Mr. Dennis D. LaMoreaux, General Manager  
**RE:** *AGENDA ITEM NO. 4.2 – DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO  
ENHANCE THE DISTRICT'S WEB SITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA  
PRESENCE.*

---

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends that the District's web site and social media presence be revised and expanded to include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other social media avenues as these public relations tools allow the District to control content, specifically target its audience, and to control the frequency of information to our customers. These campaigns will also help increase and drive the use of customer account features on the District's web site, help gain public support for important District issues such as water rates, future water supplies, and infrastructure improvements, and will promote and maintain a positive public image for the District. It is further recommended that, at a minimum, social media include the following content:

- ❖ Contests/Promotions
  - Like our page and win a prize (could partner with local nursery for plant or gift card)
  - Partner with a nursery for coupons for free plants
- ❖ Develop and post videos – 1-1/2 to 2 minutes in length on Facebook-post longer versions on District web site, youtube, and host in the lobby– videos could be developed in both English and Spanish
  - Water main crew work
  - How to understand your water bill
  - Where is your meter
  - Steps to pay your water bill on line
  - How to sign up for water service 'on' line so you don't have to stand 'in' line
  - Understanding your Consumer Confidence Report
  - The history of PWD
  - How to sign up for rebate programs (separate video for each program)
- ❖ Develop virtual tours
  - Water treatment plant
  - Littlerock Dam



OUTREACH COMMITTEE  
PALMDALE WATER DISTRICT

VIA: Mr. Dennis D. LaMoreaux, General Manager

April 3, 2012

- ❖ Post before and after pictures (show where funds were spent)
  - Littlerock Dam rehab
  - Water treatment renovations (all)
  - Water Main replacements
- ❖ Ask for public opinion – “Tell us what you think” or create topical surveys
- ❖ What division am I in? Who is my Director?
  - Create a custom tab on Facebook for each of the division maps
  - List general boundaries
- ❖ Frequently asked questions
- ❖ Help the public navigate our agency
  - Contact information for departments
- ❖ Show PWD’s involvement in the community
- ❖ Write articles and/or use individual articles from Water News
  - Break up long articles into multiple parts
  - Guest posts for articles – someone writes for us and we write for them
- ❖ Develop live chats
- ❖ Use humor or other methods to engage the public
- ❖ Ads can also be placed on Facebook which are specific and targeted to our customers.
- ❖ Create a blog – a blog can create a more positive image for PWD in search engines
- ❖ Water levels
- ❖ State Water Project allocation

It is further recommended that an e-newsletter be developed with advertising space sold to help with the cost of publishing the current form of Water News and that the existing Community and Government Affairs Coordinator job description be revised to include social media coverage with these revisions presented to the Personnel Committee for consideration.

**Alternative Options:**

The alternative option is for the District’s social media presence to remain as is with Facebook postings of press releases, water conservation tips, and Board and Committee agendas performed by the Administrative Assistant and Executive Assistant. The Information Technology Assistant and I would continue performing the technical aspects. Water terms with simple definitions and one sentence postings on a single topic could possibly be developed.

**Impact of Taking No Action:**

Facebook postings will remain as is.

**Background/Updates:**

Outreach to the Palmdale Water District’s customers has included news releases, Water News, presentations to community groups, and advertising on local radio, cable, and newspaper, and public relations efforts have had a relatively narrow scope focusing mainly on conservation. While conservation is important to the District and to preserving future water resources, there are many other aspects to the operations of the District that the public is simply not aware of.



April 3, 2012

Enhancing the District's web site was the first step to enhancing the District's electronic media presence. When the old web site was taken down, the District had less than 1,500 customers signed up for online access. Today, the District has 8,363 active online customers. Of those, 2,865 have elected to go paperless with their water bills and 890 have elected to use the District's Auto-pay feature.

As discussed at the last Outreach Committee meeting, electronic media use is a huge source of communication for the general public and is growing daily; however, the District's social media presence is severely lacking. Staff believes the District can take the lead among public agencies in its Facebook/Social Media efforts as it has in other areas such as energy efficiency and water quality.

The following are updates on recommendations from the last Outreach Committee meeting:

- ❖ The Google translation toolbar has been added to the District's web site.
- ❖ The mobile version of the District's web site for mobile phone users is currently being developed by the District's contracted web site developer and status reports on the progress will be provided to the Committee.
- ❖ A mobile phone app can be developed. If the Committee wishes to go in this direction, IT staff will evaluate industry leading mobile application developers to determine who can provide the best product, at the best price, for the District. Initial conversations with developers indicate a simple app can be developed for a relatively small investment whereas larger, more complex apps can range up to \$25,000. It all depends on the direction the District wishes to take.

**Strategic Plan Element:**

This work is part of meeting the District's Core Value of Stakeholder Trust in the District's Strategic Plan.

**Budget:**

The cost for implementing these recommendations would be the cost to fill the vacant Community and Government Affairs Coordinator position.

**Supporting Documents:**

- List of several organizations and who monitors social media/public relations
- Social Media use articles



<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORED BY:</b>
<b>Palmdale Water District</b>	Staff – I.T. Manager; I.T. Technician; Executive Assistant, Administrative Assistant
<b>City of Lancaster</b>	Communications Division – staff of 2
<b>Castaic Lake Water Agency</b>	Staff – Administrative Analyst (2); Water Conservation Coordinator; Web Developer; consultant
<b>ACWA</b>	Communications Department – staff of 12
<b>Metropolitan Water District of Southern California</b>	Community Relations Department – External Affairs Group
<b>Los Angeles County Department of Public Works</b>	Information not found
<b>Waste Management</b>	Communications Department
<b>Southern California Edison Company</b>	Communications, External Relations, Public Affairs Departments
<b>Southern California Gas Company</b>	Public Information, External Affairs Departments
<b>Irvine Ranch Water District</b>	Communications Department – staff of 8
<b>City of Palmdale</b>	Communications Department

3/1/12





## Older Adults and Social Media

Aug 27, 2010

While social media use has grown dramatically across all age groups, older users have been especially enthusiastic over the past year about embracing new networking tools. Social networking use among internet users ages 50 and older nearly doubled—from 22% in April 2009 to 42% in May 2010.

- Between April 2009 and May 2010, social networking use among internet users ages 50-64 grew by 88%--from 25% to 47%.
- During the same period, use among those ages 65 and older grew 100%--from 13% to 26%.
- By comparison, social networking use among users ages 18-29 grew by 13%—from 76% to 86%.

“Young adults continue to be the heaviest users of social media, but their growth pales in comparison with recent gains made by older users,” explains Mary Madden, Senior Research Specialist and author of the report. “Email is still the primary way that older users maintain contact with friends, families and colleagues, but many older users now rely on social network platforms to help manage their daily communications.”

Read the full report, [Older Adults and Social Media](#) on the Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project Web site.

[See All Reports In Demographics](#)

### More Work in Computers and the Internet

- [Education](#)
- [E-Gov and E-Policy](#)
- [Family, Friends and Community](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Internet Evolution](#)
- [Major News Events](#)
- [Online Activities and Pursuits](#)
- [Public Policy](#)
- [Technology and Media Use](#)
- [Work](#)

### Pew Related Areas Of Work

- [Computers and the Internet / Online Activities and Pursuits](#)





## Who Tweets?

Dec 09, 2010

Eight percent of the American adults who use the internet are Twitter users. It is an online activity that is particularly popular with young adults, minorities, and those who live in cities.

This is the first-ever survey reading from the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project that exclusively examines Twitter users. In previous surveys, the Pew Internet Project had asked internet users whether they "used Twitter or another service to share updates about yourself or to see updates about others?"

Here is a little background on our reasoning for focusing just on Twitter in this more recent survey. The message service Twitter launched on July 15, 2006 now claims tens of millions of users worldwide. It is one of the most popular online activities among tech enthusiasts and has become a widely used tool among analysts to study the conversations and interests of users, buzz about news, products or services, and announcements by commercial, non-profit, and government organizations. For instance, it is an important component of the analytical work by our colleagues at the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism in its New Media Index, which assesses the most prominent topics discussed in social media every week.

Read the full report, [Who Tweets?](#) on the Pew Research Center Web site.

[See All Reports In Demographics](#)

### More Work in Computers and the Internet

- [Education](#)
- [E-Gov and E-Policy](#)
- [Family, Friends and Community](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Internet Evolution](#)
- [Major News Events](#)
- [Online Activities and Pursuits](#)
- [Public Policy](#)
- [Technology and Media Use](#)
- [Work](#)

### Pew Related Areas Of Work

- [Computers and the Internet / Online Activities and Pursuits](#)





## Global Publics Embrace Social Networking

Dec 16, 2010

Although still a relatively young technology, social networking is already a global phenomenon. In regions around the world -- and in countries with varying levels of economic development -- people who use the internet are using it for social networking. And this is particularly true of young people.

Meanwhile, other forms of technology are also increasingly popular across the globe. Cell phone ownership and computer usage have grown significantly over the last three years, and they have risen dramatically since 2002.

While social networking has spread globally, it is particularly widespread in the country where it began. Among the 22 publics surveyed, Americans most often say they use websites like Facebook and MySpace: 46% use such sites, 36% use the internet, but do not access these sites, and 18% say they never go online.

Read the full report, [Global Publics Embrace Social Networking](#), on the Pew Research Center Web site.

[See All Reports In Demographics](#)

### More Work in Computers and the Internet

- [Demographics](#)
- [Education](#)
- [E-Gov and E-Policy](#)
- [Family, Friends and Community](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Internet Evolution](#)
- [Major News Events](#)
- [Online Activities and Pursuits](#)
- [Public Policy](#)
- [Technology and Media Use](#)
- [Work](#)

### Pew Related Areas Of Work

- [Computers and the Internet / Online Activities and Pursuits](#)
- [Computers and the Internet / Demographics](#)
- [Computers and the Internet / Internet Evolution](#)





## Generations and Gadgets

Feb 03, 2011

Many devices have become popular across generations, with a majority of adults now owning cell phones, laptops and desktop computers. Younger adults are leading the way in increased mobility, preferring laptops to desktops and using their cell phones for a variety of functions, including internet, email, music, games and video.

...

In terms of generations, Millennials are by far the most likely group not only to own most of the devices we asked about, but also to take advantage of a wider range of functions. For instance, while cell phones have become ubiquitous in American households, most cell phone owners use only two of the main non-voice functions on their phones: taking pictures and text messaging. Among Millennials, meanwhile, a majority use their phones also for going online, sending email, playing games, listening to music and recording videos.

Gen X, however, is very similar to Millennials in ownership of certain devices, such as game consoles. Members of Gen X are also more likely than Millennials to own a desktop computer.

Read the full report [Generations and Gadgets](#) on the Pew Internet & American Life Project's Web site.

[See All Reports In Demographics](#)

### More Work in Computers and the Internet

- [Demographics](#)
- [Education](#)
- [E-Gov and E-Policy](#)
- [Family, Friends and Community](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Internet Evolution](#)
- [Major News Events](#)
- [Online Activities and Pursuits](#)
- [Public Policy](#)
- [Technology and Media Use](#)
- [Work](#)





## **Seventy-One Percent of Online Adults Now Use Video-Sharing Sites**

Jul 26, 2011

Fully 71% of online Americans use video-sharing sites such as YouTube and Vimeo, up from 66% a year earlier. The use of video-sharing sites on any given day also jumped five percentage points, from 23% of online Americans in May 2010 to 28% in May 2011.

Rural internet users are now just as likely as users in urban and suburban areas to have used these sites, and online African-Americans and Hispanics are more likely than internet-using whites to visit video-sharing sites.

“The rise of broadband and better mobile networks and devices has meant that video has become an increasingly popular part of users’ online experiences,” said Kathleen Moore, author of the report. “People use these sites for every imaginable reason – to laugh and learn, to watch the best and worst of popular culture and to check out news. And video-sharing sites are very social spaces as people vote on, comment on, and share these videos with others.”

Read the full report, [71% of Online Adults Now Use Video-Sharing Sites](#), on the Pew Internet & American Life Project Web site.

[See All Reports In Demographics](#)

### **More Work in Computers and the Internet**

- [Demographics](#)
- [Education](#)
- [E-Gov and E-Policy](#)
- [Family, Friends and Community](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Internet Evolution](#)
- [Major News Events](#)
- [Online Activities and Pursuits](#)
- [Public Policy](#)
- [Technology and Media Use](#)
- [Work](#)

### **Pew Related Areas Of Work**

- [Computers and the Internet / Online Activities and Pursuits](#)
- [Computers and the Internet / Demographics](#)





## Sixty-Five Percent of Online Adults Use Social Networking Sites

Aug 26, 2011

Two-thirds of adult internet users (65%) now say they use a social networking site like MySpace, Facebook or LinkedIn, up from 61% one year ago. That's more than double the percentage that reported social networking site usage in 2008 (29%). And for the first time in Pew Internet surveys it means that half of all adults (50%) use social networking sites. The pace with which new users have flocked to social networking sites has been staggering; when we first asked about social networking sites in February of 2005, just 8% of internet users – or 5% of all adults – said they used them.

Looking at usage on a typical day, 43% of online adults use social networking, up from 38% a year ago and just 13% in 2008. Out of all the “daily” online activities that we ask about, only email (which 61% of internet users access on a typical day) and search engines (which 59% use on a typical day) are used more frequently than social networking tools.

Among internet users, social networking sites are most popular with women and young adults under age 30. Young adult women ages 18-29 are the power users of social networking; fully 89% of those who are online use the sites overall and 69% do so on an average day. As of May 2011, there are no significant differences in use of social networking sites based on race and ethnicity, household income, education level, or whether the internet user lives in an urban, suburban, or rural environment.

Read the full report, [Sixty-Five Percent of Online Adults Use Social Networking Sites](#), on the Pew Internet & American Life Project Web site.

[See All Reports In Demographics](#)

### More Work in Computers and the Internet

- [Demographics](#)
- [Education](#)
- [E-Gov and E-Policy](#)
- [Family, Friends and Community](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Internet Evolution](#)
- [Major News Events](#)
- [Online Activities and Pursuits](#)
- [Public Policy](#)
- [Technology and Media Use](#)
- [Work](#)





## Half of Adult Cell Phone Owners Have Apps on Their Phones

Nov 02, 2011

The share of adult cell phone owners who have downloaded an app to their phone nearly doubled in the past two years – rising from 22% in September 2009 to 38% in August 2011 – according to a new survey by the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project. The share of U.S. adults who purchased a phone already equipped with apps also increased five percentage points in the past year, from 38% in May 2010 to 43% in the current survey.

When both groups are accounted for—those whose phones came equipped with apps and those who have downloaded their own—fully half of U.S. adult cell phone owners (50%) now have apps on their phones. In May 2010, that figure stood at 43%. Looking at all U.S. adults, 42% now have cell phones with apps.

Read the full report, [Half of Adult Cell Phone Owners Have Apps on Their Phones](#), on the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Web site.

[See All Reports In Demographics](#)

### More Work in Computers and the Internet

- [Education](#)
- [E-Gov and E-Policy](#)
- [Family, Friends and Community](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Internet Evolution](#)
- [Major News Events](#)
- [Online Activities and Pursuits](#)
- [Public Policy](#)
- [Technology and Media Use](#)
- [Work](#)

### Pew Related Areas Of Work

- [Computers and the Internet / Online Activities and Pursuits](#)
- [Computers and the Internet / Demographics](#)
- [Computers and the Internet / Internet Evolution](#)
- [Computers and the Internet / Technology and Media Use](#)





## Nearly Half of American Adults Are Smartphone Owners

Mar 01, 2012

Nearly half (46%) of American adults are smartphone owners as of February 2012, an increase of 11 percentage points over the 35% of Americans who owned a smartphone last May. Two in five adults (41%) own a cell phone that is not a smartphone, meaning that smartphone owners are now more prevalent within the overall population than owners of more basic mobile phones.

Nearly every major demographic group—men and women, younger and middle-aged adults, urban and rural residents, the wealthy and the less well-off—experienced a notable uptick in smartphone penetration over the last year. Overall adoption levels are at 60% or more within several cohorts, such as college graduates, 18-35 year olds and those with an annual household income of \$75,000 or more.

Although this overall increase in smartphone ownership is relatively widespread, several groups saw modest or non-existent growth in the last year. Chief among these are seniors, as just 13% of those ages 65 and older now own a smartphone.

Read the full report, [Nearly Half of American Adults Are Smartphone Owners](#), on the Pew Internet & American Life Project's Web site.

[See All Reports In Demographics](#)

### More Work in Computers and the Internet

- [Education](#)
- [E-Gov and E-Policy](#)
- [Family, Friends and Community](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Internet Evolution](#)
- [Major News Events](#)
- [Online Activities and Pursuits](#)
- [Public Policy](#)
- [Technology and Media Use](#)
- [Work](#)

### Pew Related Areas Of Work

- [Computers and the Internet / Demographics](#)
- [Computers and the Internet / Technology and Media Use](#)



EC Network: EnergyCentral EC Pro IntelligentUtility EnergyBiz RenewablesBiz TransmissionHub EC Job

# TRANSFORM SMART GRID VISION INTO REALITY



SUBSCRIBE

intelligent  
mag

# intelligentutility<sup>®</sup>

WHERE THE SMART GRID  
MEETS BUSINESS  
AND REALITY

know  
INTELLIGENT UTILITY EXEC

[HOME](#) [NEWS & COMMENTARY](#) [CALENDAR](#) [RESOURCES](#) [MAGAZINE](#) [SUBSCRIBE](#)


Home

## Smart Phones -- The Gateway to Utility-Customer Engagement

Sambit Bisoi | Mar 01, 2011

[Share](#) / [Save](#) [f](#) [t](#) [c](#) [v](#) [p](#)

MORE...

SUBSCRIBE

Back Issues

Blogs

Case Studies

Commentary

Conferences

Insights

News

Poll Results

Training

Webcasts - Live

Utilities usually have the luxury of not embracing the latest IT solutions as they emerge, but they must keep an eye on the trend and align their applications in the direction of evolution. In the ever changing information arena, everything, from the form of a computer to mode of usage by the customers is constantly undergoing changes. The past couple of years seem to be the flag bearer of the upcoming dimension of web experience. yes, I am talking about the evolution of smart phones and 3G tablets and their rising popularity as primary device for internet usage. These miniaturized gadgets are not only powerful enough for everyday computing, but also are extremely portable; thereby replacing some of the traditional notebooks and desktops as far as day to day computing is concerned. Many business organizations have started providing application (also called *Native App*) specially targeted for these smart devices. Amazon store, BOFA, Southwest Airlines etc. are some of popular Apps for Apple iPhone and Android devices. Where by using the Amazon App you can order stuff from you iPhone or buy a book from a kindle store, one can do banking transactions using the App provided by BOFA. Similarly you can book your air ticket or do an e-check in for SW Airlines from your phone application. Owing to their simplicity and fluid movement between various functions, smart phone Apps have encouraged many non IT savvy users to use the IT services through their phones or tablets.



Webcasts - On  
Demand

White Papers

Advertise/Media  
Kit/Edit. Calendar

About Us

Contact Us

**ENERGY  
CENTRAL**

**FREE  
ENERGY  
NEWSLETTERS**

**Smart Grid  
Renewables  
Power Storage  
...and more!**

**Subscribe Now!**

The first natural question that is often asked is -- *Why Native Apps? Why not browse the web site itself from the smart phone and get the job done?* The answer lies in this simple example. If you are standing near an ATM and want to check your balance, would you use the ATM or would you like to log into your bank website by typing long user names and passwords? Accessing a conventional web page from a small phone screen with large horizontal scroll bars is never so elegant. Web pages take some amount of time to load and sometimes look scary when rendered partially due to slower internet. Also the non tech savvy people often find it difficult to enter the address in the browser and look for the proper hyperlink to go to the desired web page and do their transaction. Just think about the ATM example that always outperforms its web counterpart due to its simplicity, smooth navigation and ease of use. Of course web pages have one advantage where the ATM can never beat them and that is mobility. Web pages don't require you to walk down the lane to the ATM to check the balance. Native apps in smart phones bring the best of both the world. These apps provide the simple and obvious user interface of an ATM and 'access-from-anywhere' feature of Web Pages. An App is installed in the phone itself. So unlike a web page, it need not be downloaded and rendered every time the user wants to access it, rather it is there in the phone and always connected to the internet. This enables the apps to be much faster and offer fluid navigation.

*Are we talking about moving everything from a web page to the apps?* Of course we are not. Utility websites provide a wide range of online services and information, most of which are only sparingly used by the customers. Visit any utility web page and you will be greeted with enormous stuff ranging from green energy to kids safety and from rate inquiry to job search. When a common customer visits the web page, 'most of the times', he is least interested to know the updates on regulatory policy or progress in smart grid implementation. Rather he intends to either pay his monthly bill or report an outage or to do a turn on/off or do some very basic stuff like that. If we apply Pareto principle (also known as the 80-20 rule) it will be evident that most (80%) of the customers use the web page of the utility company to do their primitive tasks; and these primitive tasks constitute rather a small fraction (20%) of the IT services offered through the web page. The new generation customers will be using their smart phone and tablets as primary devices for their browsing needs. In order to pay a bill, they won't like to log into their notebook nor would they like to access the heavy web page from their small phone screen. It will be like forcing them to use a banking site when the ATM is right at their door step. It will eventually be necessary for the utility companies to enable them to access (at least) the basic IT services through their phone. Of course, the 'not so frequently used' services can continue to enjoy their place in the conventional Web Pages.

Smart phone Apps provide much more than just better access to the services. Apps can use the phone's native hard wires like GPS, camera, microphone, gyroscope etc. (where as Web Pages cannot). So an App can provide features like finding direction to the nearest utility office using the GPS, enabling the users to talk to the customer rep. through phone calls on unavailability of internet etc. Apps also can use the messaging



services of the phone and do the transaction even without internet. For example if the customer wants to check his electricity consumption, the request can be sent as an outgoing SMS and the response can be delivered as an incoming SMS. The App engine will process the SMS show the result to the user and all these will happen without the customer knowing about the complexities.

Smart phones do not have a steep learning curve as regular computers. They are actually computers for the people, who are afraid of computers. The simple yet elegant user interface does not require the users to remember the web address or learn how to go to the proper page to get the work done; rather the fluid navigation makes the user take some obvious looking steps to do the work. So the people, who never wanted to use their computer to pay a bill or request a turn on/off, will be attracted to use online services. So utility companies can expect more number of online transactions, thereby increasing productive usage of time and effort, which in turn increases the profitability of the company.

With the implementation of Smart Grids, the customer engagement with utilities is likely to increase and this will increase the amount of time that the customer spends on a utility web site or customer service phone calls. According to a survey that research firm 'IDC Energy Insights' conducted, 35 percent of utility respondents that have installed smart meters have seen an increase in call volume of between 10 percent and 30 percent. The research finds that -- "The customer will be more engaged on a daily basis with the utility. The customer will no longer be a passive recipient of a bill, but an active partner in managing energy consumption and cost". And such frequent customer engagement can be better addressed through the smart phone apps, rather than conventional web pages on notebooks.

Now let us come to the 'literally' million \$ question. *Will it take a lot of time and money to build IT service around the phone Apps?* As we all know, the utility industries have already web based IT applications to cater to the need of the customer services. Most of these web applications follow the popular SOA (Service Oriented Architecture) pattern. In an SOA, the IT applications expose various services (for e.g., bill payment, outage reporting etc.) and these services are consumed by the web page. All that needs to be done is to develop front end mobile applications, which will be running in the smart phones and these apps will consume the already existing IT services to get their work done. So it will not require a re-engineering in the existing business process, nor any significant change to the business logic driving the current IT services. The diagram explains the flow.

## Webcasts    Confe

Managing the Data  
Behind MDM Impli  
Mar 1, 2012  
(All day) EST

Energy Utilities as  
Responsible Inves  
Mar 6, 2012  
12:00 PM EST

The vital role of IC  
at your fingertips  
Mar 15, 2012  
11:00 AM EST

The Rise of the CI  
Mar 15, 2012  
12:00 PM EST

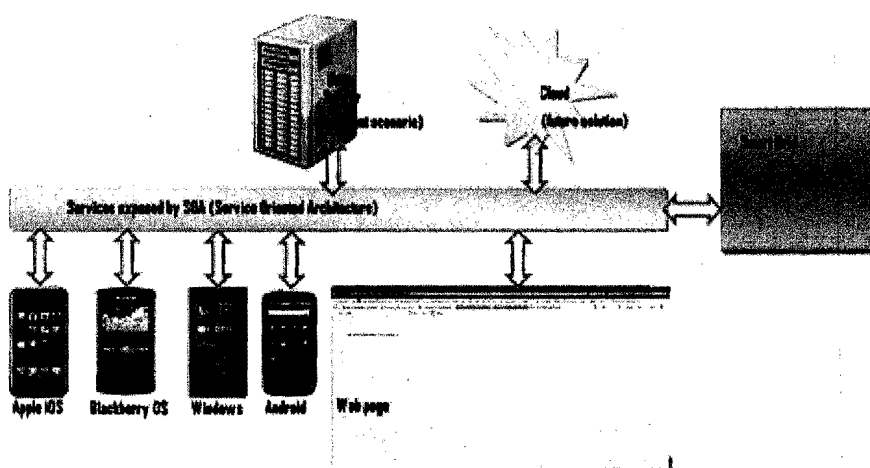
more webcasts

**Get the attention of  
high quality  
recruiters  
and employer**

**Advance your career...**

 **EnergyCentralJobs.com**





There is a flip side to the App story also. It needs to be noted that there are a diverse set of mobile platforms present today; the most popular ones being the iOS for iPhone, Symbian for Nokia, Blackberry OS for RIM-BB and Android and Windows for some other phones. Separate apps have to be designed for each of these platforms, though all these devices can be supported by the existing SOA in the back end. The second challenge is a slight shift from the existing IT-service life cycle towards the IT-Product life cycle as far as Native Apps are concerned. Unlike the content of the web pages that can be updated without the user knowing the details, phone Apps will require patches/updates downloaded to the phone. Frequent patch installation will not help in pleasant customer experience. So the application must be bug free to the extent possible to avoid frequent updates. (Please note that we are talking about the front end application only and the back end services in SOA can continue to be updated without user intervention).

In the future, not so far away, one won't really have to be so smart to use one of these smart phones. And the smart phone Apps, from being a nice to have feature of today, would soon become a must have tool of tomorrow. Also the advent of cloud computing, will make the conventional notebooks lose the significance of their powerful hardware as computation will happen in the cloud and this will make tablets and smart phones even more practical. It will not only enrich customer experience by providing faster & seamless IT service, but also increase productivity of the utilities by encouraging the non computer savvy customers to go online. So it is time for the IT leaders to put their thinking caps on and start thinking in the smart direction.

### Summary

In the coming years smart phones and 3G tablets will become primary device for access internet replacing notebooks and desktop computers. So smart phone Apps will gain popularity as compared to conventional Web Pages for routine mundane tasks like utility bill payment, turn on/off request etc. With the introduction of smart grids, customer engagement with utilities will increase and smart phone apps will provide significant edge than web pages. Also the non computer savvy users will find the



phone Apps easier to use due to linear learning curve. This article throws light on the significance of smart phone Apps for utility customers.

---

## Comments

Wed, 03/02/2011 - 3:45am

I am immensely pleased with this article. In fact Remote metering projects do have conventional e-messaging solutions. I must point out that time of the day demand tariff has practically met its waterloo because it is not practical. I have tried it and it worked satisfactorily for Industrial units. But doing it for domestic customers has many many problems. Are you doing any project in India for this?

Well I will tell you to do it. I suggest you contact Mr KB Singh Vice President IT - Reliance Infra Phone no 0091- 011 39999846. and if you like take my name- That I recommend it.

My name is Alok Misra

Good Luck !

Wed, 03/02/2011 - 5:38am

Good observation on the cloud and how such mobile devices can be better leveraged.

Smart Grid related changes require utilities to engage better and with more of their customers. So communicating with customers using the most popular medium makes sense. - smart phones and androids are definitely going to be one of those mediums. Another observation is utilities wanting to some of the put field tool applications on such devices which are easier to carry and operate compared to rugged notepads etc especially when inspections require climbing or going to hard to reach locations where carrying a laptop is not really convenient

Wed, 03/02/2011 - 12:05pm

Well, maybe ok, but these cell network providers will need to seriously reduce their charge rates before I will take the devices in any way seriously.

Tue, 03/08/2011 - 11:31pm

"So smart phone Apps will gain popularity as compared to conventional Web Pages for routine mundane tasks like utility bill payment, turn on/off request etc." (Quoted from the summary.)

My utility bills have been paid automatically (with zero effort and without charge) by my bank for decades. As to on/off requests I don't recall ever making such a



**P A L M D A L E   W A T E R   D I S T R I C T**  
**B O A R D   M E M O R A N D U M**

**DATE:** April 3, 2012 **April 9, 2012**  
**TO:** OUTREACH COMMITTEE **Outreach Committee Meeting**  
**FROM:** Mr. Dennis D. LaMoreaux, General Manager  
**RE:** ***AGENDA ITEM NO. 4.3 – DISCUSSION OF DISTRIBUTION OF PRESS RELEASES.***

---

The District's press release distribution list is attached for the Committee's review and comment for any additions and/or changes. Press releases regarding Board actions are distributed on a monthly basis by Executive Assistant Deans, and press releases on all other District subject matter are distributed on an as-needed basis by Water Conservation Supervisor Roberts. In addition to the distribution list, press releases are forwarded to the Board of Directors and to all District staff.

Staff was also directed to contact the Antelope Valley Press and TimeWarner Cable regarding regular publication or notification of agenda information possibly through a community calendar section.

The call to the Antelope Valley Press was directed to Dennis Anderson. He suggested that the District compose an email listing the agenda items so they could possibly do an advance article but that it would depend on the agenda item as it would need to be a topic of interest to the general public. He requested the email be sent to Chuck Bostwick, Gerry Price, and Alisha Semchuck, with a carbon copy to him.

The call to TimeWarner Cable was directed to Naomi Huerta. She indicated that the District's agenda items tend to be more technical in nature and that the general public would not have an interest or would not understand the subject matter. She suggested that if there is, for instance, a rate issue, a job awarded to a local contractor, or a topic of interest to the general public that they be called to schedule an interview for the topic.

**Supporting Documents:**

- Press Release/Public Notification List dated March 14, 2012
- Blank form – Press Release/Public Notification List dated March 14, 2012





# **PALMDALE WATER DISTRICT PRESS RELEASE/PUBLIC NOTIFICATION LIST**

**March 14, 2012**

<b>COMPANY NAME/ADDRESS</b>	<b>CONTACT NAME</b>	<b>PHONE NUMBER</b>	<b>EMAIL ADDRESS/ FAX NUMBER</b>
Acton-Agua Dulce News P. O. Box 57 Acton, CA 93510	(via email as pdf)	661-269-1169	joyced@pacbell.net 661-269-2139
Adelman Broadcasting	William Swartzbaugh Jess Collins (via email as pdf)		w.swartzbaugh@yahoo.com Cbforhim1@sbcglobal.net
Antelope Valley Press P. O. Box 4050 Palmdale, CA 93590	Chuck Bostwick Dennis Anderson Rich Breault Brian Golden Calendar Section Alisha Semchuck (via email-text in email)	661-273-2700 661-273-2700 661-267-4172 661-273-2700 661-273-2700 661-267-4214	Editor@avpress.com danderson@avpress.com rbreault@avpress.com bgolden@avpress.com wwarford@avpress.com asemchuck@avpress.com valleylife@avpress.com 661-947-4870
A.V. Journal 3166 E. Palmdale Blvd. Palmdale, CA 93550	Veronica/Marion Romero (via email as pdf)	661-947-5009	avjournal@gmail.com 661-947-5208
A.W.W.A. California/Nevada Source Magazine 10574 Acacia St., Suite D6 Rancho Cucamonga	Marketing (via fax)	909-481-7200 x303	909-481-4688
Clear Channel (97.7 fm; 610 am sports) 348 E. Ave. K-4 Lancaster, CA 93535	Rebecca Smith (via email as pdf)	661-942-1121	rebeccasmith@clearchannel.com 661-723-5512
CSDA 1112 I Street, Ste. 200 Sacramento, CA	Nicole Dunn Kevin Eckery (via email as pdf)	877-924-2732	nicoled@csda.net kevin@csda.net 916-442-7889



Daily News Antelope Valley Office 24800 Valencia, CA 91355	Karen Maeshiro Mark Kellum (via email as pdf)	661-476-4586	Karen.maeshiro@dailynews.com Mark.kellum@dailynews.com 661-257-5262
Golden Poppy Magazine	Chris Chapleau (via email as pdf)		cchapleau@abm1.com
High Desert Broadcasting (1470 am KUTY; 106.3 fm) 570 E. Ave. Q-9 Palmdale, CA 93550	Chris Cox Greg Wood (via fax) Emmett (via email as pdf)	661-947-3107	Greg@highdesertbroadcasting.com Emmett@highdesertbroadcasting.com 661-272-5688
KHIZ TV P. O. Box 6464 Victorville, CA 92393	Curt Davis (via fax)	760-241-5888	760-241-0056
La Voz Del Valle 38603 Ninth St. E. Palmdale, CA 93550	Lucio Valencia (via fax)	661-947-1940	661-947-6362
La Prensa	Yoab Martinez (via email as pdf)		yoab@laprensapopular.com
Santanaads	Phyllis Fregoso (via email as pdf)	661-947-2810 530-258-4876	santanaads@earthlink.net
TimeWarner 41551 N. 10 <sup>th</sup> St. W. Palmdale, CA 93551	Naomi Huerta Russ Williams (via email as pdf)	661-272-0168	Naomi.huerta@twcable.com Russ.williams@twcable.com 661-273-6439





# **PALMDALE WATER DISTRICT PRESS RELEASE/PUBLIC NOTIFICATION LIST**

**March 14, 2012**

COMPANY NAME/ADDRESS	CONTACT NAME	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS/ FAX NUMBER