

# THE PIPELINE

News from the Ventura County Public Works Agency

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## From the Director's Desk

**Jeff Pratt,**  
Public Works  
Agency Director



Dear Colleagues,

Last month, we celebrated National Public Works Week, May 18-24. The theme of "Building for Today, Planning for Tomorrow" was never more evident than at our big youth event at the Government Center on Tuesday, May 20. It was a wonderful day, and we'd like to thank all of our employees who put together this event.

Also in this issue of *The Pipeline* we feature the Integrated Waste Management Division, which handles far more than simple trash collection. Its focus is also on recycling, reuse, and green living.

In March we completed a major project that was eight years and \$13 million in the making — increasing the depth and width of the Calleguas Creek. This project was aimed at flood control and also created room for a pedestrian and bike trail, which should be completed later this year.

Last but definitely not least, we would like to honor two exceptional members of the VCPWA staff for all of their hard work and outreach to the community. Read on to find out who 2014's Employees of the Year are!

All the Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Jeff Pratt".

Jeff Pratt  
Director

## One Man's Trash Is Another Man's Treasure

*The Integrated Waste Management Division*

The Integrated Waste Management Division (IWMD) isn't just about garbage collection. As part of the Water and Sanitation Department, IWMD is responsible for ensuring the County complies with the California Integrated Waste Management Act and other state laws pertaining to responsible solid waste management, focusing primarily on diverting solid waste from landfills.

Among the most noteworthy responsibilities of the division is administering the Recycling Market Development Zone (RMDZ) program, an innovative recycling and reuse program that combines recycling with economic development to fuel new businesses, expand existing ones, create jobs, and divert waste from landfills. IWMD locally oversees this state program to help companies use recycled materials to manufacture new products. If a business uses recycled or reused materials to make products, or if it can make products out of less material than previously used, it may be eligible to benefit from the variety of state and local RMDZ program incentives and other business assistance such as low-interest loans; assistance with financing; permit assistance; location assistance; suggesting ways to procure materials for use in manufacturing; and more.

IWMD also oversees other significant programs dedicated to responsible waste

collection and community beautification. For example, up to 16 Community Beautification Events ("CBEs") are coordinated annually by IWMD staff, in conjunction with the County's franchised waste collectors, in neighborhoods throughout the unincorporated area of Ventura County to provide a way for thousands of residents to easily recycle, or dispose of, unneeded or unwanted items... free of any costs! The program is so popular that, during an average year, 300,000 lbs. of material is routinely collected and diverted from disposal in our local landfills.

Another environmental program administered by IWMD is the monthly collection events at the County's Pollution Prevention Center (PPC); these monthly events offer residents and qualifying businesses a responsible way to dispose of unwanted, or outdated, household hazardous waste. Because of these events, more than 100,000 lbs. of household hazardous waste are collected, and diverted from disposal in our landfills, every year!

"Green" living is also encouraged by IWMD and related information about reducing junk mail, sustainable gardening/landscaping, and a directory of thrift stores for those who believe "one man's trash is another man's treasure" can be found on the division's website. For more information, visit the IWMD website at [www.wasteless.org](http://www.wasteless.org) or call (805) 658-4321.





# Public Works Week!

The VCPWA Public Works Day fair took place on Tuesday, May 20 at the Government Center as the pinnacle of National Public Works Week. VCPWA hosted these events and activities to celebrate the work of the five departments that make up the Agency, as well as recognize its workforce dedicated to improving the quality of life for present and future generations of County residents.

At 10:00 a.m., in the Hall of Administration, the County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution in honor of National Public Works Week. In other official business, we announced our Employees of the Year Award to two hard-working staff members.

Outside in the parking lot, the public was invited to visit several display booths and demonstrations, including heavy equipment, sustainable gardening, recyclable arts and crafts, and refreshments.

Kindergarteners from Children R Us and second graders from Junipero Serra Elementary School had a chance to learn all about the various types of jobs performed by VCPWA and about the hardworking men and women who work here. One

of the kids' favorite activities was the Watershed Protection District's demonstration of the remote-controlled skid steer, which taught children how the machines are used for flood prevention throughout the County.

A career booth was staffed to provide information on exciting career opportunities with the Agency, including internship and student-worker programs available for high school and college students interested in gaining professional experience in the Public Works sector.

In addition, high-school students from the Architecture, Construction, and Engineering (ACE) school were given a special tour of the Saticoy Operations Yard. The students got a close-up look at heavy equipment in action, the nursery, and the crew rooms. They were especially impressed with the large role technology has in our operation and maintenance functions and the diverse job opportunities available with VCPWA.

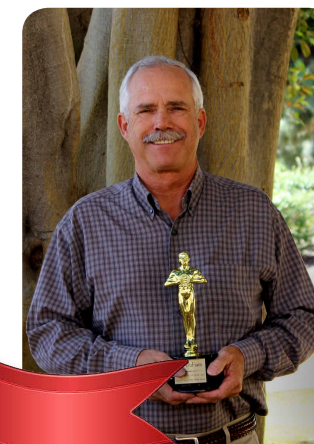
From the littlest visitors up to the college students who stopped by for career advice, we declare Public Works Day a great success, and a true example of "Building for Today, Planning for Tomorrow."



Rose Paredes

"We're blessed to work with some really great people!"

- Rose Paredes



Bill DuFrain

Congratulations are in order to this year's nominees: Charles Alvarez from Central Services, Rose Paredes from Engineering Services, Howard De Leon and Jose Ramirez from Transportation, Kathy Jones and Bill DuFrain from Watershed Protection, and Lisa McCullough and Sean Hanley from Water & Sanitation. This year, Jeff Pratt proudly announced Rose Paredes and Bill DuFrain as the 2014 Employees of the Year recipients for their exemplary work and leadership.

Bill DuFrain, a Supervisor of Public Works Maintenance, will celebrate his 13th year with VCPWA in July. Last year, Bill played a critical role in the Santa Clara River flooding project which flooded McGrath State Beach; he helped lead the charge in devising creative tactics to reduce water levels and protect endangered species.

Rose Paredes with the Division of County Surveyors is honored to receive the Employee of the Year accolade for the Agency she's represented for more than 21 years. The Survey Tech recently spent four months compiling a comprehensive library of County record maps which can be accessed online at <http://gis.ventura.org/CountyView/>.

Though humbled by the recognition, Bill and Rose dedicate the awards to their colleagues, attributing the team effort responsible for the Agency's successes. "We're all part of the same entity; I certainly could not do it on my own. The award should be renamed to 'County of the Year!'"





**A** recent project by the Ventura County Public Works Agency (VCPWA) proves that “Building for Today and Planning for Tomorrow” involves more than just preventing future problems and serving the common good of Ventura County residents and businesses — it actually saves them money.

More than 900 homeowners and businesses, located along Calleguas Creek between Pleasant Valley Road and Highway 101 in Camarillo, were saved, collectively, over \$1 million in flood-insurance policies by the Calleguas Creek Channel and Bank Improvements Project. On April 25, 2014, Camarillo Mayor Kevin Kildee, Ventura County Supervisor Kathy Long, and VCPWA Director Jeff Pratt joined the crowd of appreciative Ventura County residents and business owners at a ribbon-cutting ceremony, celebrating the project’s completion.

In 2010, 100-year flood maps by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) took effect, showing that the properties adjacent to the creek were at risk. As a result, these property owners were required to purchase flood insurance through FEMA. “We started looking at what we can do from a protection perspective,” said Jeff Pratt, “because (flood) insurance was going to be higher and flood protection was in everyone’s best interest.”

The project involved widening a narrow section of the creek by 90 feet, widening the rest of the creek between 156 to 300 feet, and lowering the bottom by three feet in depth. Two energy-dissipating drop structures were also constructed. Along the way, VCPWA’s strategy was to keep the creek looking as natural as possible. Instead of the wide, stark concrete passages found in many California cities’ flood-fighting structures, VCPWA used a special concrete mix resembling natural soil and stone. They also preserved native vegetation wherever possible, including over half of the creek’s west bank. The west side will also soon boast a pedestrian and bike trail, to be completed later this year.

VCPWA is grateful to all of the businesses and residents who cooperated with the inconveniences of this major construction project. Not only is it a money saver for everyone who was located on the flood plain, it also eliminates worry and the possibility of damage to the infrastructure—all while maintaining the area’s natural beauty and providing recreation.

# Calleguas Creek Ribbon Cutting

