

PINAL

9. Casa Grande Receives "Best Clean Water Project of the Year" Award

City of Casa Grande
February 22, 2013

The Casa Grande Water Reclamation Facility Phase III expansion project received the 2012 "Clean Water Project of the Year" award given by the Water Infrastructure Finance Authority (WIFA) of Arizona. Phase III of the project doubled wastewater capacity from 6 million gallons a day to 12 million gallons a day at the facility and upgraded the treatment level to A+ quality water suitable for open-access irrigation uses. The award was presented at the February 19 City Council meeting.

According to WIFA, Casa Grande was selected based on the ability to reuse more water, project cost-effectiveness and excellent project management.

"Remarkably, the City was able to upgrade the existing infrastructure and add capacity to the system for less than \$9 per gallon, which is a much lower cost than what is typical by today's standards. They are certainly to be commended for that," said WIFA Communications Director Susan Craig in her presentation to the City Council. "When you combine these low costs with a below-market interest rate from WIFA, what you have is a cost-effective project that has produced a great value for Casa Grande customers. Last but certainly not least, Casa Grande staff did an excellent job managing this project and was a pleasure to work with. Staff demonstrated dedication and professionalism throughout the project," continued Craig.

Financing for Phase III of the Waste Water Master Plan was provided by WIFA. The total cost of the expansion project was \$58 million - making it the most expensive project the City has undertaken to date.

Project included significant improvements to all stages of the treatment process, including preliminary treatment, the anoxic/aerobic basins, secondary clarification, tertiary treatment and effluent pumping and conveyance. By converting the oxidation ditches to utilize two mechanical aerators instead of one, the City was able to provide an upgrade to the existing capacity and added capacity to the system.

Phase III of the project was completed in June 2012. An Open House was held on February 9 to celebrate the completion of the project. Staff provided walking tours to over 100 residents who attended the Open House to see the facility and learn how wastewater is processed in Casa Grande.

The WIFA Project of the Year Award was created to recognize the most exceptional WIFA projects funded or completed during the funding cycle as demonstrated by their performance in resolving water quality/public health issues, securing public support, cooperative funding efforts, sustainability (energy and water efficiency) and/or exceptional system and project management practices.

WIFA maintains and improves water quality in Arizona by providing communities and private water systems with access to low-interest financial assistance and technical assistance needed for basic water infrastructure. To learn more about WIFA, visit www.azwifa.gov

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