



News Release

Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District

1503 First Street South, Nampa, Idaho 83651

Tel: (208) 466-7861 -- Fax: (208) 463-0092

Serving The Treasure Valley Since 1904

IRRIGATION DISTRICT MAINTENANCE CREWS PREPARE CANALS FOR START OF IRRIGATION

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For Media Information Contact:
Greg Curtis, (208) 466-0663

Maintenance crews from the Treasure Valley’s largest irrigation district are hard at work getting the District’s 500 miles of canals ready to receive water on Wednesday when the Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District formally begins the 2020 irrigation season.



Ditchrider Wes King (in orange) and seasonal employee John Alverez with the Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District at work burning weeds, leaves and other debris on the banks of the Eightmile Lateral canal in a Meridian residential subdivision. (NMID Photo)

The crews are using propane torches to burn off weeds and other debris on the canal banks to clear away vegetation that can affect the flow of water down the canals. Idaho law gives irrigation districts the right to maintain canals and banks including the removal of brush and trees that may be growing on canal banks.

Compounding the maintenance program is the grass, leaves, tree limbs and various other kinds of landscaping material and trash that residents routinely dump into the canal. Idaho water law prohibits dumping into canals but to do so but water managers say NMID ditchriders regularly see it all along the NMID canal system, especially in residential areas.

“This year this problem is exceptionally bad. I think people are home because of the stay-at-home order and the social distancing requirements and are working in their yards. We are seeing large piles of

debris thrown into ditches after our crews have already burnt the area clean. That kind of dumping is going to cause us issues when we start running water beginning Wednesday, said Greg Curtis, NMID Water Superintendent.

Curtis noted that people with property adjacent to canals may be alarmed at first when they see clouds of smoke billowing from the canals and want to call the local fire department. But our crews are highly experienced in this type of maintenance process and practice great caution to keep any burning well under control so adjacent property is not threatened.

NMID delivers irrigation water to approximately 69,000 acres of Treasure Valley agricultural and residential lands in Ada and Canyon Counties and supplies pressurized irrigation water to more than 17,000 individual parcels of land, including 493 subdivisions the Treasure Valley. 2020 marks the 116th consecutive year of water deliveries to the Treasure Valley by the irrigation district.

For more information about the District call (208) 466-7861. Information is also available on its Internet website: www.nmid.org.